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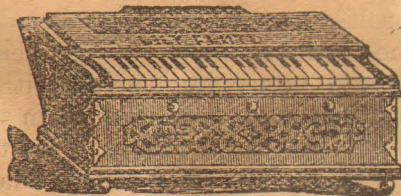
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THE HINDU ORGAN.

JAFNA, WEDNESDAY JANUARY 24, 1900

The Unofficial Seats in the Legislative Council.

The Burgher and the low-country Sinhalese seats in the Legislative Council are shortly to become vacant, and the claims of rival candidates for them are now being discussed in the columns of our daily contemporaries with some warmth and feeling, by those directly interested in the well-being of those communities. Though the Burghers and the Sinhalese are the people directly interested in the question, yet the whole native population of the Island are not less interested in seeing that the best available men are appointed to represent those communities in the Legislature. There is not at present more than one or two unofficial members on whom the Ceylonese in general could look up to adequately represent their interests in the Legislative Council. As long as Government appointed as unofficial members only such men as fully enjoyed public confidence they represented not only the interests of their own constituents but also those of all other communities in general. The late Mr. C. A. Lorenz, Mr. C. L. Ferdinands, and Mr. James Van Cuylenberg, Burgher Representatives, and the late Mr. James Alwis and Mr. J. P. Obeyesekere, Sinhalese Representatives, faithfully represented not only the communities to which they belonged but were champions in and out of Council of all interests and communities in the Island, just as Sir Coomara Swamy, Mr. Ramanathan, and Mr. Coomara Swamy did represent the interests of the Tamils in particular and those of the Ceylonese in general. It is, therefore, a matter of great interest to the Ceylonese that the two seats in question should be filled by gentlemen of real worth, ability, public spirit and independence—men who would be no place-seekers, or docile instruments in the hands of the Government.

The Tamils of Ceylon are particularly interested in this question not only for the above reasons but also for the reason that they have not in the Hon'ble Dr. Rockwood a strong and experienced Member. It is, therefore, no less in the interest of the

Tamils than it is in the interest of the Burghers and Sinhalese that the new members to represent these communities should be men of proved capacity and experience.

The Hon'ble H. L. Wendt, the sitting Burgher Member, does not seek re-appointment as an unofficial member of the Legislative Council. The one gentleman who is head and shoulders above all compeers, and whose appointment as Burgher Member of the Legislative Council is liked by the whole Ceylonese, irrespective of caste or creed, is Mr. Advocate Dornhorst. But this gentleman declines the honour on the ground, as it is said, that the constitution of our Legislature is not liberal enough to give full scope to his abilities, public spirit, and independence.

The urgent need for reform in the constitution of the Legislative Council cannot be denied. But has Mr. Dornhorst, with his great influence at the Bar and with the leading members of the European and native communities, done anything to improve it? It is surely by entering the Council he will be in a position, not only to render signal services to his countrymen as others belonging to the Burgher community had done before, but also to bring about the much desired reforms in the constitution of the Council. If Mr. Dornhorst after entering the Council set about an agitation for securing the reforms which he has so much at heart, he is sure to have the co-operation of all his un-official colleagues, European and native; and any representations made under such influential auspices are sure to receive the respectful attention of the Colonial as well as of the Home Government. In all climes and countries it is by constant agitations political reforms and privileges are secured. In Ceylon, however, the very best men who ought to lead the Ceylonese and make some self-sacrifice on that behalf think that the best means of serving their countrymen and improving their political and social status is to keep aloof from all public movements and refuse even to serve them in Council in spite of the unanimous call of their countrymen to do so. To show that it is by constitutional agitation alone we may hope to improve the constitution of our Government and Legislature we quote what His Excellency Sir West Ridgeway said in the course of the debate in the Legislative Council on the 13th ultimo on what is called, "the new policy" of the Government. "We are", he said, "a Crown Colony. We are not a self-governing Colony. Some of you may think we ought to be a self-governing Colony. Well, agitate by all constitutional means in your power to get the colony made a self-governing colony." We are, therefore, disposed to think that Mr. Dornhorst has not acted patriotically and in the best interest of his countrymen in refusing to be nominated for the Burgher seat.

Failing Mr. Dornhorst, the Burghers have now divided their support between Mr. F. C. Loos and Mr. Hector Van Cuylenberg, both Proctors of the Supreme Court and esteemed and influential members of that community. It remains to be seen on whom the choice of His Excellency the Governor will fall.

