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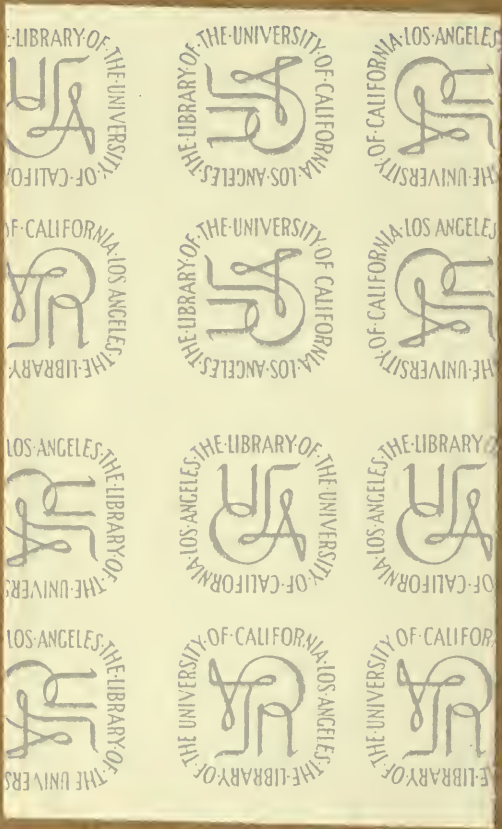
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EMANCIPATION OF INDIA



THE EMANCIPATION OF INDIA.

A Reply to the Article by the Right Hon. Viscount
MORLEY, O.M., on "British Democracy and
Indian Government" in the "Nineteenth Century
and After" for February, 1911.



By H. M. HYNDMAN.

ONE PENNY.

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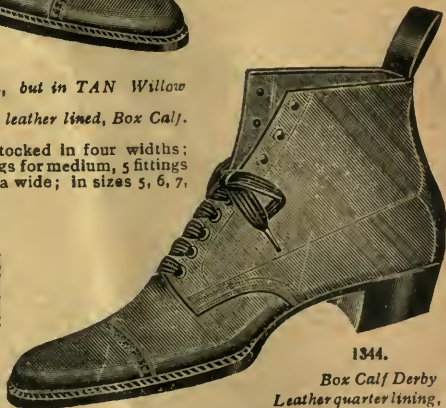
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TO THE READER.

This pamphlet is an article I wrote for the "Nineteenth Century and After" in reply to Lord Morley's eulogistic notice of Mr. Chiroi's book "Indian Unrest," which appeared in that Review for January. I reprint below the amusing letter I received from the editor declining my contribution, and my paper appears here precisely as it was sent to him. I need scarcely say that in its present shape this farther indictment of British rule will have a very much wider circulation in India itself than it could have obtained in the "Nineteenth Century and After." On the other hand, the ruling minority of this country will not, of course, have the opportunity of learning the truth through one of their principal channels of information. This I regret for the sake of India.

I regard the situation as increasingly dangerous, and I do not in the least believe that, whatever agreements they may have entered into, our Government can rely upon Japan to maintain our despotism in Hindustan. But the fact that such Asiatic support should be relied upon in any way shows how very weak our own position in India is known to be. It is not too much to say that unrest, deepening into bitter disaffection, is spreading now openly and secretly through that great Empire. Englishmen who know the country and the people best are most doubtful as to the immediate future. I have done my utmost for five-and-thirty years to warn my countrymen how impossible it is that our hold upon India should be permanent. Unfortunately the sordid Imperialism which now has this nation in its grip is even more short-sighted and incapable than any previous form of domination from which we have suffered, and the probability of a really enlightened policy being taken up and carried through is less than it was in 1876.

H. M. H.

9, Queen Anne's Gate, London, S.W.
March 1st, 1911.

"The Nineteenth Century and After,"

5, New Street Square,
Fetter Lane, E.C.
February 13th, 1911.

MY DEAR SIR,

I have read your article on "The Emancipation of India" with great interest, and am very sorry to be unable to publish so eminently readable a contribution. The tradition of this "Review" has always been to present varied points of view, but in this case, whatever may be said for the point of view, I cannot but think it very unadvisable to present it. To suggest to any Government the "complete emancipation" of India is to give advice which one must know will not be taken—and I am compelled to think that the publication of your article would have a dangerous effect on India. I am, therefore, returning it without delay in accordance with your letter of the 11th.

Please accept my best thanks for allowing me to read it.

Yours very truly,

To H. M. Hyndman, Esq.

W. WRAY SKILBECK.

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THE EMANCIPATION OF INDIA.

