Daily News (London, England),
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DUTCH AND BRITISH RULE IN THE EAST.*

I.

Just when complaints are uttered in print and in private of the indifference to Indian subjects by the English people in general and Parliament in particular, a book appears which seems likely to turn the indifference into eager interest. It is no wonder that such a book should excite the minds of readers, or that it should be received with a sort of enthusiasm by those who had almost despaired of ever inducing England to attend to Indian affairs in any effectual way. It is natural that Mr. Money's account of Java, and his exposition of "How to manage a Colony," should at present be talked of in many companies; and if we perceive that readers are run away with by its pictures of prosperity, and in a hurry to demand that the system which has made Java a mine of wealth to Holland, and a scene of material comfort to the inhabitants, shall be forthwith applied to India, we may easily make allowance for the precipitation, while recommending a suspension of judgment. Our case, as to this ignorance and indifference about India, is a sad and serious one; and it will yet produce worse evils than a rash admiration of the Dutch system in Java, as exhibited by Mr. Money; but it at once accounts for the attention the book has won, and renders the work itself a great public benefit.

While the Company left the nation nothing to do about India, the nation failed to recognise the merits of the Company; and especially its devotion to the singular object of ascertaining how semi-barbarous races and peoples may be best governed by a civilised one. A more difficult problem was never offered to human faculties; and a more vital interest was never committed to the conscience and capacity of any rulers of men. The Company did their best to ascertain, to learn, and to put in practice the principles of the case. They exhibited the only spectacle of the kind on record of a great government carried on by a middle-class organization of rulers; they believed that they had solved the problem given them to study; and they had a large amount of practical success to show as the result of their method of civil rule. While they were at work the English public knew and cared nothing about them and their subjects. India was supposed to be the interest and the charge of a coterie of families, who had a hereditary share in such power and profit as it might yield. Thus, when the hour arrived which must arrive sooner or later—when it came suddenly and in the shape of calamity, and the Company was deposed from its Indian throne, there was nobody qualified to take its place. It was easy to present the Queen to the people of India as their sovereign; it was easy to make proclamation through the country that her Indian subjects would be under the government of the three estates, like the English themselves; it was easy to propose to bless the races of India by the change; but it was not easy for people at home to see where the knowledge, philosophical and practical, was to come from for ruling well in so difficult a case. Thus far experience has shown that the gravest apprehensions of those who appreciated the Company were reasonable. Parliament not only knows nothing about the nature of the problem in question, but, for want of this knowledge, grows weary of practical questions. The House empties when Indian topics are brought forward; and no effectual check is imposed on the Indian Minister of the day, who feels no need of counsel, and no dread of a responsibility which would almost crush any man who was aware of its extent. We have left the path of theory on which Indian government had hitherto marched, rightly or wrongly; and we have not yet decided on our aim and object in quitting that track. We are therefore in an unsettled and irresolute condition as to our relations with India. For some time we have heard it urged that the way to get Parliament and people duly interested in it is to prove by experiment that India is a wealth-producing country. Once get a sufficient number of English shareholders engaged in prosperous Indian enterprises, and they will get to know and care more about the people and their ways, and to feel an interest in the country being well governed. Till that is done, one set of people will listen to the missionaries and entertain their objects, and another set will catch up the views of the Indian army officers, and another will talk of the indigo question, or cotton supply, or railways; but there will be nothing to replace the system of the Company—nothing to compensate for the special guardianship which the people of India no longer feel, and the people of England have abolished, before any substitute was prepared. Under such circumstances, the appearance of a book which proposes to teach "how to govern a colony," and which exhibits an Eastern dependency in a paradisiacal state by means of its method of government, may well seize upon men's imaginations; and the amount of discussion caused by Mr. Money's work is perfectly natural. The stronger the excitement it produces, however, the more necessary it is that we should keep a clear mind and calm temper in the study of it, in order to satisfy ourselves what it is that we want for India, and whether the example of Java can really help us to it. We have first to learn what the Dutch government of Java is. If it appears tempting, as Mr. Money assumes throughout, we have next to consider whether it is compatible with the theory, or primary objects of our rule in India; and, again, whether it suits our practical capacity, or national convenience. There is nothing in the book to prevent any thoughtful reader from forming a judgment on these heads, and it is this method of reading it, and not any passing excitement caused by its pictures of prosperity, which will finally determine its value.