In regard to the Sinhalese seat, it seems that the sitting member, the Hon'ble Mr. A. de A. Seneviratna, is desirous of being re-appointed for a term of another five years. Though he does not possess the dash and brilliancy of some of his predecessors in the Sinhalese seat, or of some of his colleagues who represented other Ceylonese communities in the Legislative Council, yet he has proved himself a safe legislator and a wise councillor. He is, undoubtedly, the most experienced and most useful member among the Ceylonese re-

presentatives in Council. The Government will have, therefore, to consider if it would be in the real interest of the public to dispense with Mr. Seneviratna's services, at a time when the unofficial side of the Council is very weak and composed of members wanting for the most part in experience. But he has been for a long time in Council, and his re-appointment for another term, in the absence of a unanimous wish on the part of the Sinhalese community, is considered unjust to others aspiring for legislative honours and would be opposed to the policy hitherto pursued by the Government in the enforcement of the Five Years Rule, particularly in the case of the Tamil seat when it last fell vacant.

In our humble opinion the Five Years Rule is a mistake. It has taken away all independence from the members who are appointed under that rule and who hope by subserviency to Government to get themselves re-appointed for further terms of five years. It is also responsible for the present weakness of the unofficial side of the Council, especially in regard to the Ceylonese members. The life Members, before this rule was introduced, did their duty fearlessly and independently and brought to bear in the discussion of all questions that came up before the Council vast amount of legislative experience and knowledge. Can this be said of the vast majority of present members? The five years term would be a decided benefit if the unofficial members are elected, at it is done in India, by the people themselves, under a restrictive franchise. But the Government in Ceylon has the power to act very despotically and unconstitutionally in the matter of appointing unofficial members to the Legislative Council, and they do at times exercise their power in that manner in defiance of public wishes and without much regard for public interests.

Now to return to the Sinhalese seat. If Mr. Seneviratna is not to be re-appointed the choice lies between Mr. Proctor S. C. Obeyesekere and Mr. Barrister James Peiris. The former is a gentleman of large independent means, great abilities, public spirit and high social position, who acted once before for a few months as Sinhalese member of Council and who is a brother of the late lamented Mr. J. P. Obeyesekera who most ably represented the whole Sinhalese community in the Legislative Council; and the latter is a gentleman of very high academical qualifications and supported by a wealthy section of the Sinhalese community. Our contemporary of the *Ceylon Observer* whose words are entitled to very great weight recommends the appointment of Mr. Obeyesekera as successor to Mr. Seneviratna, and suggests the desirability of adding another Sinhalese seat for the adequate representation of that community in proportion to its importance and numerical strength, and in order to satisfy the aspirations of that section which has put forward Mr. Peiris to be their member.

While admitting the policy and expediency of the *Observer's* recommendation, we hope to show on a future occasion that if the present system of racial representation in Council is to continue, the Tamils of Ceylon should have also one more member to represent their interests in the Legislature. In the meantime we may be permitted to say that we prefer provincial to racial representation together with the representation which is now allowed to the Planters Association and the Chamber of Commerce.

THE INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS.

The fifteenth session of the Indian National Congress was held at Lucknow in the last week of 1899, under the presidency of Mr. R. C. Dutt C. I. E., a disting-

nished member of the Indian Civil Service who retired a few years ago from it after holding the exalted position of Commissioner of a Division in the Bengal Presidency. Nearly one thousand delegates attended from every part of India; and about five thousand persons were present as spectators. The inaugural Address of the President was one of the best ever delivered. It was dignified, moderate and worthy of the occasion. Mr. Dutt's distinguished abilities, his long connection with Government, his intimate acquaintance with the country and its wants, entitled him to speak with authority on all questions relating to India. We have no space to refer to the various questions touched in the Address, but quote elsewhere his weighty deliverance on the present famine in India and the causes of this periodical affliction in that Continent.

The Congress has had no settled constitution during the last fifteen years of its existence. A committee was, therefore, appointed at the fourteenth Congress held last year in Madras to frame a constitution and submit its report to the fifteenth congress. We also publish in another column the rules regarding the constitution as adopted by the Congress at Lucknow.