A full generation has passed since, in 1878, I began to write in this Review* upon the serious economic and financial problems of our Indian Empire, and did my best to call public attention to the terrible mischief which, with the best possible intentions, we were doing to scores of millions of our fellow-subjects in India. Lord Morley, adopting the views of Sir John Strachey, answered my article in the "Fortnightly Review," on behalf of the Anglo-Indian bureaucracy, then as now the dominating influence on these questions in the English press. I do not think those who take the trouble to look back to my rejoinder, and a later article on the same subject, likewise in the "Nineteenth Century," will dispute that at that time I made out my case.

Certain it is, at any rate, that the Conservative Government of the day thought so. Lord Cranbrook, then Secretary of State for India, Lord Salisbury, and Lord Iddesleigh, were convinced that the recognition of the rights of Indians to the management of their own country, which the two latter had so nobly sanctioned when they returned Mysore to Indian rule in 1868, ought to be carried farther; that an attempt should be made to build up Indian administration under light English leadership in other directions, where there was no existing Indian State to emancipate or reconstitute; that Indians should be given a much greater share in the existing government whilst this far-seeing and generous policy was being carried out; that also a great effort should at once be made to reduce the heavy salaries, civil and military, paid to Europeans in India, and to return to the methods of strict economy which in the main characterised the administration of the old East India Company. At this time I was in almost daily communication with Sir Louis Mallet at the India Office, as well as with Sir George Kellner, who then held a confidential post under Lord Salisbury at the Foreign Office. Moreover, my intimate friend Mr. Edward Stanhope, Under-Secretary for India, a commencement of a policy of economy and reconstruction being then determined upon, sent me a note saying that a seat under the gallery was reserved for me when he made his speech introducing the new measures, in order, as he was so kind as to write, that "you may hear your policy" laid before the House of Commons. Although, therefore, like Lord Morley himself, I have never been in India, I may claim that I am entitled by long study of India, and close and continuous acquaintance with Indians from all parts of Hindustan, to speak and write upon the subject.

When the Liberal Government came to power in 1880 Lord Hartington restored all the highly-paid posts which had been suppressed; no farther attempt was made, even under Lord Ripon's Viceroyalty, to deal seriously with the economic side of the vast Indian problem; and from that day to this the system which I firmly believe is ruinous to India and harmful to Great Britain has been

* "The Nineteenth Century and After."

relentlessly upheld. No amount of agitation in England or in India, against what I hold to be the crushing and shortsighted injustice of our rule, has so far had any serious effect upon our governing class. Europeanisation has been pushed to a point never attained hitherto. Economy is the last thing which has been thought of in any direction. Such appointments, also, as have lately been given to Indians are calculated rather to strengthen the foreign bureaucracy, by rallying capable Indians to the support of our government, than to foster the development of genuine Indian administration in the interest of India ; and the general tone of the English press and English society is, perhaps, more opposed to the claims of India for emancipation and self-government than ever before.

And now, in his article in the last number of this Review, criticising Mr. Chirol's book on "Indian Unrest," Lord Morley assumes throughout that British domination in Hindustan will practically be permanent, and that the matter most pressing for consideration at the moment is whether the Secretary of State responsible to the House of Commons in London, or the personal Representative of the King-Emperor in Calcutta, shall be the real ruler of India. Admitting that under our Constitution power must ultimately rest with the popular Assembly in England, this, under existing conditions, makes as little difference to Indians as it does to live turkeys whether they should be basted with oil or with butter. The view of Indians naturally is that they do not wish to be governed by us at all.

Unfortunately, also, the drawbacks of our administration are by no means fully discussed in the House of Commons. Indian policy is made a Government and a Party matter. If the Liberals are in office and they carry out a programme of repression the Ministry is sure of support from the Opposition ; and advanced Radicals or Irish Home Rulers or Socialist Labour men have little chance of making any impression upon the House and the country even if, as very seldom happens, they have the leisure and the opportunity for mastering the details of Indian affairs. When the Conservatives, on the other hand, obtain a majority the cry is raised that a continuity of policy must be maintained. In this respect matters are a great deal worse now than they were in the days of the East India Company. Then, once in thirty years, when the Company's Charter came up for renewal, a thorough inquiry could be and was made into the management of affairs of India, and, no question of party loyalty being directly involved, a thorough and impartial investigation might be made. No such careful examination of the influence of our management as a whole upon India has been entered upon since 1857.

There have been commissions and committees on various subjects who accumulated a vast mass of information on which they decided that in the main all is for the best in India. But there has been no such formal Inquiry by a body of men qualified by knowledge and experience to form a judgment unbiased by party considerations, as many wholly impartial persons have long considered desirable. Strange to

say, Lord Morley, who is so strongly opposed to any weakening of democratic authority—that is to say, as he puts it, House of Commons control—is even more antagonistic to such a complete Inquiry as that suggested, on the ground that “it would be absurd to bring home all the capable men who are engaged in the day-to-day administration of the enormous Government in order to hear questions which would not in all cases be dictated by knowledge, but partly by prejudice and passion.” Lord Morley’s old friend, Professor Beesly, quoting this sentence in the “Times,” made upon it the following criticism: “Two entirely different objections are here mixed up. The answer to the first is that the committee should sit in India as well as in England. The second has no more validity against this than against any other inquiry.” I need add nothing to this. That something far more searching in the way of investigation is needed than any criticism we get at present seems to follow from Lord Morley’s own admissions, in the article upon which I am commenting, when he writes quite frankly about the prevailing disaffection in India.

