

FINANCES OF INDIA, 1884-5.

9. Prince of Wales laid the foundation-stone of the Chapel of St. Anne's Asylum, Redhill.
 10. Important conference of the Liberal party, at which Mr. Gladstone announced that, in consequence of the amendment to the Franchise Bill passed by the House of Lords, all measures before the Commons would be abandoned, and an autumn Session held to pass the Franchise Bill.
 — Lords: Marriage with a Deceased Wife's Sister Bill withdrawn.
 — Commons: Statement by the Premier with regard to the autumn Session and the measures to be withdrawn.

11. Democratic Convention at Chicago nominate Mr. Cleveland, Governor of New York, for the Presidency.
 — Prince and Princess of Wales attended a Working Men's soirée at Bethnal-green Museum to promote the work of the Beaumont Trust Fund.

12. Prince of Wales laid the foundation-stone of a new bridge across the Thames at Putney.

14. Lords: Lord Weymss gave notice of his intention to move a resolution to the effect that the House of Lords do proceed with the Franchise Bill on the understanding that the Government bring in a Redistribution Bill in November.
 National Fête celebrated in Paris. A German flag torn down by the mob and burned in the Place de la Concorde.
 — Meetings held in various parts of the country urging the Government to force through the Franchise Bill.

15. Franchise Bill agitation continued. Meetings in condemnation of the action of the Lords.
 16. Accident on Manchester, Sheffield, and Lincolnshire Railway near Penistone, twenty-three persons killed and many injured.

17. Lords: Lord Weymss's motion to pass the Franchise Bill rejected by 182 to 132.
 — Greeley Relief Expedition, under the command of Captain Schley, in the *Thetis* and *Bear*, arrived at St. John's, N.B., with seven survivors. Eight having been found alive, but one afterwards died.

18. Two policemen shot by burglars in Hoxton.
 — Wimbledon: St. George's Challenge Vase won by Private T. Osborne, 1st Warwick.

21. Great demonstration in favour of the Franchise Bill in Hyde Park.
 22. Private Gallant, 8th Middlesex, won the Queen's Prize at Wimbledon with 110 points.
 23. The new St. Paul's School at West Kensington opened.

— Cricket: A representative English team beat the Australians by an innings and five runs.
 24. Wimbledon: Elcho Shield won by Ireland with 1583 points.
 25. Reported that the French had attacked the Hovas on June 27.
 — Earthquake at Massowah.
 28. Mrs. Weldon obtained £1000 damages from Dr. Semple for signing certificate of insanity.

29. Conference on Colonial Confederation at Westminster Palace Hotel.

— British Medical Association opened at Belfast.

30. Cholera reported at St. Petersburg.

— Liberal Conference at St. James's Hall on the action of the House of Lords.

31. Libel action brought by Mr. Bolton, Crown Solicitor for Tipperary, against Mr. O'Brien, M.P., for libels in *United Ireland*, resulted in a verdict for £350.
 — Goodwood Cup: St. Simon, 1; Ossian, 2; Friday, 3.

AUGUST.

1. Commons: Motion by Mr. Gladstone that for the remainder of the Session the House go into Committee of Supply on Saturday without debate on notices carried by 123 to 23.
 Jubilee of the Anti-Slavery Society celebrated at the Guildhall, under the presidency of the Prince of Wales.

— Manchester Ship Canal Bill thrown out by a Select Committee of the House of Commons.
 — Captain Pollard, of her Majesty's ship *Defence*, ordered to be dismissed his ship for causing a collision with the *Valiant* in Bantry Bay.

— Warwick Assizes: John Daly sentenced to penal servitude for life for being in possession of explosives for an unlawful purpose, and Patrick Egan to twenty years.
 — Australians defeated the Players at the Oval by ten wickets.

4. Franchise agitation in Birmingham: speeches by Messrs. Bright, Chamberlain, &c.

5. Lords: Earl Granville announced the appointment of Lord Northbrook as High Commissioner to Egypt, accompanied by Sir Evelyn Baring.

