

Rajah received at once an honourable and substantial recompense for the loss incurred. The sovereign of Cochin almost spontaneously abandoned them, notwithstanding his revenue was impaired in consequence to no inconsiderable degree.

We believe there would be no great difficulty in effecting a mediation with respect to them in the other native states between the merchants who convoy their packages of cotton and the princes who levy duty upon them. At present the system prevailing in the Nizam's country may be described as a thoroughly organised levy of black-mail. Not merely does the sovereign farm out the duties yearly to contractors, who are authorised to take all that they can get, but the same system prevails in every petty jaghire and zemindary occupied by his dependents. Naturally enough might Sir J. Hogg inquire of Captain Reynolds, who mentioned this fact in his evidence, how, under these circumstances, the merchants ever contrived to get their produce conveyed to the coast? and the answer of the latter illustrated in a singular way the ingenuity and mercantile ability of the Hindoo man of business.

A firm is composed of bankers, under the name of Hoondakurs, who, as soon as the transit duties are let to the contractors, send round to bargain with them severally for the transit of so many thousand loaded bullocks. If one is exorbitant, another is tried, though the track which he commands makes the route infinitely more circuitous; and thus, at length, a passage is secured. When this has been effected, the merchant who wishes to transmit his packages bargains with the Hoondakurs for the portion he requires of the privilege thus purchased. The cotton is then entrusted to Brijarries, a kind of gipsy tribe, whose hereditary vocation is that of carriers. They pack it in parcels of about 240 lb. each upon the backs of the small bullocks of the country. The herds of pack oxen amount frequently to thousands each. Every package is loaded in the morning and removed at night. Their path is, for the above reasons, often very devious, and months are consumed in the journey. The burthen is sometimes dirtied, sometimes damaged by the rains and not unfrequently in part eaten by the oxen; but this very cotton, in search of a market under difficulties, often comes to hand at last in good condition. It is well known both in London and Liverpool as the Oomrawattee cotton from the valley of Berar, inferior to few, if any, of the native qualities in fineness and strength, though, from the shortness of staple in general, it cannot be put in competition at Manchester with the Uplands of the United States. Of this it is clear that a cheaper and more certain kind

of conveyance would procure a much larger supply, and though no doubt the quality of American last mentioned would remain as heretofore, the consols (so to speak) of the trade, we have good reason to believe many spinners would view it, especially if it were in first-rate condition, with very different feelings from those with which they now regard the ordinary dirty Surats. We may add that the cotton grown in the native states, and conveyed as we have described, frequently forms the bulk of the export both to England and China.

But supposing the cotton trade generally between England and Hindostan could be largely extended, an advantage would necessarily accrue to the company of hardly less importance than those to which we have alluded. It is indispensable that a remittance of four millions annually should be made to England in payment of many charges, such as the dividends of stock, pensions, and retired allowances, the cost of military and other stores, and the like. It is, in fact, the only tribute paid to the empire by the largest and most important dependency, and in prosperous times must be considered as absolutely trifling. Probably as much, or more, was wasted in mere pageantry and ostentatious architecture by those of its native emperors under whose sway it reached the zenith of its prosperity; and it needs but little reflection to discover that, whichever way capital is sunk unproductively, the result will be the same upon the economical condition of a country. Four millions spent upon idols or elephants is obviously as much lost to the traders, manufacturers, and agriculturists of any kingdom, as if the same amount, whether in the form of merchandise or the precious metals, were bodily exported to the East India Docks. If no poverty ensued in the former case, it can hardly be said to be the cause of it in the latter. Still, insignificant as this sum is when we take into account the extent and resources of India, and the number and industry of its population, there is a great and not by any means decreasing difficulty in making a remittance of it. The direct exports to England are very insufficient for the purpose, and there are besides the imports to be paid for by them. The cultivation of silk does not seem to advance. In sugar, during the past year, there has been some decrease; in indigo, a very considerable one, and indeed in this article, almost a monopoly of India, production seems already to have approached the limits of consumption; cotton, as usual, seems to vary inversely, as the supply of American and the European demand for other productions is so limited as to preclude any of them from being considered great staples. The indirect remittances, it is generally known, are made by bills from China—in other words, by tea

and silk. The trade between India and China is principally in opium and cotton; the former is a contraband importation, and must, being a mere luxury, have a certain limit to its demand, in cotton the United States have already entered into competition with India, and, it is to be feared, will in years of abundant crops seriously interfere with its Chinese market. If, then, both the direct and indirect means of remitting the sums in question are further diminished in any great degree, the ruinous process of remitting bullion must of necessity increase, and none will, from their position, be subjected to so severe a loss as the East India Company and its servants.