Thus Lord Morley says: “But all will agree that, whatever the proportions, depth and vitality of unrest, it is in spirit near enough to revolt to deserve examination.” I think I shall be able to show that “the proportions, depth and vitality of unrest” are much greater than have as yet been generally appreciated, and that they certainly “deserve examination.” But if the examination is called for on this ground alone, what sort of Inquiry ought that to be? Not surely examination only by those, from Lord Morley and the Viceroy downwards, who themselves are responsible for the government of India, into their own conduct and acts. Nor, again, can the haphazard questionings of the House of Commons, of the representative of officialdom for the time being in that assembly, be said to meet the case. “The potent truth that the Cabinet is the single seat of final authority,” the Cabinet being more supreme in Parliament than ever it was, sweeps away also any probability of such a searching and unprejudiced Inquiry by the whole House. On a far more limited issue than that opened up in relation to the British Government of India, both Lord Morley and Mr. Chirol state, in very strong language, that the House of Commons has utterly failed to do, or attempted to do, even a little justice. This is in regard to the treatment of our Indian fellow-subjects who have emigrated to South Africa. “No Englishman,” writes Mr. Chirol, with the full approval of Lord Morley, “could have listened to the debate without a deep sense of humiliation”: a debate “upon a question that has stirred the resentment of every single community of the Indian Empire.” But if the whole House of Commons, from the extremest Toryism to the most advanced section of the Labour Party, fails ignominiously to deal with so crying a scandal as this of the persecution of Indians in South Africa, can we feel quite so sure as Lord Morley seems to be that it is an adequate Court of Appeal in all the complex problems bound up with our domination in Hindustan? I think not.

Therefore, I ask for a thoroughly representative and careful Public Inquiry into British Government in India: Indians themselves, who are foremost exponents of the prevailing unrest, and Englishmen who sympathise with them, not being excluded from such an important Commission. But whether this request be granted or not, a direct statement of facts from the non-official side may be of general interest at this critical juncture, when preparations are already being made for the approaching visit of the King-Emperor and his consort to India; and some hope has arisen among the more sanguine that the great Durbar, held to welcome their Majesties, may be signalled by the proclamation of a more generous policy than has found favour hitherto.

I.

Whatever may be the benefits that our rule is supposed to confer upon India, there is no longer any dispute as to the terrible poverty of the agricultural population. Such poverty on so huge a scale is to be found nowhere else on the planet. Without going deeply into statistics, I do not think it will be disputed that to take the sum of 16s. 6d. a year out of the income of a cultivator's family of five, not exceeding £4, or at the outside £5, a year is a very heavy deduction indeed for government purposes, no matter by what name we call it, whether tax or rent. That 226,000,000 of people should be dependent for their entire food supply upon less than 200,000,000 acres of land under eatable crops, much of which is soil of very poor and ever-decreasing fertility, can also scarcely be taken as evidence of an improving standard of life for the bulk of this great population as compared with the position thirty years ago. My friend the late Mr. William Digby calculated in his book "‘Prosperous’ British India," that the ryot of our time can only command one-third the amount of nourishment available for his great-grandfather and one-half that at the disposal of his grandfather. As Mr. Digby's conclusions were based entirely upon precise details given in confidential official reports not accessible to the general public, there is no reason to believe that these estimates of his as to the extreme and growing poverty of the people are exaggerated.

There is, in fact, no proof whatever forthcoming of increasing prosperity. On the contrary, though here and there, in irrigated districts where too heavy a price is not charged for the water, and well-sinking by the ryots is not prohibited by law, a comparatively small number may have benefited, there is too much reason to believe that the admissions of Sir William Hunter and others as to the baleful effects of our rule in forcing tens upon tens of millions into a condition of permanent starvation would have to be considerably extended if a similar calculation to his were made at the present time. Famines and outbreaks of plague enforce this view.

To put it another way. If the peasants of British India were becoming richer there would be clear evidence of this increase of

wealth in the demand they would create for imported goods of a higher class, by the greater display of bangles and other gold and silver ornaments they would make, and the larger supplies of sweet-meats which would at once be seen in the villages. According to the best testimony, there is no such sign of improvement anywhere over an extended area. Yet when the American Civil War in the early sixties cast a transient gleam of well-being over the province of Bombay, owing to the high prices then realised for Indian cotton, the eagerness of the agriculturists to purchase watches, trinkets, etc., was remarkable. Nothing of the kind can be seen nowadays outside the Native States, whose imports and exports are all lumped in with those of British Territory.