The Congress after holding its sittings for three days, during which several important resolutions were unanimously passed, adjourned to hold its next session in the Punjab. An interesting feature of the proceedings of this Congress is the part which a highly educated and philanthropic English lady, Miss Garland, took as the delegate of the British Committee of the Indian National Congress. She proposed an important Resolution on the necessity of curtailing the military expenditure of India, and impressed the audience no less by the cogency of her arguments than by the eloquence of her speech. The great Indian orator the Hon'ble Mr. Surendranath Banerje moved the resolution condemning the provisions of the Calcutta Municipal Act which has recently been passed in the face of the opposition of the people of Bengal. Even the correspondent of the anti-congress "Pioneer" of Allahabad thus describes Mr. Banerje's speech on the occasion:

"The other speech referred to, was the splendid oration (no meaner word will explain my meaning) made by Mr. Banerji on the Calcutta Municipal Act. For nearly fifty minutes the speaker held the rapt attention of the closely packed audience; every single sentence he gave utterance to was worth hearing, and one positively caught one's breath in amazement, at the rapid, unhesitating yet absolutely distinct flow of eloquent language."

The annual gathering of the Indians in Congress at considerable self-sacrifice must afford to the people of Ceylon an object lesson. The vastness of that country, the diversity of races, and creeds in India are barriers against the formation of a Congress for a common object, yet they have all been overcome, and the Congress has become an institution which is to be reckoned with by the Government of India and which has already brought about several important reforms in the Government and the Legislative Council's of that Empire. In Ceylon, however, there is no public body worth speaking which has for its object the amelioration of the political condition of the Colony; and every one here is dead to all sense of self-respect and to his duty towards his country.

THE JAFFNA F. N. S. HOSPITAL.

We learn that the Government is not prepared to take over this Hospital in their charge, as recommended by a meeting held last month in the Kachcheri. That meeting, we need hardly say, did not represent the wishes of the general public but only of a few subscribers who had no independent opinion of their own. Unless the Government Agent cordially works for the welfare and maintenance of the institution as a people's hospital, it must sooner or later become a Government Hospital. We would certainly prefer a well managed people's hospital to a Government hospital. But, under existing circumstances, we despair of seeing the affairs of this hospital restored to a satisfactory condition. If the Government Agent could be persuaded to retain his position as ex-officio chairman of the Managing Committee and if the Colonial Surgeon be appointed to supervise the working of the Hospital as vice-chairman of the committee, we have no doubt this arrangement will immensely satisfy the public.

THE CEYLON CONTINGENT FOR SOUTH AFRICA.

Ceylon has shown its loyalty to the British Empire and justified its position as the premier Crown Colony by equipping and sending to the seat of War in South Africa a company of 125 mounted Volunteers who will leave Colombo on the 1st or 2nd proximo. The number required has been made up, and instructions in riding and grooming horses have commenced at Walles Yard, Kollupitiya, Colombo. The Legislative Council at the sitting held on the 10th instant unanimously decided, on the motion of the Sinhalese Member seconded by the Burgher member, that the colony should bear the expenses of the contingent estimated at Rs 173,000. The contingent is made up entirely of Europeans, and for reasons explained in Council native volunteers were not included. It is a pity that the Imperial Government has so decided in respect to the employment of native troops and native volunteers from India and the Colonies—a decision which is condemned by eminent Anglo-Indian authorities. We are glad, however, that the Ceylonese members of our Legislative Council have acted in the manner they have done and proved beyond a shadow of doubt how loyal we are and how much we are interested in the speedy triumph of British arms in South Africa.

LOCAL & GENERAL.

The Weather—We have had some drizzling showers again this week, which though much beneficial to the standing crops are not sufficient to prevent the failure of the crops in certain parts where the sowing took place later than usual.

A Distinguished Visitor—Mr. Andrew, father-in-law of Mr. C. Eardly Wilmot, our worthy District Judge, is now on a visit to Jaffna and is engaged in travelling throughout the Peninsula and seeing important sights and Temples. He is interested, we learn, in the study of Hindu folk lore and has secured the services of Mr. M. Sathasivampillai to assist him in his investigations and study during his stay in Jaffna.

The Government Agent—Mr. Ievers has returned from Chavakachcheri where he was engaged in the valuation of lands to be acquired for the railway. He goes again on circuit to Pooneryn and Delft. We learn on the authority of a local contemporary that Mr. Ievers is shortly to go home on three months leave of absence.

Personal—Mr. C. Muttiah the eldest son of Mr. Canapathipillai the late Jaffna Maniagar has come down here on a visit to his friends and relations.