— Commons: A Vote of Credit for £300,000 for the relief of Khartoum carried by 174 to 14.

6. Commons: Vote for Queen's Colleges, Ireland, carried by 106 to 35.

Formation in London of a League to Promote a Reform of the House of Lords.

7. Letter from General Gordon to the *Mudir* of Dongola published.

— Commons: Vote for the funeral expenses of the Duke of Albany carried by 69 to 23.

11. Remarkable heat in England. Thunderstorms in many parts of the country, accompanied by loss of life.

12. The Earl of Lauderdale died from being struck by lightning while grouse-shooting.

13. South Devon Election: Mr. J. N. Tremayne returned unopposed.

— Parliament prorogued by Commission.

20. The Prince and Princess of Wales visit Newcastle to open a Park, Natural History Museum, and Library, the former the gift of Sir William Armstrong to the town.

— Ross and Cromarty Election: Mr. R. C. Munro Ferguson (L), 717; Mackenzie (C), 334; Macdonald (Land Law Reformer), 248.

From the lucid statement made by the Under-Secretary just before Parliament was prorogued, the financial position of India was seen to be not only sound, but improving. The closed accounts of 1883-4 exhibit a surplus of nearly half a million above the estimated surplus: and for 1884-5 there were good reasons for expecting the same. Taking the revenue for the current year at £70,564,000, with an expenditure of £70,241,000, there remains a surplus of £323,000. The actual taxation imposed on the people of India was £40,361,000, and, if the land rent of £21,888,000 be deducted, leaves a total amount of taxation of something over 18 millions, or an average of 14 annas 9 pies per head. Examining the separate heads of the revenue, there will be a reduction of £1,378,000 on the opium revenue. In regard to expenditure, a gradual reduction of the charge of the Debt was expected, the reduction in the last year being £206,000; there was, however, an increase on the telegraphic service, cost of law, justice, police, and education. The cost of the Army will occasion no great increase, the gross charge for 1883-4 being £16,121,000: the estimate for 1884-5 was £15,238,000. During the past year from £60,000 to £70,000 was spent in bounties of 120 rupees per man, to meet a slackness of recruiting for the Army, and an increase in the number of men who have taken their discharge, 7000 to 8000 of whom had been re-engaged. As to exchanges, these are always subject to great fluctuations, the decrease in 1882-3 being £476,000, followed by an increase of £779,000, and by a decrease again in the coming year of £522,000. The gross charge of the ordinary works for the three years under review was £20,094,000 (the net cost for the year 1881-5 being £5,171,000) and the gross receipts only £2,575,000, the cost to the Indian Government being £17,519,000 for the three years. A detailed examination of items shows a heavy expenditure; but this is in no way increasing, there being a reduction of rather over half a million during the current year. As to productive public works, the gross receipts for 1884-5 will, it is estimated, be £13,631,000, there being progressive increases of £746,000 and £661,000 in the receipts of the former and current years. The charges, including everything but loss by exchange, were estimated for 1884-5 at £1,088,000; this gives an advance in net receipts of £609,000 in two years, and being due to an increase in the earnings of East Indian and State railways. With regard to the question of railway extension in India, the policy that railway extension shall not subject the people of India to increased taxation will be adhered to; but with regard to the extension of railways generally, it is more than probable that the Indian Government may have come to Parliament next Session for power to borrow in England. The total amount of the Indian debt is £246,948,000, against which there is the set off of public works, guaranteed railway loans to native States and municipalities, and other assets, of the value of £182,367,000, leaving uncovered liabilities to the amount of £64,581,000. According to the latest information, the revenue of 1883-4 will, it is expected, exceed the revised estimate by half a million—the results of the railways being considerably better, and the cost of the army some £100,000 less, than estimated. The year 1882-3 is of exceptional interest in the history of Indian finance. From the closed accounts of that year we see the results of the changes made by Sir Evelyn Baring in the customs duties and in the salt tax. Several duties were swept away, and the salt tax was reduced by about 25 per cent. The consequent loss to the revenue was put down in the estimates for the year at £2,800,000. It has proved in the event to be £2,313,000. The net loss on salt was put down at £1,400,000; it was really only £1,169,000, the lowered price having given a sharp stimulus to consumption. There was a progressive increase on the Post Office, and a small increase from the Telegraph Service. In the estimates for 1884-5 a full allowance is made for a prospective falling off in the opium revenue. In 1883-4 the opium crop was bad, and the stock was so far reduced that the sales for the following year had to be kept down. At the same time the expenses of cultivation were greater. The crop for 1884-5 promised better results. It was hoped it would be an extraordinary crop. The loss on both sides of the opium account was to be expected. The sales, it was thought, would bring in less, while the outgoings would be larger than before, to the benefit, of course, of a more distant year which is not yet taken into account at all, and which will enjoy the benefit of the increased produce which the current year may yield. In each of the three years under review there have been extraordinary outgoings. The year 1882-3 is charged with the cost of the expedition to Egypt. In 1883-4 a clear million was applied to paying arrears of non-effective charges. The next year's accounts are affected by fluctuations in opium revenue.