Let us not forget that by levying the Land Tax (which is exacted in cash before the crops are gathered, thus forcing the ryots into the grip of the money-lenders) at the factitious rate of 1s. 4d. for the rupee, intrinsically worth from 11d. to 1s. 2d., the land tax was permanently raised against the ryots at least 28% all round, without any possibility of effective resistance. If, furthermore, the United Kingdom were taxed at the same average rate as British India is, on the total national gross income, the Chancellor of the Exchequer would have a revenue of £333,000,000 a year, and even then his taxation would not press nearly so heavily upon this country as our taxation does upon India. Taxation in British India, therefore, is not light as compared with the resources of the people. It is very heavy.

And all the time a permanent cause of impoverishment is relentlessly at work which it is nowadays the fashion to deride, but which none the less has a terribly depressing effect upon British India as a whole. The amount which British India has to pay for Home Charges, including interest on loans and dividends on State Railways, amounts at present roughly to an average of £18,000,000 a year. Obviously, it makes no difference in the economic effect of this payment on what account that large sum is paid. It is so much deducted from the gross yearly produce of India and brought over here for the benefit of our own countrymen.

Moreover, this is not by any means a full statement of the case. That the total net Land Revenue of India should be thus transferred to Great Britain year after year is bad enough. Properly calculated, however, the actual drain to this country without commercial return averages £30,000,000* a year for the ten-year period 1899-1908 inclusive. I am amazed, therefore, that the Master of Elibank, whose speech on this subject is quoted by Mr. Chirol in an appendix, should imagine that £300,000,000 can be abstracted from so desperately poor an Empire as our great Indian Dependency undoubtedly is without doing economic injury which no improvements in production and transport yet introduced under our régime can possibly counterbalance.

*These figures include the imports of treasure as well as the imports into the Native States, and it would not be difficult to show that the drain is even greater than appears from the figures given above. On the other hand, the decrease in the excess of exports is very marked indeed in the last two years of the period.

It is impossible properly to compare India in this respect with the United States, our own free Colonies, or other independent countries, whose exports exceed or appear to exceed their imports. The conditions are quite different in every way. They have virgin soil to deal with, open to be cultivated and developed by a new influx of energetic immigrants every year. They are their own masters, can build their public works on their own scale, and maintain their own armed forces according to their own wishes. They can and do suspend payment of interest and dividends, or actually repudiate these obligations altogether when they find the drain is too heavy even for the advantageous circumstances under which they work. What a contrast to India! India is a very ancient, thickly-peopled Empire where practically all the good cultivable soil is occupied. She has no say as to whether the system imposed upon her in European administration, railway and public work construction and military expenditure is too costly for her or not. She has to pay whether she likes it or not, because she is under what is in practice a despotic foreign rule that forces her to discharge this heavy economic tribute even in the worst years of famine and plague.

I contend once more, therefore, that, economically and socially, on the ground of heavy taxation harshly levied and a tremendous yearly withdrawal of wealth without return, British rule is ruinous to India.

But it is urged by many Anglo-Indians and others that India as a whole was still poorer before our arrival than she is now. This statement seems to me to be controverted by all records of the Hindu and Mohammedan periods. Hindustan suffered much from foreign invasion, from domestic disturbance and from famine in those old times. Nobody would dispute that. But the trade of India was always sought after, its commerce built up the wealth and prosperity of many great cities of ancient times, and the privilege of trading with the Mogul Empire was considered extremely valuable by English merchants long before the idea of acquiring any hold upon the country entered the heads of our forbears. Again, the Emperor Akber's revenue, which was certainly not harshly raised by his famous Hindu Finance Minister, Toder Mull, amounted to £30,000,000 a year, representing, of course, a very much larger amount at the present time. The revenue Aurungzib obtained from a larger extent of territory amounted to no less than £80,000,000. These are Sir William Hunter's estimates. The wealth of the Deccan under the Bahmuny Dynasty has long been celebrated, and 40,000 breached tanks in that province alone speak of the wonderful irrigation works carried out and maintained by its Mohammedan rulers. Besides, if India had been a poor country when we went there, how could we have taken out of it in the eighteenth century the enormous wealth which gave us the first place in the development of the great industry in Europe, and secured for us likewise in large part the financial resources by which we were enabled to encounter and overcome Europe in arms against us?

