

highest statesmanship, the truest political economy, the safest foundation for a permanent Empire.

I close with the words of the great American, William Jennings Bryan, who soon realized the true condition of India and her people, during his stay among them: "There is no justice in India."

+ + +

## THE ECONOMIC GRIEVANCES OF INDIA.

Extracts from an Essay on Imperialism, by G. P. Gooch, in "The Heart of Empire."

India is an agricultural country, the population of which has been from time immemorial engaged in work on the land. In order to reach the mass of the people a land tax has at all times been levied on the produce of the soil. Nothing could be more just; and the grievance consists not in the principle, but in the method of taxation. In earlier times the peasants paid their tax in kind; under English rule the produce of the soil is no longer legal tender. In former times the contribution rose and fell with the crop, and when there was no crop there was no taxation. Under British rule the land is compelled to pay a regular sum, fixed for a definite period of twenty or thirty years, for an irregular yield. The result is the same as in Russia. A large number of the peasantry is getting taxed off the land. In a bad year the *bunya*, or money-lender, is called in, and the cattle, next year's crop, and finally the land itself is mortgaged; for the yearly tribute must be paid. The official says quite truly that the bad years have been reckoned on in fixing the yearly tax; but few peasants possess enough land to make the surplus of a good year do duty for the deficit of a bad one. The peasants, though industrious and thrifty, live from hand to mouth. The extent to which this practice of levying money is carried was shown in the resolution of the Government to collect full tribute for 1898, which happened to be a good year, thus preventing the peasantry from recovering from the terrible famine of 1897, and preparing for the still worse visitation of 1899-1900. The third grievance in connection with the land tax is that it is as a rule excessive in quantity. The land systems of India are legion, and no general statement would be true of every part. Bengal has enjoyed the blessing of a Permanent Settlement for over a century; in other words, it has been exempt from the continual rising of the demand, and has in consequence been virtually immune from famine. But outside Bengal and the North-West Provinces it would not be untrue to say that the British demand is on the whole higher than the peasantry can meet—work as hard as they will—without getting into debt. Even the Secretary of State had to admit it had

been excessive in the Central Provinces. It is true enough that the land revenue demanded—we do not know whether it was obtained—by the Moghuls may have been as great as ours; but in the Moghul era the people were not wholly dependent on the crops. The introduction of European goods and the facilities afforded by railways to compete in the remotest parts of the peninsula have crushed the greater number of native industries—hand-loom, leather and metal work, and the manufacture of dyes. The official mind is satisfied that they are "the lightest taxed people in the world," forgetting that the lightness of the tax is relative to taxable capacity. The land and the land alone has now to bear the strain, and there is hardly a village outside Bengal throughout the length and breadth of India which has not sunk into debt in its attempt to bear it. The wide extent and the fatal character of this canker is but faintly realized in England. The evil has been intensified by the permission, introduced by English law, to alienate land; and under this law a vast quantity of land has passed out of the hands of its hereditary owners. The Government at last seems to be waking up to fatal consequences of this law, and has passed a bill to prevent further alienation of land in the Punjab. The measure, however, is little more than the locking of the stable door when the horse is gone, and cannot be expected to accomplish any good until the causes that produce the money-lender are themselves modified. A lighter rent alone can free the cultivators from the grip of the *bunya*. The two great famines coming in three years have revealed the utter lack of staying-power in the Indian peasant, and may bring a tardy blessing with them if they force the administration to consider whether it is wise to compel taxpayers to go on living on the edge of a precipice. The common explanation of famines by the improvidence of the people and the increase of population is utterly inadequate. No people in the world are more industrious or less extravagant (except in regard to funerals); and the increase of population is less than in England. The Famine Commissioners of 1898 declare of the laboring classes that their "liability to succumb, instead of diminishing, is possibly becoming more accentuated." . . .