Official Changes—Mr. C. Root, Colonial Store-Keeper, who is expected to return from leave early next month has been appointed Accountant of Railway Extension Department, and Mr. F. W. Vane, Assistant Post-Master-General has been appointed Colonial Store-Keeper with effect from the 20th instant. Mr. Mellerish becomes assistant Postmaster-General on the understanding that he will soon be made Postmaster-General.

MANIPAY WANANTHIL GYM KANA CLUB.

The annual sports in connection with this club came off with success on Saturday the 13th Inst. in the playground of the Manipay Wannanthil Hindu C. C. Crowds of people came from different parts to witness the sight. In spite of which, order was kept throughout. The Gymkana field was tastefully decorated with ferns and flags and every one who was present perfectly enjoyed the day. Mr. E. Kandiah of the Hindu College distributed the prizes to the winners of each play and Mr. S. Duariappah a student of the same College and the Champion of the Intercollegiate Gymkana held on the 27th ultimo was the starter. Mr. Sivapiragasam, nephew of Mr. W. Tampipillai, the well known merchant and commission Agent of Colombo, took much interest in the sports and he presented a watch to Master Alageretnam of the Victoria College for having scored the highest number of points. Mr. A. Presudi also, of the Irrigation works, Trincomalee, who takes much interest in such patriotic institutions as this, did all that was in his power to promote the welfare of this Club. This Gymkana was started in 1898 and it is no exaggeration to say that under the able management of the following committee members Messrs C. Superamaniam (Secretary) A. Duriappa (Treasurer), S. Appiah, R. Dharmalingam, N. Kanagaratnam, and R. Chinnatamby, it was a thorough success this year. —Cor.

TELEGRAPHIC SUMMARY.

THE WAR

London, January 12, The Daily Mail learns that General Buller on Saturday lost 14 officers killed, 34 wounded, and 800 men killed and wounded.

It is stated that Lord Methuen injured his spine through falling from his horse when wounded.

General Buller telegraphs from Springfield on the 11th instant that he occupied the south bank of the Tugela at Potgieter's Drift that morning, and seized the Pont. The river is in flood. The enemy is strongly entrenched four-and-half miles to the north.

London January 14th. Reports are current that a battle is raging at three points on the Tugela River. Reuter, in a despatch from Ladysmith dated the 12th instant, says that all has been quiet for the last two days, and that bodies of the enemy are seen galloping on the distant hills.

A despatch from Pretoria, dated the 11th instant, says the position of the Boers at Colesberg is favourable but the British are concentrating for large operations. Small detachments of British troops are constantly being sent from Belmont over the Free State border. The embargo at Delagoa Bay is the question of the hour with the Burghers, and if it is not removed it will have an injurious effect upon the British prisoners at Pretoria.

President Kruger has issued a stirring address, in which he says that Providence will side with the Burghers, who must win.

Reuter, wiring from the Modder River on the 11th, says General Babington with cavalry and a horse battery made a two day's reconnaissance and penetrated about 20 miles into the Free State towards Jacobsdal, but encountered none of the enemy. He also reconnoitred the extreme left of the enemy's position. This is the first incursion into the enemy's territory.

London, January 15th. A despatch from Lord Roberts, dated Cape Town the 14th evening, says the situation is unchanged.

A despatch from Lord Roberts, dated the 13th instant, confirms the news from the Modder River of General Babington's reconnaissance; and adds that the enemy are all quiet at the Modder River.

General French advanced on the 11th instant with the object of bombarding the Boer laager to the east of Colesberg, but was unable to outflank the enemy. The position of General Gatacre's column is unchanged.

A Daily Mail telegram from Pietermaritzburg dated the 12th instant, states that General Warren, with eleven thousand men, has marched eastward from Free via Weemen. His scouts found no sign of the enemy at Groblers Kloof, while they ascertained that Colenso was deserted by the Boer.

All colonials and Irregulars have been placed under General Warren's command.

General Wood, with a force of all arms, established a post at Zoutpan's Drift, north of the Orange River in the Free State, on the sixth instant. A pontoon bridge has been made across the river.

The second edition of The Times published a telegram from Pietermaritzburg, dated the 13th instant, states that the heliograph at Ladysmith all day strongly reported that the Boers, since their repulse of the 6th January, had been moving guns from the south of Ladysmith.

A Pretoria message states that the bombardment of Mafeking was resumed on the 12th instant.

Nothing authentic has been received regarding the operations on the Tugela.