The truth also is that, anarchical as we now consider much of Indian rule to have been, it had great compensations which are entirely lacking under our more rigid system. The following passages by the man of genius who performed the marvellous feat of suppressing the Thugs will perhaps give some idea of the reasons why the English peace is by no means universally preferred to the disturbances of old time. I may add by way of interpolation that Lord Morley himself says:—"Even the fiercest of Oriental tyrants always ran some risk of having his throat cut or his coffee poisoned if he pushed things too far." Under our rule, at any rate until quite recently, the most despotic administrator ran no such risk. But hear Sir William Sleeman as to the condition of Oudh even in the period of forty years of horrible misrule before our annexation in 1856. He writes:—"There were neither accumulating arrears of land revenue nor ruinous back debts to weigh down the proprietors; there were no unsatisfied decrees of court to drive debtors to hopeless despair; they came back from their court of bankruptcy, the jungle-forest, free from encumbrances; the bread tax was fixed with some regard to the coming harvest; arrears were remitted when the impossibility of payment within the year was clearly demonstrated." Further, "there could be no black despair in those days of changeful misrule." What, then, do we find? Why, in spite of all the oppression undergone and the unspeakable atrocities committed, Sir William Sleeman records that "the people generally, or at least a great part of them, would prefer to reside in Oudh, under all the risks to which these contests expose them, than in our own districts, under the evils the people are exposed to from the uncertainties of our law, the multiplicity and formality of our courts, the pride and negligence of those who preside over them and the corruption and insolence of those who must be employed to prosecute or defend a cause in them, and to enforce the fulfilment of a decree when passed." "Once more," he says, "I am persuaded that if it were put to the vote among the people of Oudh, ninety-nine in a hundred would rather remain as they are, without any feeling of security in life or property, than have our system introduced in its present complicated state."

These words were written more than fifty years ago, and I do not pretend to say that no changes for the better have been made in our system since then. But those who have talked familiarly with Indians know well that bitter complaints are still made of our complete incapacity to understand how our, to us, apparently just, but inflexible, unsuitable and over-legalised methods of administration and finance really crush the very life out of the Indian population.* Nor can it be honestly disputed, I think, that to shut a highly civilised group of

* The effect of our rigid system of tax collection has been to put nearly the whole agricultural population in our territory, outside of a few favoured areas, in the hands of the native money-lenders. If these bunias, shroffs or soucars, were to refuse to make advances, the land revenue of India could not be collected. The effects of our policy upon the Province of Madras in particular are well-known and are very deplorable. It is not only the amount of our taxation but the manner in which it is levied that calls for immediate reform.

nations out from any direct share in the management of their own affairs, to discourage their study of their own great history in so far as it tells of patriotism and resistance to the foreigner, to neglect the education of the mass of the people, and to force out of existence by unthinking competition their finest industries and most beautiful arts—to do all this, even with the best motives, is not to benefit India, but to inflict an amount of moral, material and intellectual damage which it may take several generations to remedy.

II.

But is the possession and domination of India advantageous to the people of Great Britain? I regard this as quite a secondary matter as compared with the issue whether our rule is beneficial to the people of India or not. Even if our democracy were pecuniarily the gainers by the retention of that great country under our control, I should still contend that we have no right whatever to continue masters of the country to the detriment of the inhabitants of Hindustan. That, of course, is purely a moral consideration; but it is one which I have always found to weigh heavily with our own people when it has been brought home to them. I maintain, however, that, even from the mere mercenary point of view, as well as from that of morality, our hold upon India is of no real advantage to the working classes of Great Britain, who, as Lord Morley himself has said, “are the nation.” That it enriches the upper middle class and gives outlets to their sons I admit; as also that it provides well-paid governorships for the aristocracy and pensions for the returned civilians and others in the employment of the Government.

But if India took control of her own industry and finance, would not Lancashire be deprived of its markets and her workpeople be thrown out upon the streets? Our trade with India does not depend upon the continuance of our domination. Our existing trade with India, apart from the drain and the imports of Government stores into India, is not in any sense a forced or official trade. Assuming India to be under the control of a series of self-governing States, at peace or at variance with one another, commerce would not cease and the demand for British goods would still continue. As matters stand, we have no monopoly of Indian commerce even with all the advantages we possess in consequence of our long possession of the country. In fact, there is growing up in India itself a feeling among the people against English goods which may have a very detrimental effect upon the quantity and value of our exports to that country. Other nations, too, notably the Japanese, are coming in to compete seriously with our own manufacturers and merchants; in fact, this competition has already begun, and adds another to the many anxieties of the Lancashire cotton-trade. The same drawbacks and difficulties, that is to say, are to-day coming to the front which it is assumed would have to be encountered were India mistress of her own commercial destinies.