Mr. Money has rendered a great public service by the pains he has taken to make himself master of the Dutch system in Java, and to supply his readers with facts, from official records, and other authoritative sources. We are thankful for the laying open of a scene so long lost sight of that it is now like a fresh region. We are thankful to him for affording us the materials of a study on which we may not the less form a judgment very unlike his. His own enthusiasm can scarcely dazzle his readers so far as to blind them to the absence of a dispassionate and moderate temper in himself. In the last sentence of his book he speaks of the benefits the noble country of India has conferred on his family and on himself; yet he seldom or never speaks of India, its ways, its government, its people, without a sneer. Every man is at liberty to prefer one method of rule to another, and to say so openly; but his accounts of affairs lose much of their effect when, as in Mr. Money's case, he recognises no value in the principles of government which are most important in English eyes, and most admires precisely the elaboration of despotism which Englishmen cannot brook, and will not lend their hand to; and when he repeats with enjoyment, "satirical questions" asked by Dutch officials, and himself makes "satirical" comparisons between Indian and Javan practices, always to throw contempt on the state of affairs at home. Mr. Money's book will probably cause a counter-representation to appear before long. We are not now without means of checking some of his admiring expositions of Dutch policy. Remembering this, and awaiting a disclosure of other facts or views by and by, we may learn a great deal by the study of what is before us, for the picture is a very striking one. It also concerns us in other ways than as reproof or guidance in the matter of the government of India. Java was once ours; and of late years our relinquishment of it has been mourned as a grievous act of carelessness or levity. It has been held up as a warning against similar levity in throwing away our opportunities in Borneo. While Holland is actually deriving a large annual revenue from Java, without injury to the people, such lamentations over our loss of that source of wealth will have their effect on the popular mind, and ought to be attended to. When, moreover, we are told that, unless England will protect British settlements in Borneo, those settlements must inevitably be made over to the Dutch or others who are eager to have them, it becomes interesting to know the means by which Dutch colonial government produces such results as are seen in Java.

Mr. Money himself does not pretend that in the other colonies of the eastern archipelago Dutch rule is so effectual in producing a golden age as in Java. He admits that the common impressions of the cruelty of the yoke, and the hatred of the Malays to their masters, are true in regard to Sumatra and other colonies. It will occur to most of his readers to inquire whether the difference between Java and its neighbours may be more or less owing to the rule of Sir Stamford Raffles. Mr. Money admits that great benefits were instituted by the English governor. The abolition of slavery, whether by Dutch or other authority, is with him a subject for a sneer only; and he is evidently unaware of the rationale of much of our government in the East; but he speaks with respect of the judicial and police systems introduced into Java by Sir Stamford Raffles, and perpetuated by the Dutch. As for the rest, Mr. Money shows us a wonderful wealth-producing machine, its various parts being so interlocked, and the whole machine being so guarded from influences from without, that all change must be mere detriment, and progression only another name for destruction. Whether any machine in which human nature is involved can work with such precision as he describes, and whether, especially, any elaborate scheme of checks, balances, and compensations can ensure every man's doing precisely what he is desired to do, and neither more nor less, may be doubted after reading the book, as well as before it. As a successful machinery for the production of wealth, and of the kind of social contentment which attends upon material ease, the administration of Java is well worth a study. Mr. Money became aware of this on the spot. He had been a resident of Calcutta for four years when he and his lady, whose health was the occasion of the trip, went to Java for a few weeks in the summer of 1858. He surrendered his mind to the charms of what he saw, and the fascinations of what he was told; and we have here the result. We must remember both that the comparisons he made between Dutch and English rule were instituted while the Company still governed India, and that the book has been written, and those comparisons have been recorded, since the deposition of the Company. His condemnation is of things both as they were and as they are in India; and he has no hope of what they will be, unless we copy the system of the Dutch in Java. We shall another day see what that system is, and proceed to a brief inquiry into its fitness to accomplish the purposes of British rule in India.

* "Java; or, How to manage a Colony." By J. W. B. Money. Hurst and Blackett.

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DUTCH AND BRITISH RULE IN THE EAST.

II.

We have now to see what the Dutch government of Java is like.

Towards the close of his book (vol. ii., 121), Mr. Money tells us what notion the Dutch have of their own task. He speaks of "their rule, which does not profess to seek more than the material peace and prosperity of the country." The system is planned so as to protract to the utmost the reign of Malay feelings and Mussulman ideas, and to keep from the knowledge of the inhabitants all the facts of the world which lies outside of their island and its customs. Whether it is professed that the Javanese are governed for their own good or for that of the Dutch, it is avowed that the "good" intended means pecuniary advantage, as much of it as can be got without exciting discontent among the people. It is necessary to put this point first instead of last, if we are to form any fair judgment of the Dutch method in Java, for, unless we are timely warned, we may easily be carried away by the story of pecuniary profit, supposing it to be the accompaniment, if not the result, of other advantages enjoyed by the people. It makes an essential difference in our estimate of colonial wealth whether the colony is governed for the benefit, material, moral, and political, of the people in it, or whether it is treated by the mother country "as a warren or preserve," as Mr. Mill says, "for its own use, a place to make money in." In the case of Java we are now aware that the object is to work the colony as a mine of wealth, in that liberal sort of way which keeps up the wealth-producing power of the people by giving them a considerable share of the material produce, while keeping their minds free from the disturbance of new ideas of any kind.