The War Office to-night increases the mystery by publishing a despatch from General Buller dated vaguely Natal, the 14th, merely repeating that Captain G. H. Ford-Hutchinson, and Lieut. E. V. Jones, of the Connaught Rangers, are prisoners at Pretoria; also a heliogram from General White, dated the 14th instant, announcing a few deaths from enteric.

London, January 16th. It is officially stated that General French on Saturday last sent a force to shell the Colesberg Road bridge, and it returned to camp without casualties.

Reuter, telegraphing from Cape Town on the 13th instant, states that there is good reason to believe the correctness of the statement that a movement of a British column of eleven thousand strong has been made eastward from the direction of Weemen; and that we may expect to hear important news shortly.

Reuter, wiring from Rensburg on the 14th instant, says that Colonel Porter is steadily shelling the enemy who occupy a strong position between Colesberg and Slingersfontein.

Whilst scouting near Colesberg on the 14th instant Lieutenant Tompson, Royal Artillery, and a trooper were wounded and captured.

Reuter, wiring from Rensburg on the 15th instant, states that the Boers that morning attempted to take a hill held by a company of the Yorkshire and the New Zealanders, but were repulsed at the point of the bayonet with the loss of 21 killed and about 50 wounded.

Reuter, wiring from Pretoria on the 14th instant, states that the Boers claim to have attacked and demolished one of our forts at Mafeking on Friday last, and that commandant Delarey repulsed a British sortie eastwards.

Boer despatches from Ladysmith, dated the 13th instant, state that there is an ominous calm there, and along the Tugela. Ladysmith appears to be in sore straits; hence the great activity of the British, who have three great camps south of the Tugela which are constantly increasing.

London January 17th. There was very heavy Artillery firing on Monday last in the direction of Springfield.

The Times publishes a telegram from Lourenzo Marques stating that Mafeking was holding its own pluckily up to the 11th instant, and that there was no likelihood of the Garrison being compelled to capitulate as they have plenty of cattle and tinned meats.

Reuter, in a telegraphic despatch from the Modder River, dated the 16th instant, states various reports are current that the Free Staters desire to end the war. It is also stated that, in a council recently held at Beemfontein, it was declared that, if the British did not attack by the 17th instant, the Free Staters would return home.

SELECTIONS.

FAMINE OF 1899.

But, gentlemen, I must extricate myself from this subject and pass on at once to the great calamity which now stares us in the face, the famine from which millions of our countrymen are suffering even now; and with your permission I will devote all my remaining time to this one great subject—which appears to me to be one of paramount importance—the famines of India, and the condition of our poorer classes. Gentlemen, you are aware of the prompt measures which have been already adopted by the Government of Lord Curzon for the relief of distress in British territory and for helping Indian Princes to relieve distress in Native States during this time of trouble and anxiety. And those of you who have had experience of relief operations in previous famines will feel confident that Englishmen when they have once put their hand to the plough, will not leave the work half done. It is with a pardonable pride that I recall past days when I myself was employed along with my English colleagues in famine relief operations, or in providing against impending famines in 1874, in 1876, and in 1896, and judging from my past experience, and judging from the measures adopted this year, I feel confident that no effort, no expenditure, no means humanly possible, will be spared by a benevolent government to save life and to relieve distress among the millions of our suffering countrymen. And in the face of this calamity, it behoves us all, it behoves this National Congress, to do all we can to strengthen the hands of the Government, to offer our help according to our capacity and power, and to place our suggestions before the Government, not in a spirit of criticism but in a spirit of loyalty and co-operation, for the relief of the present distress and for the prevention of such distress in future.

ALLEGED CAUSES OF FAMINES.

It is in this spirit that I suggest that the time has come when it is desirable to take some effective measures to improve the condition of the agricultural population, of India. Their poverty, their distress, their indebtedness all this is not their fault. Sometimes it is asserted that the poverty of the people and the famines which we witness in India and in no other well-governed country on earth, are due to the over-increase in population. Gentlemen, this is not so. If you go into figures you will find that the population does not increase in India as fast as it does in many European countries like Germany and England. And if you read the paper written by Mr. Baines, the late Census Commissioner of India, in the first volume of the British Empire Series recently issued in London, you will find the Census Commissioner has distinctly stated that the growth of population in India is not so fast as that in Germany or in England. Sometimes, again, it is asserted that the poverty of the Indian agriculturist is due to his own improvidence, wastefulness and folly. Gentlemen, this is not so. Those who have passed the best portion of their life among the Indian cultivators, as I have done, will tell you that the Indian cultivator, is about the most frugal, the most provident, the most thoughtful about his future, among all races of cultivators on earth. If he goes to the money-lender it is not because he is in love with the money-lender, but because he has nothing to eat. If he pays 25 or 37 per cent as interest on loans, it is because he cannot get loans on lower interest on such security as he can offer.