That emancipated India would impose protective duties against our cotton goods, as we protected our home markets against Indian

calicoes 150 and 200 years ago, is a probability of which full account must be taken, and is an event for which, should such a complete change of government be brought about, preparation must be made. Looked at, however, from the most pessimist point of view, there are compensations in this too. Even assuming that the Indian cotton trade were to fall off in consequence of the relaxation of our hold upon that country, it can scarcely be maintained that this would be a great blow to England in the long run. Our habit of regarding the growth of exports and imports as the sole test of national prosperity has finally closed our eyes to the truth that the vast expansion of the cotton industry in the North of England has deteriorated our race physically, morally, and intellectually. To quote Lord Morley again: "If we pierce below the varnish of words we any day discover strata of barbarism in the supreme capitals and centres." That is undoubtedly true of the great country where cotton is king. Blackburn itself is scarcely a model of high civilised life. Foreign and even Indian markets may be obtained at too heavy a cost when such is the result of the complete divorcement of our people from the soil, and their being crowded together in the slums of big cities and towns.

Moreover, our existing trade with India, including the native States, is absurdly small for such a vast population. The average of the total imports of India from the United Kingdom for the past ten years, apart from Government stores and treasure, is only £40,000,000, or considerably less than 3s. per head per year. Even taking the highest year of the ten-year period, the total amount of imports from the United Kingdom reached less than 4s. per head. The direct import trade from the United Kingdom into India, therefore, is comparatively small in relation to our total exports from this island. Nor can it, I think, be denied that, if my contentions as to the impoverishment of India are correct, it would pay, from the commercial point of view, that our customers should grow up well-to-do under their own control rather than that we should impoverish the 226,000,000 of people under our direct rule by the system of economic depletion which we apply to them to-day.

But, further, our connection with India set our external policy on the wrong track from the first. As Kinglake said, we are a warlike but not a military nation. The possession of India, with the consequent necessity for keeping up a large and expensive European army in the country, puts us on the footing of a military power and forces Great Britain to regard international questions far too much from the Eastern view. It is not too much to say that had it not been for our possession of India we should long since have been able to take up that policy of democratic alliances in Europe for which we are specially fitted by our geographical situation, our historical development and the traditional faculties of our race. Unluckily the influence of Indian policy upon England is increasing rather than diminishing.

Much of our recent dealing with other nations has been guided by Asiatic rather than by European considerations, and the possibilities of

disturbance in India affect prejudicially our influence in Western affairs. Nearly all those, likewise, who return from holding office in India join the ranks of the reactionary party; while the few who take a wider view of the prospects of humanity are of opinion that British rule in India is a necessity, and are thus drawn more or less themselves into the vortex of Imperialism. Nor is it far from the exercise of despotism abroad to an attempt to stifle public opinion and exalt the power of bureaucracy at home. This in itself may be a serious danger. For the British Democracy, about which Lord Morley writes, is in fact non-existent. We have all the drawbacks of a plutocracy and none of the advantages of a popular Government at the present time. A Referendum to the whole of the people would, however, I am convinced, decide even now in favour of giving self-government to India. English workers are not Imperialists in the bureaucratic sense at all.

III.

A population of 44,000,000 of people exercising practically despotic rule over 300,000,000 of civilised Asiatics several thousand miles away from these islands. Is it not enough to state that one fact to show plainly that sooner or later this connection must come to an end? Is it not also reasonable, when that truth is admitted, to consider seriously how soon the change is likely to take place, and to prepare for bringing it about in a satisfactory manner with the consent of both parties? At the present moment there seems little probability of this being done, and it is the loss of all confidence in the intention of Great Britain to act reasonably in this direction that more than anything else has led to the growing unrest and dissatisfaction throughout Hindustan.

But we have it now on the highest official authority that this unrest exists, and that quite probably it will continue and will spread. Lord Morley may be right when he says that disaffection prevailed in Bengal long before partition. Nevertheless, it is also true that this cutting in two of a great historical province, in order to give the Mohammedans, who are supposed to be favourable to British rule, or at any rate hostile to Hindu dominance, a majority in the severed portion brought the disaffection to a head. It did more. This was no economic oppression: it was an outrage on local sentiment and the general feeling of Indian patriotism. What was the result? This purely sentimental grievance aroused a spirit among the Bengalis which Anglo-Indian officials still seem unable to understand. This "cowardly" race as our people were never tired of calling them—though the history of the Bengal Sepoys and of the Bengal Moslem Wahabi Crescentaders passed up by the secret committees from Benares to Agra, and thence on to the frontier to fight on the Black Mountain in 1868, might have taught them better—this pusillanimous set, I say, suddenly developed a succession of cool, desperate, self-sacrificing young assassins who reckoned their own lives at nothing, and who, when they gloried in their condemnation and went triumphantly to their deaths, were regarded as martyrs by their countrymen.

No such imposing religious demonstration has been seen in India in our day as that secretly-summoned crowd which attended the cremation of the body of one of these popular heroes after his execution in Calcutta itself, the presence of many well-to-do women lending special significance to the ceremony. Much as we all detest assassination, it is madness to shut our eyes to the importance of such a public outburst of religious feeling in favour of an assassin, because steps have been taken to prevent a renewal of the display.

