

Africa by the aid of British troops, such a policy must necessarily be predestined to failure.

A HINDU ON THE ENGLISH ADMINISTRATION OF THE REVENUES OF INDIA.

A letter written to the Manchester Guardian by Romish Dutt, dated at London, April 21.

India has waited for the report of the royal commission on Indian expenditure for five years, and the people of India, who have enough trouble and misery of their own, expect that in the matter of foreign wars and foreign complications England will at last deal justly and even generously by the people of India. Judging from the substance of the report which has already appeared in print, the recommendations made by the majority of the commissioners are full of the worst forebodings for India. Permit me to refer only to one or two heads. Under the head of "Apportionment of Charges" it is recommended that India should contribute one-half of the military charges of Aden, one-half of the cost of the Persian mission, £12,500 for the China establishment, £10,000 for the Zanzibar and Mauritius telegraph subsidy, and also the present Euphrates-Tigris subsidy. The amount under each of these heads is comparatively small; but is it just on principle to saddle India with any portion of the cost of maintaining British power and influence in different parts of Asia and Africa? Does England saddle Cape Colony or Natal with the cost of Ashanti or of any of the British establishments in West Africa?

Under the head of "Indian Troops Out of India" we are told that a part of the cost of employing Indian troops out of India should be borne by India if she has a distinct and special interest at stake. And then we are told that India has a "direct and substantial interest" in keeping open the Suez canal and in the maintenance of order in Egypt; a "modified interest" in Zanzibar and the African islands in the Indian ocean; a "direct and substantial interest" in Persia, the Persian gulf and the coast and islands of Arabia; a "direct and substantial interest" in Afghanistan and parts of Central Asia; a "direct and substantial interest" in Siam, and a "modified interest" in China and the Malay peninsula. Does this mean that the resources of India, which are scarcely enough for her civil and military administration, will continue to be drawn upon by England in her various complications in different parts of Asia and Africa? Does this

mean that the richest country in the world will continue to tax the poorest and most miserable peasantry on earth, not only for their own welfare, but also for the maintenance of England's influence and empire in portions of two continents? The principle that India is responsible for keeping the path from England to India clear is a principle which would be considered outrageous if it was applied to any of the colonies. The Australian colonies are as much interested in the Suez canal, the Arabian and Persian coasts, and in the Malay peninsula as India; has any royal commission or colonial secretary suggested that the Australian colonies should be saddled with the cost of maintaining British influence in these places? Sir Henry Fowler said at Wolverhampton: "Why am I standing here to defend the [Transvaal] war? Because it is a war not for the obtaining of the franchise, not for the rights, sound and strong as they were, of the outlanders, but because it is a war for nothing less than British supremacy in South Africa. That supremacy means our Indian empire." If the recommendations of the majority of the royal commission were accepted and followed out to their logical conclusion, would not the Indian empire be charged for this South African war, which is necessary, according to Sir Henry Fowler, for maintaining the Indian empire? Would not the Indian empire be charged for the maintenance of the British army and the British fleet and of the British power generally, because they are all necessary for maintaining the Indian empire? Where will you draw the line when you once depart from the old and equitable and sound maxim that India shall pay for troops maintained for her protection in India—not for troops and establishments and wars outside India? The army now maintained in India is not for her protection only, but for England's Asiatic and African possessions. Considering the large portion of the Indian army now employed in South Africa, the question was raised, not long ago, by Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman whether the whole of the army now stationed in India should be paid for from the Indian revenues. I do not find that this question has been dealt with in the report of the majority of the royal commission. While the majority of the commissioners are anxious to define India's interests on the Nile and the Tigris, in Mozambique and the Malay peninsula, I do not find that they are anxious to define England's imperial interest in the army now stationed in India. I write this in

regret and in sorrow—a sorrow which will be universally felt by my countrymen when they read the substance of the report which has been published.

"God help the people of India!" said Mr. Donald Smeaton, a member of Lord Curzon's council, to Reuter's agent at Bombay the other day; "Great Britain and Ireland owe a debt to the Indian peasant, a debt of millions upon millions." We know that India annually remits to England a sum estimated between £20,000 and £30,000 for home charges, pensions, interest, and the like. We know that the people of India are virtually debarred from the higher posts in India, except a very small percentage, and that £15,000,000 are annually paid to European officials employed in India and sending all their savings to Europe. We know that our ancient industries like weaving and spinning and dyeing have been killed by European competition, and that the land is so heavily taxed in many provinces that the peasant cannot save in good years for years of bad harvest. We know that an army is kept in India, and paid for by India, sufficient for England's imperial requirements over the best part of Asia and Africa. We know that our finances are adjusted by executive councils in India and in England in which the people of India have no seat, and that in the taxation of India we have no voice. These are some of the burdens we bear in India, and these are some of the causes of the famines from which we periodically suffer. Will Englishmen add to them the burden of paying for British forts and armies, British establishments and wars in various parts of Africa and Asia—from the Suez canal to Mozambique, from the Tigris to the Malay peninsula? Will the English conscience reconcile itself to thus proceeding in a year when 90,000,000 of people are affected by the worst famine that India has ever known and 5,000,000 are actually attending relief centers? After the famine of 1770 and the desolating wars of Warren Hastings, the great Minister Pitt brought in his Indian bill in 1784 to give us a better government. Is there no statesman in England at the present day who will give us a new India bill, moderating land tax, reducing expenditure, opening up the higher services to the people of India, and giving them some control over their finances? Is there no Englishman of this generation who will stand up for justice to India?

The expropriation of the mass of the people from the soil forms the basis of the capitalist mode of production.—Marx.