

## EDITORIALS.

## HINDOSTAN.

As a portion of the great Eastern Question, the condition of Hindostan and the British rule there is highly important. This whole Oriental question comes up periodically for discussion by the press when more exciting topics grow scarce. One Mr. Robert H. Elliot has recently renewed the interest and controversy as regards the East Indian portion of the problem, by the publication of a pamphlet, in which he maintains a rather misanthropic position. He presents the Indian difficulties under eleven heads, as follow—

- "1. The British colonial policy, which has robbed India of her native manufactures, and compelled her to rely for support entirely on the soil.
- "2. Poverty of the country.
- "3. Financial mis-management.
- "4. Russian proximity and intrigues.
- "5. Difficulty of recruiting the Indian regiments, while wages in England are high and emigration to America, etc., easy.
- "6. A native population increasing beyond the means of the soil to support them.
- "7. Danger from the spirit of inquiry and skepticism with which the native leaders have been imbued.
- "8. The financial existence of the Indian Empire depends on the fortuitous circumstance that we are still able to force opium on the Chinese."
- "9. Exploitation of the soil by neglect to manure, and by undue encroachments on the pasture lands.
- "10. Increasing difficulty of relieving famines that must, from the nature of things, increase in frequency.
- "11. Childish condition of the people, brought about by over-paternal government."

These constitute a rather formidable list of difficulties, but to them Mr. Elliot adds a few more, thus—

"We have stopped Suttee, legalized the re-marriage of widows, forbidden infanticide, stopped human sacrifices, forbidden religious suicides, put an end to the Thugs, fallen with extraordinary vigor on tigers, wolves, panthers and even snakes."

In consequence of all these provisions in behalf of human life, Mr. Elliot contends that a great increase of population has come about in India, so that it numbers to-day 250,000,000 of inhabitants, increasing at the rate of one per cent. per annum, and threatens to amount to 500,000,000 in seventy years more.

Mr. Elliot says that ninety-five per cent. of the inhabitants are tillers of the soil, that all the cultivated portions of the same are occupied, that each person is reduced to the lowest limit of support, and that periodical famines cannot be averted.

Then comes the great question of M. E.'s pamphlet—what shall be done as the inhabitants increase? This momentous problem he does not solve. He rather claims that nothing can be done, but that things must have their course, resulting in a burst up, a violent change, a revolution, a social cataclysm, a social and political deluge. He thinks that the holders of \$225,000,000 of Indian securities should sell out. Curious advice, for where are the buyers of so much questionable stock to come from, and what inducement have they to become purchasers of and investors in such uncertain property? There are not many people anxious to purchase an interest in a volcano.

On the other hand, those who do not accept Mr. E.'s rather alarming views, assert that his startling statements are unsupported by proof, that there are no means of determining that the Indian population increases, that therefore Mr. E.'s argument is substantially baseless, that it is begging the point,

and that his conclusions consequently are untrustworthy and cannot be received.

## THE LICK TRUST.

THE Lick Estate goes into chancery by the means of a bill in equity. The Trustees have filed a complaint against Mr. Lick and his beneficiaries, praying for leave to resign their trust and that other trustees may be appointed, for the reason that Mr. Lick's revocation has clouded their title to the property and they are unable to fulfil the requirements of the trust. Able counsel are employed on both sides, and each side is confident it is in the right. It would hardly have done for such an immense amount of means as is covered by the trust to have been conveyed to purposes of beneficence without the lawyers having the chance of a handsome pick at it. It would not have been in accordance with "civilization." Says the *Sacramento Record-Union*, "This new proceeding renders it certain that a complicated and tedious maze of litigation is destined to envelop, and not impossibly in the end consume, the Lick Estate."

The following is the prayer of the Trustees, filed in court, April 17—

"Wherefore the plaintiffs pray that this honorable Court will by its judgment and decree:

"First—Accept the several resignations of these plaintiffs.

"Second—Appoint Trustees in the place and stead of the plaintiffs.

"Third—Settle, adjust and determine the account of these plaintiffs as such Trustees.