Nor is this exhibition of sympathy with opponents of the Government confined to actual criminals or manifested only in the towns. When Mr. Bipin Chandra Pal, a convinced pacifist, was released from the imprisonment to which he was condemned, for refusing to give evidence in a political case, his portrait was carried crowned with flowers through most of the villages of the partitioned province, and it is said that Mohammedans joined with Hindus in their appreciation of the service he had rendered to the common cause by his action. Why should they not? They are of the same race after all, and are placed under similar disabilities. Certain it is at least that, so far as Bengal is concerned, the suppression of newspapers, the putting-down of public meetings, the deportation without accusation or trial of political suspects, and the flogging of young political offenders, have not checked the development of unrest and discontent among the 80,000,000 Indians, Hindu and Mohammedan, who constitute the population of the undivided province. These measures have only, as might have been expected, driven the propaganda underground. The demand for Swaraj is more persistent than before, and the cry of "Bande Mataram" arouses more enthusiasm than ever.

But it is just the same in the Mahratta country. There, though serious economic and social causes are at work to account for permanent unrest, it was the arrest and condemnation of Bal Gungunder Tilak, for an article dealing with the history of the Mahratta race and drawing encouragement for the future from the records of their past, which stirred agitation throughout the province of Bombay, and led to the extraordinary action of the Bombay Municipality in actually closing the markets of that great city for eight days in order to show disapproval on the part of the commercial classes—the chief supporters of our rule—with the policy of the Government. Here, again, not only in Bombay and in Poona, but throughout the whole of the villages, the same view was taken of the trial and judgment. Tilak to-day in his prison is still leader, not only of the Mahrattas, but of the whole of Western India. The agricultural population may be poor and ignorant and superstitious; but if we have failed, after 150 years of victory in the field and "successful" administration in the bureau, to convince them that our presence and leadership are preferable to the counsels of men of their own race and faith, then what probability is there that we shall be able to deal any better with this growing dissatisfaction in the near future?

If also Tilak was compelled to go to the expense of an appeal to the Privy Council in London, in order to argue out his plea of mis-

translation and misdirection with reference to an article written in a language wholly unknown to the Court called upon to adjudicate, it can scarcely be regarded as democratic justice that Savarkar should have been packed off to India for trial, though his alleged offence was committed, and he himself was arrested, in Great Britain. Faith in British equity has been completely shaken by these proceedings; yet nobody can truly say that the British Democracy has been responsible for them either directly or indirectly. The cases have never been put to them for their opinion in any shape or way. They are really not consulted in reference to these matters, any more than the Indian public is consulted. For Indian questions are not discussed at election times, and anyone who, like Mr. Mackarness, makes himself obnoxious to the Government in the House of Commons by pluckily taking the sound democratic view, is speedily boycotted and harried out of Parliamentary life.

The unrest in Bengal and Bombay, though no doubt intensified by general causes, became overt and unpleasant to the Government as the immediate result of ruffled sentiment. In the Punjab, on the other hand, it could be easily traced to the direct effect of economic injustice. Promises made to cultivators were broken, excessive charges were imposed for irrigation water, and no attention was paid to the complaints of the injured ryots or their leaders—men of the highest character who were deeply respected throughout the district. The principal leader was, as all the world knows, arrested and transported without accusation and without trial; Lord Morley hinting in the House of Commons that if this course had not been taken the Sikh regiments might have risen in the night. That utterance and that action seemed to me dictated by panic. The soundness of this view was confirmed when the prisoners were released, when the Central Government overruled the local authorities on all the points at issue, and when it was proved in court that Lala Lajpat Rai had been most unjustly dealt with. A heavier blow had thus been struck at British rule in India than even a rising of native troops would have been. For these incidents are nowadays blazoned abroad all over Hindustan, and the unrest is by no means confined, as the Government is well aware, to Bengal, the Punjab, and Bombay. The whole of India is affected.

At the same time, the touch of Englishmen in India with Indian life is not nearly so close as it was. This is admitted on both sides, and there is no necessity to go into the reasons for the growing aloofness. They are well known. But the tone of the Anglo-Indian press of late years proves that the unrest is by no means confined to Indians, nor the strong language to Indian newspapers. Here are a few passages cited by Miss Hilda M. Howsin in her paper on "Race and Colour Prejudice," read before the East India Association, Lord Amptill being in the chair. They are only samples of what constantly appears in these journals; but there is no talk of suppressing them nor of fining and imprisoning their editors or proprietors. Thus the "Pioneer" suggests "a wholesale arrest of the acknowledged terror-