We are all aware that the Government of India are at the present time endeavouring to safeguard the interests of the cultivators in the Punjab and elsewhere from the claims of money-lenders on their land. I do not wish to speak on the merits of the Bill, because I never wish to say a word or to express an opinion on inadequate information, and the information I have been able to gather about the condition of the Punjab tenants is not yet as full and complete as I could wish it to be. All that I can say is that this idea, that the condition of cultivators can be improved not by helping them to save, but by restricting their right of sale and mortgage, is an old idea which has been found utterly unsound in Bengal. The policy was advocated when the Bengal Tenancy Bill was under discussion, fifteen years ago. I myself took my humble part in strongly resisting the policy; and if I remember correctly, the able Revenue Secretary of Bengal who is now the Lieutenant Governor of these Provinces, took the same view. I allude to these views because they are no secret, and will be found published in the *Calcutta Gazette* of that year. The absurdity of relieving the cultivators by virtually taking away from the market value of the one property they have on earth was strongly exposed and the idea of placing any restrictions on mortgage and sale of lands was ultimately abandoned.

Curiously enough, the question was mooted again in Bengal only three years ago showing what vast importance is attached to official views and ideas formed in close council chambers. The fear was entertained that land was slipping away from the hands of the cultivating classes to the hands of the money-lending classes and that to restrict the right of sale and mortgage was the only remedy. I happened to be then acting as Commissioner of Orissa, a part of Bengal which is not permanently settled and where the condition of the cultivators is worse than in other parts of Bengal. If the free right of sale or mortgage has worked evil in any part of Bengal, it must have done so in Orissa. But I was able to show from the records of half a century that although the right of

sale and of mortgage had been freely exercised, land had not slipped out of the hands of the cultivating classes, and that to take away from the market value of the land was not the best way to help the cultivators. Fortunately the greatest revenue authority of Bengal Mr. Stevens, who afterwards acted as Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, took the same view, and the idea of helping the cultivator by decreasing the market value of their land was once more abandoned. I do not wish, gentlemen, to generalise on these facts; I do not wish to infer that what would be needless and mischievous in Bengal and Orissa may not be needful and useful for the time being in some parts of India where matters may have reached a more acute stage. But what I do wish to emphasize is that such remedies cannot permanently improve the condition of the cultivators; that in order to improve their condition, we must make it possible for them—as it is possible in Bengal—to save in good years against failure of harvest in bad years.

REAL CAUSE OF FAMINES, AND THE REMEDY.

Gentlemen, the real cause of the poverty of our agricultural population is simple and even obvious, if we have the courage and the honesty to seek for it and to grasp it. It is not over-population, for the population does not increase faster than in European countries, does not increase faster than the area of cultivation. It is not the natural improvidence of the cultivator, for those who know the Indian cultivator, will tell you that with all his ignorance and superstition, he is as provident as frugal, as shrewd in matters of his own interest as the cultivator in any part of the globe. The real cause of his wretchedness and indebtedness is that, except in Bengal and a few other tracts, the land assessment is so heavy that the cultivator is not able to save in good years enough to meet the failure of harvests in bad years. All our village industries, like spinning and weaving have been killed by a free competition with the steam and machinery of England. Our cultivators and even our village industrial classes therefore virtually depend on the soil as the one remaining source of their subsistence. The land assessments should therefore be made in a liberal and even a generous spirit. There is every desire in the high officials to make the assessments in a liberal spirit, but as the people have no voice in controlling these assessments, they are found in the actual working to be often illiberal and harsh. They do not leave the cultivators enough to be able to save; and cultivators therefore fall victims to famine whenever the harvests fail.

(Extract from the Inaugural Address of the President of the fifteenth Indian National Congress.)

THE CONSTITUTION OF THE CONGRESS.

Mr. R. N. Mudholkar submitted the report of the Sub-Committee appointed by the Madras Congress to draft new rules regarding the constitution of the Congress. The rules were as under:—

I. The object of the Indian National Congress shall be to promote by constitutional means the interest and the well-being of the people of the Indian Empire.

