WILD, and opposed by Mr. BAGWELL. Ultimately it was read a third time and passed.

The remaining business having been disposed of, the House adjourned at a few minutes past 1 o'clock.

India, in common with all the rest of Asia, has ever been more liable to revolution than Europe. It has been more the prey of conquerors, and that to a much more recent date; it has surrendered more easily and totally to foreign masters, and more quickly learnt to revere dynasties alien in religion, language, and race, than any country in this part of the world. No doubt this is owing to the gentleness of the Hindoo character, and to the original want of a political unity and faith. The lesson of such a retrospect ought not to be lost upon the present masters of India, for what they have gained in one century they may lose in another. Lord ELLENBOROUGH, however, would find it difficult to point out a precedent to justify the very grave apprehension of instant and terrible danger which he sought to impress upon Government last night. The revolutions of India have not been the work of a day; rebellion has never spread like wildfire across the Peninsula; there is not that freemasonry in its races and religions; and, in fact, India never has in a moment thrown off its lords, and then looked for others. It has not even originated a spontaneous rebellion, like that of China, working its way at the rate of a province a-year. There is, then, no reason to imagine that the idle pretence of contact with forbidden substances caught at by a few mutinous soldiers, or even such an unlooked event, were it possible, as a successful conspiracy against the local authorities or the European forces at a particular station, would produce a general and instantaneous disaster. Within a very few years we have witnessed several occasions on which our Indian fellow-subjects, had they thought themselves oppressed, had they been united and ready to co-operate, and had they felt the least wish or hope for independence, had all the opportunity that fortune could possibly offer. Our reverses in Affghanistan, the attempted invasion of the Sikhs, the long conflict between the Mahomedans and the Hindoos in the kingdom of Oude, and the Santal rebellion, all supplied the brand for a general conflagration, had India been the magazine of mischief that some have described her. Experience rather shows that a long succession of follies, violences, wrongs, and neglects can there be committed without bearing their legitimate fruit so manifestly and presently as they would in other parts of the world. We need only point to the fact that for some generations we have had an ecclesiastical establishment in India, clergy committed to the duty of spreading their faith, and schools in which at least the language of our Scriptures was taught. Yet India has borne it with scarcely a murmur of suspicion or discontent.

What, then, is the danger? We have already expressed our opinion on this point, and nothing Lord ELLENBOROUGH has said can lead us to think him better informed upon it. No doubt the Hindoo population, and particularly the soldiery, containing, as the latter does, all the more irregular and excitable elements of the population, and the actual survivors of predatory tribes, require to be ruled with a strong hand. The European officers ought as much as possible to be present with them, to occupy their minds, to engross their attention, and engage their affections. In the dangerous tranquillity and tediousness of peace the officers, so far from seizing the opportunity for protracted absences and frivolous or profligate amusement, ought to give double care to enforce discipline, to keep up habits of activity, to inspire respect for authority, and sustain, themselves, that military spirit which actual war will keep up of itself. We all know what young British officers can be in their own country; we can imagine what they may become in an enervating climate, without anxious occupation, and with many opportunities of mischief; we know from sufficient sources what the Hindoos are themselves. We have only to put these things together,—we cannot help doing so, and we have at least the means of understanding how it is that regiment after regiment of the native forces is reported to be in a state of disaffection. If a master neglects his school it is sure to fall into disorganization; if the head of a mercantile business becomes slack in his personal superintendence it soon goes to wrack and ruin; if the authorities of a town take it for granted that all is right it will soon be a nest of thieves. In the East indolence is almost a necessity of the climate, vice more precocious than here, and decay more rapid. So we cannot doubt that the absence or carelessness of officers in regiments, not too well officered to begin with will inevitably tell very quickly in the insubordination of the simple native soldier. This, in our humble opinion, is the real danger; and Lord ELLENBOROUGH'S alarm as to the missionary projects he attributes to Lord CANNING can only have the effect of diverting attention from it.