"Fourth—Allow and direct these plaintiffs to pay over to such succeeding Trustees the net balance of cash remaining in the hands of the plaintiffs after deducting all lawful disbursements and proper allowances.

"Fifth—Allow and direct these plaintiffs to transfer and deliver to such succeeding Trustees all of the said trust property remaining in their hands, real, personal and mixed, and effects of every kind belonging and appertaining to said trust, and to make all necessary and proper deeds of conveyance, so as to divest these plaintiffs of all of said trust property and the title thereto, and fully invest such succeeding Trustees with the same.

"Sixth—Discharge these plaintiffs entirely from the said trust and all duties imposed upon them under and by virtue of the said deeds above referred to.

"And the plaintiffs further pray that they may have such further and other relief as is meet in the premises and agreeable to equity."

A LADY'S VALEDICTORY.—Miss La Grange, upon relinquishing the temporary charge of the editorial department of the *Santa Barbara, Cala., Press*, thus expressed her sentiments on retiring from the tripod—

"If any undreamed of combination of circumstances ever compels us to take editorial control of a newspaper again, we shall have a masculine dummy placed conspicuously in the front office to do the heavy responsible, while I supply "copy" through some convenient hole in the wall. Then if we chance to do anything good the paper will receive the credit, while anything supremely ridiculous will be taken as a matter of course, and not considered as feminine nonsense. If any of our enemies have suffered at our editorial hands we are sorry—that we did not make them suffer more while we had the opportunity; and our greatest regret is for the things we have not said."

Must the mixing of the editorial "we" with the personal "I" in one paragraph be considered as one of the little bits of "feminine nonsense?" If so, the fewer such bits the better.

There are in the city of New York 4,000 lawyers, of whom the small minority of 500 do about all the business.

## BEAUTIES OF RING RULE.

*Peculative Pictures from Nordhoff's Letters to the New York Herald.*

Demagoguery at a Discount—How Arkansas was wronged and Robbed—Six years of Public Plunder—How Public Debts are Heaped up—Cords of Scrip—Ten Cents on the Dollar—Six Cents on the Dollar—Swindling Despotism—Some New Tricks—Trickery and Trickery—Advanced Politics—How to Serve the Public—Unbounded Corruption—Big Steals and Little Steals—Republican Government Turned into Broad Farce—How to Sink a Country.

LITTLE ROCK, March 25, 1875.

The State of Arkansas celebrates to-day a great deliverance. By proclamation of Governor Garland this day is kept as one of thanksgiving for the action of Congress which, it is hoped and believed, restored the State to permanent and peaceful self-government. Here, in the capital, the day has been singularly quiet. Banks and shops were mostly closed; many people went to church, there was turkey for dinner; and there were, among the older and substantial citizens, not a few heartfelt words of gratitude for quiet and peace, and the hope of prosperity. And that, so far as one could see, was all. The streets were not crowded, though the day was as long as a June day with us; I heard absolutely no political discussion either in streets or hotels; Poker Jack's arrival in the morning did not create even a ripple; and though there are probably a good number of disappointed men among the adherents of Brooks, it looks here very much as though both parties were glad to see the battle ended.

## WHY THEY ARE THANKFUL.

The truth is, it was time for strife to end. Nobody of either party who had anything, even his labor, to lose, could any longer afford it. Here are a few figures which prove it. Arkansas has no less than 650,000 people. It has about 120,000 voters. These owed in 1868, when reconstruction began in this State, about \$3,500,000 and had \$319,000 in cash in their treasury. The debt was State debt. The counties owed little or nothing. To-day, after seven years, the State owes at least \$15,700,000, and most of the counties have debts of their own sufficient to make them bankrupt. And for this huge indebtedness, which amounts, for State, counties, town and school districts, to probably \$20,000,000, the people have nothing to show, except some miles of railroad, on which they must pay for their passage whenever they travel. There are no new public buildings; neither science nor the arts have been advanced; the old State House looks as dilapidated as when the reconstruction began, and has been changed in nothing except having its door lintels mutilated that a Brooks cannon might be squeezed into the hall; the schools are almost all closed because the school fund was stolen, and Little Rock is unpaved, though the conquerors of 1868 issued nearly shinplasters enough to have all the streets hand somely paved, and bonds enough besides to make dry crossings at the corners.