+

A second economic grievance is the expense of [the British] administration. Since the Mutiny the Indian debt has doubled in a time of unbroken internal peace, and this despite the fact that the revenue is now thrice as great as in 1858. The taxpayers cannot understand why public money should be spent in decorative memorials to civil servants, nor can they be made to see the necessity for so many special trains and heav-

expenditure on official banquets. Again, they recognize that they benefit by many of the railways in time of famine; but they are by no means reconciled to the Government's policy in pledging the national credit to keep up the dividends of certain lines that seem to them more for the benefit of the promoters than of the community at large. The railways involve a loss of two millions a year, and the Famine Committee of 1898 declared that their further extension would be of no value as a precaution against famine. The greatest expense is, of course, involved in the maintenance of the existing military system, and all the more since England appears to regard the Indian army as a sort of reserve on which she draws when she requires aid in any part of the world. An army of a quarter of a million men naturally imposes an enormous additional burden on the resources of the people. It is generally admitted that the army of India is greater than is needed for internal security; in other words, it has an Imperial as well as a local value. This being so—the poverty of India apart—it seems fair that the Empire should pay for that portion of the force which is not needed for purely local purposes. It need scarcely be pointed out, too, that the squandering of millions in military adventures beyond the frontier, such as the Afghan Wars and the campaigns necessitated by the establishment of forts in distant positions—such as Chitral—provokes widespread indignation. And it is difficult to speak with due moderation of the decision of Lord Salisbury's Cabinet to throw the cost of the employment of Indian troops in the Sudan campaign of 1896 on the Indian taxpayer, despite the protest of the Viceroy, and in the teeth of the declaration of 1858 that Indian money should not be used for campaigns outside the country. The drain on the resources of the country would be bad enough if the money thus raised was spent in the country itself. But nearly a third of the total revenue is remitted to England in the form of Home Charges, dividends, pensions, etc., and part of the fifteen millions paid in salaries to European officials is sent as savings to Europe.

---

## BOOKS

---

### GREAT BRITAIN'S "COSTLY ABSURDITY."

**British Aristocracy and the House of Lords.** By Edward Carpenter. Published by A. C. Fifield, 44 Fleet St., E. C., London. 1908. Price, 6d. net.

"A foolish and somewhat vulgar anachronism," "a reactionary institution of such magnitude and dead weight as no other nation in the world can show," "a waste,"—with a few exceptions, of

course—"of dullness, commonplaceness and reaction," are a few of the author's names for the British aristocracy in this forward charge upon the Peers and their Parliament Chamber. Mr. Carpenter, however, believes more in the House than in the Lords. A Second Chamber is in his opinion "on the whole advisable," and he proceeds to "the practical question" of "how to remodel it with a view to rendering it . . . useful." He proposes three reforms: "(1). Life-peers (the actual title a matter of little importance). (2). Adequate reasons of useful service to be given for each creation—on democratic grounds more or less scheduled and recognized. (3). Limitation of number of members."

The essay is a reprint from *The Albany Review* and naturally, being from Mr. Carpenter's pen, is concentrated food, well-spiced.

ANGELINE LOESCH.

\* \* \*

### A CHRISTMAS SERMON.

**What Does Christmas Really Mean?** By John T. McCutcheon and Jenkin Lloyd Jones. Published by The Unity Publishing Co., Chicago. Price, 50 cents.

Sweet, simple and clear, avoiding all controversies and non-essentials, the life-story of the Christ in word and deed and influence, is told by a mother to her eager little boy. The brief twenty pages of the book are attractively bound and printed and with McCutcheon's drawing and its text are a dainty medium for the spirit within.

ANGELINE LOESCH.

---

## BOOKS RECEIVED

---

—Report of the Proceedings of the International Free Trade Congress, London, August, 1908. Chairman, the Rt. Hon. Lord Welby, G. C. B.; Treasurer, Russell Rea, Esq., M. P.; Secretary, J. A. Murray Macdonald, Esq., M. P. Full official report of the proceedings, with complete text of all speeches and papers at the Congress, together with reports of speeches at the Cobden Club dinner. Cloth bound. Published by the Cobden Club, Caxton House, Westminster, London, S. W., England. Price, 5s. net—\$1.25 net.

---

## PERIODICALS

---

The Socialist Review (London) contains in the October number two articles of exceptional merit, "The Remedy for Unemployment," by Joseph Fels and John Orr, and "Who Pays the Rates," by Josiah C. Wedgwood, M. P. Unemployment is a matter of interest to most of us at all times, but just at present outsiders are giving it attention, much after the manner of the darky's mule, who, if knocked down more than seven times in one day, dimly realized a change from "established usage." In the first of