A low standard of duty in the officers cannot but tell on the army. It tells even here, where the natural character of the British soldier, and the whole force of surrounding opinion, combine to counteract the bad example or neglect of those in command. It must, then, tell in India, where the soft, ductile character of the Hindoo, waits for impressions, and in the absence of a good model and salutary instruction is sure to fall, by mere lapse, into any delusion or temptation that offers itself. There never was a people so easily governed. We should not have acquired the obedience, the confidence, and even the affection of 170,000,000 people, had they not possessed a wonderful pliancy of temper, and had we not also had within ourselves some natural gifts of command. Here, then, are brought together all the elements of an unbroken peace and a durable dominion, and there must be some very positive fault, some gross misrule, to produce the deplorable events said to have taken place. Even if the reports be true to the fullest extent, we have no fear of serious consequences. It is better, indeed, to be on the safe side, and we trust Government will remember that British India has increased much of late years, that the demands on its army have increased on all sides, and that the native forces have also been considerably augmented without a proportionate increase of the European forces. We cannot pretend to hold a seventh of the human race with no greater number of British soldiers than was lately thought but a poor contingent to send to the siege of Sebastopol. We ought to have more men in India. But it is even more important that measures should be taken to keep the European officers of the native army fully up to their duty and their work. The very nature of the delusion alleged in this instance convicts these officers of neglect. They cannot have had proper communication with their men, they cannot have won the confidence of their men, or gained access to their understandings, if the latter have generally imbibed so ridiculous an idea as that England was destroying their castes and undermining their religion by means of greased cartridges.

A word as to the penalty inflicted on the offenders. People hear in this country with much satisfaction of a native regiment disbanded and sent no one knows where for a few acts of thoughtless folly. But people are not generally aware of the severity of this punishment. The Sepoys so disbanded lose all their claims on the Company, and such as are advanced in years, as many, especially of the native officers, are, pay with their lives for the madness of an hour. The pension in their only resource, and without it they must starve. Will not a recurrence of such examples, miserable enough in themselves, suggest a doubt of the Company's faith, as if it were seeking for a pretence to evade its obligations, the just performance of which has been always described as our principal hold upon Hindoo respect and allegiance? Let the Company be wisely consistent; let it extend the penalty to all who deserve it. Let it put all the European officers on half-pay, seeing that their neglect is the chief cause of these misfortunes. We have heard it said that nothing would produce so salutary an effect upon the Company's service. So far from its being unpopular, or diminishing the confidence of Englishmen in the honour of the Company, we believe that it would be hailed as a triumph of justice.

The debates on the Army Estimates have brought to light a notable piece of administrative economy. It had been resolved to provide the country with a Military Hospital—not a bad decision in itself, for events had shown how much we had to learn in this respect, and some good institution, where the principles of military surgery and nursing could be practically studied might naturally be attended with advantages over and above the relief of its particular inmates. Well, the vote originally proposed for the purpose was 150,000*l.*, but it appeared that the expense of the building was to exceed its first estimate by no less than 110,000*l.*, and that, instead of 150,000*l.*, it was to cost 260,000*l.* This was something, but not all. The site selected for the new invalid establishment was Netley, on the banks of the Southampton Water, where acres of mud, as a matter of course, are uncovered for so many hours daily to the pestiferous action of the sun. Mr. STAFFORD, whose experience at Scutari has given him some insight into realities of this kind, enlightened the House a little upon the Hospital at Netley. "It was begun," he said, "in utter defiance and ignorance of all those "principles of sanitary knowledge which we had "learnt by bitter experience during the last few "years. Its site was chosen without any reference to "medical authorities. When the building was com-"menced the attention of those who ought to have "been consulted, and who had the interest of the "British soldier at heart, was drawn to it, and it "was found necessary to make so many important "and costly alterations that the Government consented to spend 110,000*l.* more upon it. Even this increase, he believed, would not be sufficient "to build it in the manner in which it ought to "be built." A very pretty story this, but there is more to come still. The expenditure already incurred upon the new Hospital is reckoned at 70,000*l.*, and it is now rumoured that, as far as regards the Netley site, the undertaking is to be abandoned. So much for economy when there is a bottomless purse to draw upon; and yet we hope to take off the Income-tax in 1860!