The State debt alone amounts to-day to more than \$15 for every voter. State, county, township and school debts, including scrip of all kinds, would probably bring the voters in debt \$175 a head. And the whole of this prodigious burden has been laid upon an impoverished and never very prosperous people in seven years.

## HOW IT WAS DONE.

Arkansas was, in 1868, a tempting prize to speculators. It had a trivial debt, a handsome little sum in cash in the treasury, hardly any railroads, and a people singularly innocent of political wiles. The young and enterprising men who then flocked in and seized power and who held it so many years had had some experience in what we call "politics." "We showed them some new tricks," said one of them to me; "the damned fools didn't know a thing about organization. They just went around the State making stump speeches, and thought that was politics. But that thing's played out."

The new regime framed a consti-

tution admirably suited to their ends, of which I shall speak further on. And then they began the real work of plunder with an act granting State aid bonds to railroads to the extent of 800 miles, at \$15,000 per mile, or \$10,000 for such roads as had also land grants; Under this law 271 miles of road were built of which the Fort Smith road is well built and well planned for 100 miles and is to be completed. It has received \$1,000,000 of bonds. The Memphis and Little Rock Company built 45 miles and received \$1,200,000, or \$750,000 more than it should have got. The Ouachita Company built 28 miles and got \$600,000 or \$180,000 more than it should have got. The Arkansas Central built 33 miles and got \$1,350,000; under the law it was entitled to but \$570,000. This was Senator Dorsey's road. The Pine Bluff built 70 miles and got \$1,200,000, or \$150,000 more than its share. The whole issue of railroad aid bonds made by the State in less than four years amounts to \$5,350,000. Many of the roads were not needed; all but the Fort Smith and the Memphis are unfinished and will for some time remain so; \$1,110,000 more bonds were issued than even these fragments of roads were entitled to; the roads were to pay the interest, but of course did not, and the State now owes the whole sum, and when it can must pay the interest as well as the principal. Citizens of Little Rock point out to the visitor a number of pleasant residences at the new or court end of the straggling town, which, they say, were built by the men who handled these bonds.

## LEEVEE BONDS.

Next, in 1871, were issued \$3,005,846 in levee bonds. The law authorizing this issue provided that no levees should be built except on the application of a majority of the property holders to be benefitted, and then only in a specified way, and the land benefitted was held for the payment of interest and principal of the bonds. Regular surveys were to be made and competent engineers were to decide, after all, whether the levee should be built. In practice, one or two engineers and half a dozen contractors made a Ring and built levees wherever they pleased; no formal petitions were required, no proper surveys made; logs and timber, and even flour and beef barrels were crammed into the bank, and meantime the Levee Commissioner, Benjamin Thomas, issued bonds whenever anybody whom he knew asked for them, and actually kept no books to show to whom, for what work, or when they were issued. The first freshet washed most of these levees away, and of those that stood, many were so misplaced that planters were ruined because the levees, intended to keep the water out, only kept it in. Fortunately the contractors and swindlers took their pay and plunder in bonds; the swindle was too gross and the bonds fell in value till they sold on the market for six or eight cents on the dollar, and can now be bought for that. The planters resisted in the courts the payment of interest demanded of them, and so carelessly had the whole work been done that the courts have held them exempt, because the most simple forms of law had not been complied with, and it is believed that the Levee Ring failed to get rich by its plunder, but the State owes on these bonds still.

## SCRIP OR SHINPLASTERS.

Next came the issue of scrip. The taxes and bonds were not enough for those monstrous robbers. They began to issue State, county, township and even school scrip—notes of hand of these corporations, some interest bearing. They issued State scrip at such a rate that by May, 1874, \$3,240,000 of this stuff had been taken up and destroyed, and there is supposed to be \$1,500,000 of it afloat now.