The native population of the whole group of Dutch colonies in the East is, we are told, about 17,000,000; and that of Java eleven millions and a half. These numbers should be borne in mind when we are advised to apply the Dutch method of rule to India, with its twelvefold number of inhabitants. The vigilant paternal system set up in Java may be sustained for a considerable time in an island to which access is rendered difficult, and in which every native is under constant surveillance, from the day of his birth to that of his death; but it is rash to assume that such a system could be applied to a vast territory, peopled by various races and tribes, holding a variety of incompatible ideas on religion and other subjects. The Javanese are all Mussulmans, and their number is manageable.

The land is assumed to belong to the ruling power. The old native notion that the land belongs to the Prince, and only the usufruct to the nominal owner, was reverted to by the Dutch on receiving back the island from us in 1816. The aristocracy, through whom the Dutch govern the country, have no land. They owe their consideration to office. Every high-born native is an official, in one way or another; and no one of the class has estates or a tenantry. Thus they are upheld in dignity in the eyes of the natives generally, while they are absolutely dependent on the European government. Landed estates are now obtainable by European settlers, with a certain amount of difficulty, and under conditions which form a heavy tax on the privilege of making a fortune; but there is no landed aristocracy in Java, either to oppress the people or to stand between them and the foreign government. Every individual among the natives is in fact dependent on the government; and the government undertakes the charge of everything, from the formation and preservation of the roads to estimating the produce of every villager's garden, and providing the larder of wayside inns.

Thus, the wealth which is so dazzling to our minds at this moment, when poured out before our eyes in description, is an achievement of the government, like everything else that is done in Java. The colonial ruler who immortalised himself by the deed was General Van den Bosch, who went out in 1830 as Governor-General of the Dutch East Indies. He took with him the confidence of his sovereign, ample funds, and a band of young men of good education, ready to work out the new scheme with less prejudice than could be expected of colonial officers. Van den Bosch believed that Java contained natural wealth which would at once enrich the peasant cultivator and the contractor who was to employ him, and yield a per centage to the official body through whom everything is done; and if so, the village communities would be interested in promoting careful cultivation, and the government would profit by the increase of its revenue, through the improved condition of the people. In order to bring about this state of affairs, the Dutch Government undertook the exploitation of Java, at a great immediate cost, as a proprietor of a neglected estate would lay out money freely, for the prospect of an abundant repayment in course of time.

A large loan without interest for a term of years was offered to contractors who would take the word of the government that they would make their fortunes if they followed government dictation. Dutchmen of respectability in the colony would have nothing to do with such a risk, as they considered it, with their knowledge of the habits of the Javanese; but the highly qualified new-comers from Holland went confidingly into the enterprise. They came out of it so rich that there is now a constant pressure upon the government to allow access to land in the interior.

With the 13,800*l.* advanced by government, the contractor began building his mill, or other industrial apparatus. He might draw a certain small amount for the support of his family while waiting for an income; but the bulk of it was to be spent in preparing buildings, water-power, machinery from Europe, and all essentials for his manufacture. He might help himself with timber and whatever else suited his purpose from government lands; and the labour, which is the chief tax paid by the peasants to government, was lent to him, to the full extent of his needs, for two years. The best machinery was obtained for him, and it was imported duty free. His obligations were to repay one-tenth of the loan annually, after the first two years, so as to become the possessor of the property in the thirteenth year. He could obtain advice and access to books from the government controllers of his district; but he was left free to manage his enterprise as he chose, it being a chief object to develop ability in the new colonists.

Government was meantime taking care that a crop should be ready at hand by the time the mill was finished. It turned to this purpose its claims upon the villagers, and it advanced to the contractor, again without interest, the whole sum necessary to purchase the crop. The contractor, in return, sold to government, at a fixed price, as much of his crop as each year cleared the advance of the preceding year, and one-tenth of the great loan. He might either require the government to purchase the rest of his crop at the fixed contract price, or dispose of it elsewhere, as he pleased.