The disputed question of loss by exchange by no means involves the unmixt loss it was credited with. In payment from India to England the rupee has been calculated as worth two shillings. It is really worth a good deal less, since it takes twelve and a half rupees to make an English sovereign. The difference between the calculated and the actual value being put down under the heading of loss by exchange means only that the rupee, as an article of merchandise, is of less value than it used to be. If the price of silver were to go up, the loss by exchange would be lessened or entirely disappear. But the change would probably be far from an unmixed benefit to India. Rent and taxes are paid in silver coinage, so that the lower the value of silver, the lower the taxation which the Indian native bears. His crops, too, are bought and paid for in silver, so that he gains considerably as a producer. If he travels by railway, he pays his fare in silver, and pays therefore less than he would have to pay if the value of silver were raised. On the whole case, the taxation of India is lighter all round than the figures seem to imply, and the expenditure of the Government a good deal less.

AGRICULTURE, 1884.

The agricultural returns of Great Britain for 1884, collected down to June. The acreage under cultivation for the five principal crops was as follows:—Wheat, 2,676,477; barley, 2,159,485; oats, 2,892,576; potatoes, 562,344; and hops, 69,258. Compared with the previous year, 1883, these figures show an increase in the area devoted to wheat of 2.4 per cent, and increases in potatoes and hops of 3.5 per cent and 1.8 per cent respectively; while there are decreases in the area occupied by barley of 5.8 per cent, and by oats of 2.8 per cent.

The live stock in Great Britain at the same period numbered 6,241,127 cattle, 16,371,290 sheep, and 9,665,937 lambs (total sheep and lambs, 26,037,217), and 2,582,323 pigs. Compared with 1883, these figures show an increase of 4.7 per cent in cattle, of 2.6 per cent in sheep, of 6 per cent in lambs, and a decrease of 1.4 per cent in pigs.

THE THAMES AND THE PUBLIC HEALTH.

Few persons are aware how enormously the demand for water has increased, as the metropolis keeps spreading over fresh ground. In 1850 (thirty-four years ago) the daily supply was 44,383,332 gallons, which had risen in six years' time to 81,000,000 gallons. By 1871 the figures had reached to 106,924,244, and in 1879 to 134,443,669. At the commencement of the present year the amount stood at 139,569,229 gallons, of which rather more than half was supplied from the river—namely, 70,869,659 gallons. If we look at the question in another way it shows very strikingly the continuous extension of London:—In 1820 there were 127,000 houses supplied; in 1827, 174,205; and in 1850, 270,581; in 1856, 328,561; in 1871, 487,592; in 1879, 564,620; in 1884, 665,437; and of the latter, 321,598, or rather less than half, were supplied by the river companies. As the tendency of London is to increase westward, the burden of the extra water supply will fall upon the five river companies; and in the Thames basin above Hampton there is a large and increasing population of a million and a half, also depending upon the river more or less. The high farming of the day also assists in harming the river, for the water is now so rapidly carried off the land that the very feeders of the main stream and its tributaries are lessened.