## AMUSING MINOR FRAUDS.

But these big thefts are not nearly as amusing as the smaller ones. One Tankersley, speaker of the assembly, for instance, got the people of Clark County to issue \$100,000 in bonds to the Ouachita Valley Railroad, of which he was president. He found a broker in New York who offered him eighty per cent for these bonds, on condition that he would get a responsible bank to guarantee the payment of the interest for five years. He deposited with the bank \$30,000, which was the interest for five years at six per

cent; received at once \$80,000 for his bonds, and pocketed \$50,000, by this pretty transaction. The town of Camden in Ouachita Co., subscribed \$50,000, which he also pocketed; and he ran in debt for the little work he did on the railroad, and when he had got his money ran away himself to Colorado.

In 1873 Faulkner county was formed out of fragments of surrounding counties. This making new counties was a custom of the reconstructors. They thus created new offices. The new Faulkner county had no debt. It had no public buildings, and has none yet, except an eight-by-ten Court House given it by a Methodist church. It contains 7,000 people and has a property valuation of about \$900,000. Two young New Yorkers, Benton Turner and Charles Landers, were appointed Sheriff and County Clerk by the Governor. They collected the first year about \$40,000 in taxes, and this being insufficient for their uses they issued county scrip for \$50,000 more.

They collected the taxes in greenbacks and turned them in in depreciated State scrip, some of which they bought at thirty-five cents on a dollar. They sold offices, released prisoners, engaged in fraudulent registration, and finally they departed with their plunder, and the State knows them no more.

In Little Rock the collector of taxes openly engaged in brokerage, took out a federal license as a broker, and then drove a thriving trade with the citizens when they came to pay their taxes. You must understand that all State and county scrip was receivable at par for taxes. If a citizen had to pay \$50 for taxes, he might buy scrip at thirty cents and pay it at par. But the collector bought scrip beforehand, when the market was low, and made his own bargain with the citizen. It is said he made his office worth \$100,000 a year. His way was to demand a moiety of the tax, but in greenbacks. For this he gave a receipt in full. Then he kept the greenbacks, and turned into the treasury the scrip he had bought up cheaply. This atrocious form of swindling became so universal that I have been told only one county tax collector in the whole State has uniformly turned into the treasury the same money which he received; and this when the allowances of the assessors and collectors were so great that in some years it cost twenty per cent. to collect the State revenue.

The reconstructors were wise in their generation. They not only robbed at wholesale and retail, but they took care to preserve their own supremacy. The constitution of 1868 gave the Governor the appointment of almost all the local officers, even to the justices of the peace and registrars of elections. The Governor, of course, selected his own adherents, and did not scruple to send them from Little Rock, sometimes a hundred miles away into a strange county. So loosely was business conducted that when the new county of Howard was created, in 1873 one Hawkins, an illiterate carpenter of Little Rock, being appointed County Clerk, began his career by having county scrip printed before he even went down to take up his office, and issued the first of this scrip in Little Rock in payment for an ambulance to take his family to Howard county. Scrip of this county is now worth from ten to fifteen cents—and no wonder.

Again, in Little Rock the merchants got alarmed at the over issue of scrip in 1869, and took the plates from which these shinplasters were printed from the Mayor's office and destroyed them. But presently it was discovered that no account had been kept by the mayor of the quantity printed and issued, and to this day, though \$10,000 worth of the stuff has been redeemed, more comes in, and no man can tell how much remains behind.

There is a small bridge in Eagle township, near Little Rock, which cost to build it \$500. Jack Agery, a colored man, was engaged to make some repairs on it. He brought in a bill for \$900; scrip was then worth ten cents, and he received his pay in it—\$900, which the county must some day redeem at par.

Sam Mallory, formerly engine driver on the Erie Railroad, became here a general of militia and State Senator in 1871; was later made Commissioner to audit old militia bills, and among the accounts allowed by him and paid was one lot coffee mills at \$17 apiece.

Meantime taxes rose, until in Pulaski county, of which Little