The people meantime had been wrought upon to do their part. They were under the absolute dictation of their landlord as to what crops they should grow; and the thing to be done, therefore, was to secure to the community a sufficient quantity of rice for subsistence, and then to induce the cultivators to grow what the contractors wanted. The proper proportion of rice land in each district was ascertained and duly guaranteed, and then the cultivators were told that they must devote one-fifth of their land to the contractor's crop. To make this smooth and easy, the contract price was so fixed as to render this product more profitable than rice. Government also took the risk of bad crops, unless the failure was caused by negligence; it gave to the people any surplus profit from the sale, and threw every advantage into the scale of the cultivator. Every official who was concerned in overlooking the engagements and proceedings had a fixed per centage on the produce, and thus all the parties below the government began to grow rich immediately, and the resources of the country were rapidly developed. Where there is a practically unlimited fund by which experiments are to be tried, and which is to bear all losses and forego all gains beyond a certain amount, the development of man's industry and nature's wealth may well be rapid.

The next question is, how the scheme answered to the party who supplied the capital. The peasants having paid off the Chinese money-lenders who held them in bondage, and the contractors having acquired the property the government had helped them to, what was the result to the government itself? It must be good, because the government continues to advance money and make sugar contracts with contractors who are known to make incomes of several thousands a year, and to have increased the value of their mill property, by improvements, from 14,000*l.* to 36,000*l.*

The European consumer was made to pay as much as possible of the government expenditure. The highest prices were put upon the various products of Java, and they, for the most part, fell short of the demand; so that the colony has never yet been checked by the want of a market. The increase in the population, which has doubled itself in 29 years, has put a great increase of labour and of revenue at the disposal of government; so that, instead of being a drain upon Holland, as it was before Van den Bosch's time, Java yielded, in 1857, a net surplus of three and a half millions sterling.

It is not wonderful that such a fact excites emotion among us. People are saying that Java is not naturally richer than many parts of India, and that the Malays were formerly far more idle and indifferent than the Hindoos. They point to the high cultivation in Java and to the admirable roads, which penetrate the whole country from the three great cities to the heart of the mountains; they hear of the contentment of the natives and the wealth of the Europeans, and of the low average of crime and of litigation; and they very naturally ask whether the problem of the government of a barbarous by a civilized race is not solved at last. They ask why we have not governed India as well as the Dutch have governed Java, and whether we cannot begin now.

There are answers to these questions, some of which we shall touch upon another day.

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BRITISH AND DUTCH RULE IN THE EAST.

III.

When it is asked whether the Dutch in Java have not solved the problem of government of a barbarous race by a civilised people, and why we cannot follow their example in our Eastern dependencies, the next step to be taken is to compare one part of the Java story with another, and both with our own history in India. Mr. Money gives us the story of the Dutch in Java in the most favourable way possible; and if it appears from his exposition that the system is as a whole essentially transitory in its character, and in all its main conditions the very opposite of our case in India, there can be nothing more to be done than to take hints from any part of the Dutch administration in Java which may be practicable, and an improvement upon our own, in India.

Every reader must be struck with the wonderful human perfection which Mr. Money has fallen into the midst of in Java. Every native noble is nobleness itself; and all the common people admire the privileges of greatness without envy. The peasants are industrious, peaceful, innocent, full of reverence and love for everybody, familiarly agreeable with Europeans, and not to be prevented from dropping on their knees in the presence of regents and residents. All officials do the whole of their duty, neither more nor less, and in the best way. They are faithful to government, and benignant to the natives. The citizens of the great towns are enlightened and agreeable; and no bad passions or unkind emotions trouble their serenity. Their position with the natives is charming. It is all generous patronage on the one hand, and grateful docility on the other. To crown all, everybody is entirely happy. Everybody is opulent; everybody is amiable and contented. Nothing ever goes wrong, and the cheerfulness of society is as brilliant and unfailing as the sunshine of the sky. Here is a great unlikeness to India to begin with; and Mr. Money makes the most of it. He and his Dutch friends seem to have been always "laughing," "shrugging," and exchanging "satirical" remarks on the miseries of India, and the wrongs and woes of every class of its inhabitants.

Yet, as we pointed out before, the Dutch do not start from any high ground in their experiment of eastern rule. And here is one of the incompatibilities of their scheme and ours. However imperfect our management of India may have been, our proposed aim has been, and now is, the welfare of the native inhabitants; whereas Java has been and is a scene of exploitation in the pursuit of wealth. Mr. Money says:

"The Dutch do not pretend to take a high view of their mission in the East. They consider that Java is given them as an assistance and support to their small mother-country, and as a pleasant home to themselves, considering their duties towards her fulfilled when they have gained the contentment and good-will of her people. * * * The Dutch allege that our pretended motives are either unintelligible or incredible, both to natives and to other Europeans, neither of whom believe the professions of conquerors pretending to govern for the good of the conquered rather than their own." (Vol. II., 198, 9.)