II. It shall ordinarily meet once a year at such time and in such place as shall have been resolved on by the last preceding Congress; Provided that the Indian Congress Committee may in case of necessity, change the place or time of the meeting of the Congress;

Provided also that in case of emergency the Indian Congress Committee may convene an extraordinary Session of the Congress at such time and place as may be determined by them.

III. It shall consist of delegates elected by political associations or other bodies and by public meetings.

IV. Its affairs shall be managed by a committee styled the Indian Congress Committee consisting of 30 members elected by the Congress, 26 of whom shall be elected upon the recommendation of the delegates of the respective provinces in Congress assembled in the manner herein below laid down that is to say:—

For Bengal including Assam 5; for Bombay, including Sind 5; for Madras 5; for North Western Provinces including Oudh 4; for Punjab 3, for Berar 2; for Central Provinces 2.

The term of office of the members of the Committee shall be the period intervening between two ordinary meetings of the Congress.

V. The Indian Congress Committee shall meet at least thrice a year, once immediately after the Congress, once during the year between the months of June and October as may be determined upon by the Committee, and once immediately before the Congress at the place where the Congress meets.

VI. The Indian Congress Committee shall have an Honorary Secretary and a paid Assistant Secretary, with suitable office staff for which a sum of Rs. 5,000 shall be granted annually, one-half of which shall be provided by the Reception Committee of the place where the last Congress is held, and the other half by the Reception Committee of the place where the next succeeding Congress is to be held.

The Secretary to the Indian National Congress shall be the Honorary Secretary of the Committee.

The Committee shall make its own rules for the conduct of business.

VII. Provincial Congress Committee shall be organized at the capitals of the different Presidencies and Provinces in India for the purpose of carrying on the work of political education throughout the year, by organizing District Committees, holding Provincial Conferences, and by such other means as they may deem proper in consultation with the Indian Congress Committee for furthering the objects of the Congress. They shall be the responsible agents of the Indian Congress Committee for their respective provinces, and shall submit annual reports of their work to that Committee.

VIII. The nomination of the President, the drafting of Resolutions, and all other business in connection with the Congress, shall be done by the Indian Congress Committee. It shall also, subject to the approval of the Congress, frame rules for the election of delegates and the conduct of the proceedings of the Congress.

IX. Rules and bye-laws shall be framed by the Provincial Congress Committee for the election of members, the conduct of their own proceedings and all other matters appertaining to their business. All such rules and bye laws shall be subject to the approval of the Indian Congress Committee.

X. A Committee styled the British Congress Committee shall be maintained in England which shall represent there the interests of the Indian National Congress. The amount requisite for the expenses of the said Committee shall be determined by the Congress, and the amount so voted shall be raised by the Congress Committee in such manner as may be determined upon by that body from time to time.

XI. The Indian Congress Committee shall take such steps, as they may deem fit, to raise a permanent fund for carrying on the work of the Indian National Congress; and such fund shall be invested in the name of 7 trustees, one from each province in India.

EMPLOYMENT OF NATIVE TROOPS.

Sir W. Rattigan writing to the London Times urges that the exclusion of the native troops from the Transvaal war is objectionable from the stand points of politics, ethics, commonsense and finance. He says:—

Politically I regard it as unwise, because it is calculated to make the splendid soldiery whom we could requisition from India feel that we not only distrust them, but fear their possible growing consciousness of strength. The prevalence of either feeling cannot but seriously and mischievously affect the *esprit de corps* of our native soldiers. They have hitherto taken a pride in their uniform, they have bravely helped to win us many a hard fought battle against our enemies, and the constant frontier and other wars in which they have stood shoulder to shoulder with our own white soldiers, have helped to create an intimate *camaraderie* between the Sikh, the Gurkha, and the British Tommy, which has inspired mutual respect and confidence. We have highly trained and disciplined our native troops and have taught them to feel a just pride in regarding themselves as soldiers of the Queen-Empress, for whom they have so often fought and bled. Is it politically wise to make them feel that we are afraid to let them show their prowess against our white enemies, even when fighting side by side with the British soldier? In the event of war with Russia on our North-Western Indian Frontier—surely not a very remote contingency—would we not have to depend largely on those very native troops? Ethically it is equally a mistake, because, amongst other reasons, it seems to treat our fellow Indian subjects as not an integral part of our great Empire, and not entitled to share in its glory, which should be the common inheritance of all subjects of Her Majesty.

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