We have no reason to believe that the company is insensible to the wants of the commerce and general well-being of its subjects, with which, in fact, its own interests are involved and identified. A wilful disregard of these is an accusation seldom brought against it, though its tardy deliberations occasionally appear to militate against the timely adoption of changes which to others seem desirable and unquestionable. It cannot, however, be charged with neglecting the staple produce in question. From the year 1788 down to, we believe, the present moment, careful experiments have been made, and no cost spared to procure minute intelligence as to the varieties which might be raised with profit in different parts of the country, the modes by which the Ryot could be induced to cultivate the better sorts, and the measures which should be adopted to bring the produce to Europe in a condition to secure a ready market. We trust events will show neither time, trouble, nor money have been wasted. The causes of the hitherto unsatisfactory state of the trade are clearly pointed out, and a knowledge of the malady being established, a physician of moderate ingenuity will not fail to discover the remedy. The relative profit which may be obtained by the selection of the proper plants and their localities is sufficiently determined to preclude any loss for the future, arising from ignorance upon that point. The readiness of the native to cultivate under certain conditions an improved species new to his experience is placed beyond a doubt, and it is equally ascertained that the smallest additional encouragement will induce him to deliver a clean and marketable commodity. The company has, in short, thoroughly pioneered the way for private enterprise, and more, we imagine, no reasonable man will require of a government. More, however, it has done, and we must, in common justice to it, observe, that it does not seem to have met with a due acknowledgment of its services. After a costly course of experiments, continued through a long series of years, unsuccessful in most instances till the scientific ability of

eminent men like Dr. Royle was employed in analysing and classifying botanical facts according to the recognised rules of that branch of natural philosophy, the company not only distributed American seed and established farms for the introduction of its culture, but, to obviate a difficulty that was pressed upon their notice from all quarters—namely, that the native cultivator would never be induced to grow a new variety except a market were secured for him, gave orders to their civil servants to purchase from the grower all the produce he might offer. As the new sort of cotton prospered well in some districts, and the Ryot was certain to be remunerated if he complied with a few reasonable requisitions, a surprising acreage was put under the new tillage, and abundant crops were raised. The cotton was sold by the company, and a considerable profit was realised by the speculation. A moralist or a manufacturer might have congratulated the Indian Government that fortune had rewarded its merits with unusual discrimination. The Bombay merchants, on the contrary, took a practical view of the matter, and complained that they were crushed by the competition of the company in making their purchases. In deference to their representations, the obnoxious orders were withdrawn. We believe, however, that the effect of the revocation has not proved favourable to the cultivation of American seed cotton.

Besides, however, the complaints of the merchants, the East India Company has had to undergo accusations of a much graver character in reference to the agricultural state of its territory, and these are so intimately connected with our present inquiry, that we should present a very imperfect view of the question if we omitted to take some notice of them. The principal part of the revenue consists of a tax upon cultivated land, and this, it is alleged, is so oppressive to the Ryots that the cultivation of cotton has been in some parts hindered and in others checked by its operation. Districts have been pointed out, formerly very productive of this commodity but now giving a much less yield, and the destitution of the Ryot, reduced to pauperism by taxation, is assigned as a cause of the diminution. It is, however, clear that there can be no ground for this charge wherever the cotton land has been turned to other account. In former times different kinds of produce were subject to different rates of taxation, upon the supposition that one kind of crop was more valuable than another. This system has been long abolished, and the land itself, without reference to the kind of cultivation adopted, is taxed according to its natural fertility. The Ryot, therefore, plants what in his judgment is most profitable, and we can see no reason to impugn the justice or wisdom of the

company in permitting this liberty of choice. There is no evidence of cotton land to any great extent (we speak of recent years) having become waste, so that if the assessment has any prejudicial influence upon cultivation it must weigh upon all produce generally, cotton of course included. Unfortunately for a clear comprehension of the subject, the most uncertain word in the language is frequently applied to the revenue raised by the assessment. It is called *rent* by the disputants upon either side, and if a payment in respect of holding land be rent, the term is accurately used. Thus we are told that it is impossible for the Ryot, burdened with a heavy rack-rent, to compete with the rent-free American planter. Now, if the established definition of rent be adopted—namely, that it is the difference of value between land of the greatest fertility or most advantageous position and land of the lowest class yielding profit from cultivation—it is quite clear that the accidental fact of a landlord receiving this difference cannot by any possibility affect the amount or cost of produce raised. A farmer in the Lothians will fill his barn as well and surely as if he were the proprietor in fee simple; and if the latter retain the land in his own hands, he will measure his profits by the amount he obtains exclusive of the true rent. In such case, as far as the cost of production is concerned, he is in precisely the same circumstances as the farmer. But, further, in point of fact, the greater portion of the American cotton plantations virtually have, and from time to time always must have, payments equivalent to rent made in respect of them. It will hardly be denied that they are saleable, and change hands. Putting the value of plant and stock out of the question, the price paid for the land itself is nothing more or less than the present value of the rent for ever. It appears, therefore, that the incident of rent, which it is beyond the power of man to create or annihilate, cannot be that which places the American on a more advantageous footing than the Hindoo with respect to cotton growing.

Another question arises when we are told that the assessment in India is substantially that which is called rent in some parts of Ireland—a sum limited only by the moderation of the demand, and, therefore, liable to trench upon the profits of labour, and even the subsistence of the labourer. This subject has been discussed for the last fifty years, with great ability and great earnestness, by the ablest men who have been engaged in conducting or denouncing the government of our Oriental possessions. From Burke to Mr. G. Thompson, from Warren Hastings to Mr. Mangles, there has been no lack of will or talent to attack or defend our policy. On very recent occasions we have heard