If, then, we find resemblances between the old policy of the East India Company and that of the Dutch in Java in the treatment of the natives, the policy is to be judged of in each case by the aim proposed.

The Company tried as long as possible to shut up their territory; and that is the great aim of the Dutch in Java now. The commercial monopoly of the Company gave way before the influence of the age, though it was a part of a deep-thoughted and far-sighted scheme designed for the benefit of the people. The aim was to civilize them gradually by the influence of good government, while disturbing influences were excluded. The natives were to be habituated to peace and industry before competitive enterprise was introduced or Christian missionaries were allowed to excite religious passions. In those days there was a consistency of rule which gave the natives a strong confidence in the justice and good faith of their masters; and their attachment to the persons of their rulers was stronger in fact than the Dutch now expect that of the Javanese ever to be to them. After the golden-age pictures of Mr. Money's first volume, it is rather strange to come upon such a disclosure as the following:

"The Dutch allege that it never occurs to the Java sepoy to be offended at the discovery of distrust on the part of his foreign rulers. Every native, they say, judging by his own ideas, expects his European master to entertain the same feeling towards him that he entertains towards all, even his own countrymen, who are not of his immediate family. The denial of such feelings the native does not credit, and the suppression of them he imputes to fear, and not to magnanimity."—(II., 131.)

Again we are told:

"The military organization of all the European inhabitants is a great security in a country where, as the Dutch say, whatever be the jealousy and hatred between native races, they will always join against the white skin and civilised man whenever there is a prospect of doing so with success."—(II., 153.)

Mr. Money reconciles his apparently discordant statements by explaining that the Dutch eminently understand the principle of governing by dividing the governed. This is not very applicable to our rule in India. When the period of exclusiveness was at an end; when commerce was thrown open, and the few "interlopers," watched and trammelled in every possible way, grew into a great class of independent settlers; when missionaries from religious sects at home landed, full of holy zeal to attack the superstitions of a pagan land, there was an end of the old scheme of Indian government, and we had to determine on some new course, or to commit our mighty dependency to chance. As yet we have fixed on no system, because nobody is competent to do so. The old trained and highly qualified body has been dismissed; and there is no other which has had any special training whatever. We all desire the welfare of India, and admit that that welfare should be the guiding principle of our rule; but at present we have no system wherewith to replace that which has passed away; and there are no signs of any intention of forming one, or of any consciousness on the part of Parliament or the Administration that anything of the sort is needed. At such a period in the history of India, the proposal to introduce Dutch methods shows an ignorance and thoughtlessness which cannot be exceeded in the House of Commons or anywhere else.

To attempt to take every individual native under government supervision, and every man's business into its own hands, would be to propose what the East India Company in its most sovereign days would never have dreamed of. It is a significant circumstance that the Dutch Government resists all instigations, both of public opinion and particular interest, to extend its scheme over the whole of Java, lest the whole thing should break up. Not one half of the island is cultivated; but the government dares not seek the doubled wealth which is within its reach, for fear of losing what it has. While we are looking for an expansion of industry and wealth, and aiding our hundred and fifty millions of people to effect it, the eleven millions in Java are disposed in patches of population, carefully kept apart by stretches of wilderness kept uninhabited. In each settlement every individual is registered, every foot of soil is mapped out, everybody's life is ordered for him, and no step in any sort of business can be taken without leave. Europeans are present at all times, in all places. The natives never know what it is to be from under the European eye. No ideas are allowed to be imparted to natives. It is forbidden to make known to them any "European knowledge" whatever. They are never to hear of Christianity, or of science, or of anything which can carry their minds beyond their daily work and their yearly gains. No native noble holds land: by degrees natives have been excluded from all military rank, even the lowest; and the native army has arrived at being composed of the lowest elements of the population. Every European in the island is compelled to be a soldier (unless he belongs to a fire company); the press is kept silent; government does everything, from parcelling out the land to filling the larders of the hotels—from distributing the effects of every person who dies to supplying music, novels, and billiards to the idlers of capitals; yet, with all this care and pains and absolute authority, the government dares not extend its lucrative system of management lest capitalists should act for themselves, and the people find one another out across the spaces of wilderness, and the artificial system come to a smash through some little accident of a moment.