We shall hardly be thought to make the matter much better, perhaps, when we say that the abandonment of the project, even at the sacrifice of so many thousands, is about the best course that could be pursued. Netley was never a desirable situation, and, though the establishment of a large Military Hospital was certainly a judicious design, there was no necessity for going to Southampton Water for the purpose. The fact is, we have a Hospital already built on a most convenient site, with excellent approaches, admirable grounds, and accommodation of the most satisfactory kind. It belongs to the nation, it is devoted to the service of the Army, and it is even called a Hospital as it is, though the term happens to be interpreted according to the ancient, rather than the modern meaning of the word. We speak of the institution at Chelsea, and, however the idea may scandalize certain sentimental notions at the first blush, we make bold to say that there is not one of the many interests connected with the proper administration of the Army which would not be advanced by such a metamorphosis as we refer to.

Of course it will be asked what is to be done with the Pensioners—with those gallant veterans who there enjoy an honourable retreat after devoting their best days to the service of their country? We reply that if the matter could be decided by the votes of these very people it would not be left many hours in abeyance. Chelsea Hospital was no doubt an excellent establishment in its origin, well intended and well worked; but experience has now taught us that all such institutions entail expenses which would make the objects of the institution far more comfortable elsewhere. What may have been the case in early times it is difficult to say, but at present it is perfectly certain that the great object of such establishments—viz., the relief and sustenance of soldiers who are past duty and have deserved support, could be attained at infinitely less cost to the country, and with far greater satisfaction to those concerned, by the simple payment of a pension without any of this costly apparatus. If a hospital provides the discharged soldier with a residence it also imposes upon him many obligations of discipline with which he would rather dispense, and it keeps him at a distance from the scenes and kindred among whom he would naturally wish to close his days. All this while the cost of the fabric, with its staff of officers and retainers, not to mention the value of the site, so swells the demand upon the Exchequer that the mere maintenance of the soldiers is lost in the total. Half the money expended directly in pensioning the same number of men would render them all far happier and far more independent. They could carry their pensions with them to such part of the country as they pleased, and, being thus enabled not only to support themselves without appeal to others, but even to render perhaps some little service to those around them, they would enjoy a position equally assured and far more comfortable than that of Pensioners in a Hospital. We need not be at much pains to prove this proposition. What is thought of the difference between indoor relief and outdoor relief we see clearly enough in the operation of the Poor Law. In that case the object is to make the receipt of assistance unattractive, and outdoor relief is measured with jealousy accordingly; but in the case of soldiers' pensions the object is of an opposite kind, and it is indoor relief which should be abolished as far as possible. To keep up a great Hospital as part of a pension machinery is to spend a sovereign upon the process of giving away half-a-guinea.

On the other hand, if the Chelsea establishment were converted into a Hospital in the modern acceptation of the word, we believe the plan would unite as many advantages as any single scheme could combine. The accommodation, as we have already said, is excellent, the place is accessible by water, it is already Government property, and—what is a consideration of no small importance—the vicinity of the metropolis would enable its staff of surgeons to keep up their standard of practice by constant communication with the great civil Hospitals of London. All professional skill is enhanced by centralisation. A Military Hospital at Chelsea would be a real school of military surgery, and our invalided soldiers would get the benefit of all that science could accomplish for their relief. Nor need the change offend even the most ardent admirers of the antique or the picturesque. No time-honoured traditions need be violated. Chelsea Hospital might be Chelsea Hospital still—

India, in common with all the rest of Asia, has.
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