There have been books of travel which throw some light on this state of things—which show the peasantry to be virtually slaves under the pressure of government contracts, and barbarians under the elaborate apparatus for keeping them ignorant, on which the Dutch Government rests its safety. We may remember, too, some traits in recent books which show the effect on the European residents of the enervating system under which they are living. While government pays them for getting rich, and stands between them and any annoyance from natives, and gives them an opera, and theatres, and clubs, and whatever they please to fancy, they become what all experience would teach us to expect. It is not very long since an accomplished German voyager told the world of his astonishment at the softness of the young men at the capital, Batavia, "who cry like babies if kept waiting a few minutes for their tea." Will it suit us to set up such a state of society as this in India?

Now, when we are striving to introduce private enterprise and capital into the country, and to take out of the hands of the government as many public works as can be carried through by special associations—now, when we hope to fertilise the peasant's field, and open markets to secluded villages, and stimulate native energy—now, when we are spreading schools all over the land, and awarding honours to native students in our colleges, shall we throw up our enterprises, and call upon Queen and Parliament to give scores and hundreds of thousands of pounds to individual "contractors" to go and see how much produce can be raised under a system of general slavery? Mr. Money has a sneer for the abolition of slavery, even in Java itself. He has a perpetual sneer for "our precious equality doctrine"—the principle of equality before the law which most Englishmen feel a certain respect for, but which he and his Dutch friends quiz unmercifully as a vulgar notion brought in by the French Revolution. To him and them it is a fine thing to see nobles exempted from punishment, trial, and even accusation, except under difficulties which afford a real impunity. To them it is a gratifying thing that low people are well looked after by law and police, while the highborn and foreigners are secure from all public disgrace—whatever they may do.

To them it is a pleasure to admire the dignity of the government when it inquires of its spies about the conduct of residents in the interior, and either lets them alone, or compels them to remove to some designated spot, or deports them altogether. They admit that it is tiresome to have to spend time on getting passports, and to have to describe your route before taking a journey; and to find security, in money and patronage, before you can spend a week at Batavia, or turn yourself about anywhere in Java. These forms are troublesome; but then they are part of the system; and the system yields a profit to government, and creates fine roads, and keeps the natives ignorant and dependent, and provides an opera and billiards for the Europeans who do not put themselves in the way of being deported or shifted from one neighbourhood into another.

We have our anxieties in India. We have occasion for regret, and for some misgiving, and for not a little shame while bringing so little thought, so little moral and political science, to such a task as the government of such a country. But we can at least breathe free air there, and stretch and exercise such powers as we have, and agree that the natives shall be the better for us, however we may doubt about the right way to go to work. The little Java conservatory, with its luscious scents and hot atmosphere, and its strict routine of management, is no pattern for us in our administration of our broad empire. The Dutch have had to deal with a race of inert Mussulmans, who have no notions of caste, and no fanaticism, and no rival creeds. We need not show how different is our case. Yet even here the rulers of Java have had their difficulties, as Mr. Money's book informs us. Even in the case of our Sepoys we might not have been happier if we had imitated the Dutch system.

It does not follow that there is nothing which we could learn from them. Another day we may remark on some of their institutions and methods which seem to succeed on grounds not impracticable for us.

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BRITISH AND DUTCH RULE IN THE EAST.

IV.

While hankering after the splendid profits which Mr. Money describes, as the yield of the Dutch method of governing Java, his readers naturally ask, after each exposure of the true nature of the policy, whether there is nothing in which we can take a lesson from the wise men of Holland. The ready and cheerful answer of every impartial student of the case will be, that there are departments in which the Dutch rule is wiser and more kindly than our own.

As to the culture-system, which produces the bewitching large profits,—it is altogether out of the sphere of a government like ours in India, as it would be in Ireland, or anywhere else. We cannot now take the land out of the hands of all who hold it, and substitute a different tenure. We cannot now convert the native aristocracy into a landless order, whose privilege is office-holding. We cannot expect government to advance enormous amounts of capital, without interest, to individuals under stringent conditions, which would, in fact, make government the universal undertaker and producer. It must be observed, too, that the days of free trade are unsuitable to the institution of such a system as that of society in Java. Monopoly prices in Europe were an indispensable condition throughout. Mr. Money says :

"The price of the contractor's crop is fixed so high that the money received for its growth, on one-fifth of the village lands, must be more than double the land rent on the whole village lands. This leaves the villagers a large cash balance in hand, after paying their land rent, besides the whole rice produce of the four-fifths of their land for their own consumption." (I., 112.)

The "principles" on which the scheme was based were, we are told (I. p. 105) :—1st. Profit to the peasant ; 2nd. Profit to the contractor ; 3rd. A per centage to the officials ; 4th. Advantage to, and consequent personal interest in the village community ; and 5th. Enrichment of the taxpayers, so as to improve the revenue. A market price in Europe which would cover all these aims must be something placed far above the risks of competition, and we find accordingly that the Dutch government fixed a monopoly price on the articles which admitted of it, in order to pay all these parties under the culture system, and also to make up for its losses on various products in which the system could not yield a profit, or to which it could not be applied. Here we meet with another sign that the whole scheme is necessarily transitory in its character.

While it is totally unfit for adoption by any government of ours, or for the government of any enlightened nation in our century, there may be some portions of the method which might be advantageously adopted by companies of capitalists. They must be very rich and very strong, and must make up their minds to go through with their undertaking. The Dutch government professed to hope that its plan would open the way to independent enterprise, when once the resources of the country were disclosed, and the natives were familiarised with industry. When a sufficient number of contractors had made vast fortunes, government refused to grant any more contracts for sugar or indigo. Independent planters might try what they could do on crown lands, at a sufficient distance from existing contractors. "The result has not been in favour of the independent planters." And why? Mr. Money tells us. Their rent is very moderate—exceedingly low in comparison with that of the contractors, perhaps in consideration of the high interest they have to pay for capital. The reason is that, in plain language, they cannot make slaves of the cultivators, as the contractors can. Mr. Money's mild way of putting the thing is this. Speaking of the failure of profit to the independent planter he says :—"This seems chiefly to arise from the want of official support among a native population whose ideas require authoritative explanation and persuasion to secure continued application even for their own good." (I., 138.)

British companies might furnish the needful capital, might obtain land from government, might induce a sufficient number of labourers to till the ground on certain terms of labour rent, in return for a guaranteed appropriation of a sufficient proportion to the growth of rice or other grain for their support. By wise and timely care the managers might prevent the cultivators getting into debt, and keep them in so far free and able to improve their circumstances, so as to become a profitable community of consumers and taxpayers ; and they would find the Hindoo a far better industrial subject than the Malay ; but two of the main conditions of the Java experiment would be impossible in India. India planters can never have the resource of a monopoly price in Europe ; and they cannot press upon their labourers the authoritative exposition of ideas that Mr. Money speaks of. They cannot institute a hierarchy of native office-holders, who are always to be ruling the people, and be themselves incessantly under European supervision. The Dutch spy-system, and the elaborate mixture of stimulus and repression, of rewards and enslavement kept up in Java with as much caution and vigilance as becomes habitual to the custodes of Sèvres porcelain or the old Venice glass, will never suit British men of business, in India or elsewhere. It is true, the Hindoo is admitted not to need this kind of treatment as the Malay does. The Malay is of a slighter make, morally, we are told. He is weak and passionate, idle and luxurious, induced to work by his craving for ease and pleasure, but too effeminate to be steady in even well-paid industry unless held to it by the authority of the native official whom he worships for his high birth, or the European whom he dreads for his mysterious power. Profitable crops produced under such influences may look more engaging than the present aspect of the Indigo districts in Bengal, but we trust there may be a better lot in store for the industrious Hindoos than a period of high pay, with high rent and taxes, with a modified personal bondage, to merge in a break-up of the artificial system, and a necessity for a new start under natural conditions which will appear hard because so long deprecated. There is every reason to expect, from what we now see in India, such a development of culture as will discharge the debt, and much more than maintain the government and public property of the country. The expansion which the Dutch government dares not undertake or permit, though half Java lies undeveloped, is to be confidently looked for in India, because there is nothing to be afraid of in the advancing intelligence and intercommunication of the people. It would not answer to us, therefore, to imitate the Dutch further than in some practical methods of dealing for land, labour, or capital. We have set before us the object of benefiting the people of India, and we are justified in believing that mere wealth will be more securely and permanently obtained by pursuing that aim than by making the country, as the Dutch make their colony, a sort of "warren, or preserve," for breeding wealth for the owner.

The best achievement of the Dutch in the Java case seems to be in the matter of law and justice, and there is no particular in which the British government in India has so calamitously failed. Here we may learn something from our neighbours. It is a sort of despair to Englishmen to think of the courts in India, after all that has been desired, attempted, and actually done, to make them answer their purpose. The puzzled judge, confounded by the perjury which surprises nobody else—the native lawyers, police, and witnesses, all plotting and lying in their several ways—the obscurities, the confusion, the delays, the utter frustration of justice to be seen in the lower courts of India, may well make us glad to learn of anybody who can teach us how to put justice within popular reach, and how best to satisfy the people with the means provided for that object.

The Dutch Government sets up its fountains of justice in small areas, and makes them easy of access. This is the great virtue of their system. The chief vice is, according to our notions, the partiality with which justice is distributed. Nothing makes Mr. Money so "satirical" as the English principle of equality before the law—"that precious equality," he calls it. In Java the native officials and their families—in other words, the nobles—cannot be prosecuted, or even sued in a civil case, except by express permission of the Governor-General. They are subject only to the European courts in Batavia, and the prosecution or suit against them is conducted with closed doors. Native advocates or guardians are provided behind those closed doors to protect the accused from any mischief from misapprehension of his case ; but no other native eyes witness his undignified position as an accused person. A noble cannot be summoned to give evidence, unless the Governor-General will politely invite him to name a time when he may be expected to be near a certain court, and he politely accedes to the invitation. He can then please himself about attending ; and if he appears he is ceremoniously placed on the bench. We need say no more to show how little risk the aristocratic oppressor runs of being called to account for his deeds, and how little chance humble people have of redress for injury from such offenders. Mr. Money is of opinion that this is all right. In a state where everybody does his duty, and all the world is in a condition of social bliss, there cannot be anything serious for any low-born native to complain of in his superiors ; and the nobles are too much of gentlemen to do anything improper. On the other hand, it is less painful to low-born complainants to go without redress than to see a high-born personage subjected to the degradation of a legal inquiry. From their own order, however, they approve of being able to obtain redress ; and the provision made for this seems to be very effectual, regard being had to the native notions and desires. The case is simple and manageable in a country where the Europeans are ever present in all transactions between man and man. No contract is valid which is not witnessed by a European. The government appoints all the boundaries, keeps all the wills, distributes all the effects of deceased persons, registers all persons and property, maps out all fields and gardens, watches all the roads, haunts all the police offices, &c. This constant oversight is out of the question in India ; and it may be conceived how it lightens the business of the courts in Java. When we add to this that the law and all penalties are contained in the Kurán, and that a priest is always present to read the appropriate chapter and verse, it will be seen what a simple business the lawyers have of it in Javanese rural life.

The distinct divisions which have the lowest courts are about four or five miles square. The village chiefs report the state of things once a week to the native superintendent of the district ; and he reports once a fortnight to the regent, who is again responsible to the next above him. A government inspector, the controller, arrives once a month, and is open to applications for justice. All officials are bound to admit all applicants at a fixed hour daily ; and thus every peasant has a monthly, or weekly, or daily opportunity of complaint ; and a court within three miles of his cottage, for the redress of petty offences ; and others in gradation above them. Evidence is taken in both languages, and recorded for examination by authorities above. Witnesses are attended by their immediate superiors, who avouch their identity, and are required to speak to their characters. Such personation, conspiracy, and perjury as are common in India seem impossible under this system. When the case is established, the priest declares the sentence according to the Kurán ; and then the members of the court vote, in private, condemnation or acquittal. Each member's vote is recorded, with its reasons. The Supreme Court revises sentences, and virtually tries all serious cases over again, so that the accused is condemned by two courts. Even then, the conviction may be quashed on other grounds than the merits.

There are Circuit Courts—the highest kind instituted for the natives—that is, for the low-born. There are nine Dutch Courts in the chief cities for the trial of high-born natives and Europeans.

Mr. Money says there is little crime of any kind, except such as arises from the passions to which all men, and especially Orientals, and above all, Malays, are subject ; and nowhere is justice more accessible, or apparently satisfactory to the people. The smallest causes or offences are judged by either a native or European magistrate alone ; graver cases by natives, superintended by a European ; and the gravest of all in the Dutch Courts, with a due interpretation of the native mind and language. Whenever the time arrives for a substitution of another kind of law for that of the Kurán and native tradition the difficulties will be experienced in Java which we find so formidable in India. Meantime, we may take some hints about making justice accessible, and perhaps in regard to the *personnel* by which it is administered.

If there is little crime under a system which precludes at once the solitude or the concert, and the provocations accessory to crime, it does not follow that there is little vice. Some travellers believe that there is a vast deal. It is enough for us that the Dutch system is framed to preclude the advancement of the people in all respects but their material ease. No system will answer for India which forbids schools, books, missionaries, visitors, free settlers, and everything new, suggestive, and progressive.

Mr. Money has rendered an important service by providing us with information so full and comprehensive and detailed as his book contains. We do not agree with him in his view of the proper aims of government, and of the true welfare of the governed ; and we cannot regard his book as the result of philosophical, or even dispassionate inquiry ; but it bears testimony to great energy and industry on his part, and may be of considerable value to us, though it will not tempt us to adopt retrograde principles and practices in our government of India.