ists in a city or district, coupled with an intimation that on the next repetition of the offence ten of them would be shot for every life sacrificed." Among those to be thus summarily dealt with the "Pioneer" enumerates "the smooth Legislative Councillor," and "the Congress Moderate," as well as "the lecturer and vernacular editor." Mr. Kingsford's life was attempted because he sentenced youthful political leaders to be flogged. The "Asian" recommended a policy of the greatest harshness to the Government, advised Mr. Kingsford to "let daylight into every strange native approaching his house or his person," and added, "We hope Mr. Kingsford will manage to secure a 'big bag,' and we envy him his opportunity." In the "Englishman" "flogging of agitators in public by town sweepers" is suggested. Making every allowance for the natural uneasiness of a European and Eurasian garrison of India numbering fewer than 200,000 all told, amid three hundred millions of people whose friendliness is increasingly doubtful, can a state of things be permanent in which language of this sort is habitually used by the dominant minority?*

I do not pretend to speak with any knowledge on military affairs, but the famous march of Sir Hugh Rose's column through Central India during the Mutiny could never have succeeded if the agricultural population had not been friendly to the English troops. I do not myself believe that our removal from India will be brought about by an armed rising; but with only 70,000 European troops in Hindustan, and a large part of them unavailable at a given moment, it is well to bear in mind that we cannot hope to hold our own by military force against an unfriendly, to say nothing of a hostile, India. Nor is it well to overlook such a statement as that made by Mr. Donald Smeaton at Glasgow, immediately on his return to England, to the effect that what is going on in India would lead to a revolt "besides which the Mutiny would be child's play." In fact, I do not suppose the most bigoted Imperialist would seriously argue that we can keep down India with European troops alone. We conquered India and we reconquered India with the help of native armies and with, in the main, the goodwill of the native population. If the conditions have completely changed within the past fifty years we are bound in common prudence to take account of this.

I am aware that there are many prominent Indians, from the great Native Princes downwards, who profess unfaltering loyalty to British rule. Can we rely upon their good faith in making such assurances? Could they do anything else as matters stand? I am old enough to remember when most people thought the Austrian rule in Italy could never be shaken off because there was no hope of open attack being success-

* It is not pleasant to state, but it is unfortunately too true, that gross rudeness and criminal brutality are not so uncommon by any means as they ought to be on the part of Englishmen to Indians, and it is almost impossible for Indians to get justice done in such cases. Of our unfortunate police system it is scarcely necessary to write. Some of our judges in India have expressed themselves very plainly and very honourably on this head.

ful after the woful disasters of 1848-49. Some of the ablest Italians of the time, therefore, accepted the position and reconciled themselves to the Austrian government. But these "Austriacanti," as they were contemptuously called, were of no use whatever to Austria when the day of emancipation came. They were all too anxious to wipe away the memory of past servility, and rushed forward as eager patriots when the tide turned against the foreigner. Are we not running the risk of relying too much upon similar protestations of eternal friendship when the whole population is seething with unrest, and the example of Japan is daily given as proof of what a less ancient Asiatic civilisation than that of India could accomplish in little more than a generation? Are not Indians learning, also by sad experience, that the blessings of British Peace may be worse than the horrors of Native War?

It is said that when Mountstuart Elphinstone was sitting in the hot season writing his history of Native rule he replied to a friend who asked him what he was doing: "Preparing our way out of India." Lord Morley, giving in his article a summary of what Indians urge against us, voices a portion of their complaints thus: "You have shown yourselves less generous than the Moguls and Pathans, though you are a more civilised dominant race than they were. Hindus were willing to embrace Islam and to fall in with the Moslem régime because the equals of the dominant race. With you there has been no assimilation." That is true, and assimilation is not now possible. But surely the duty which we owe to India is not fulfilled by mere refusal to understand her demands or to give an outlet to the higher conceptions of her people. To continue to repeat the hypocritical statement that we remain in India for the good of India deceives no one—not even ourselves. To say that we will never be driven out of India is to predict a permanence for our rule which does not depend upon us. To enlarge upon Indian shortcomings in the past and in the present is little more than a pharisaic belauding of our own virtues, which men of other races do not regard as transcendent.

Yet, if we would but see, there is a glorious task lying immediately to our hand. We have done mischief enough. Here is a magnificent Empire, with a splendid record behind it in every branch of human achievement, slowly stirring with a new life which will be a glorified and ennobled resuscitation of the old. Great art, great architecture, great public works, great industries, great agriculture, great mathematics, great philosophy, great religions, all are being slowly born again, even under the crushing influence of our rule. Let us lift off this carapace of greed and repression and hold out the hand of welcome and encouragement to the higher aspirations of this vast population. That England should herself take the first steps towards the complete emancipation of India would entitle her to an infinitely higher place in the world's esteem than a vain attempt to carry on for yet a few fatal years the harmful despotism of to-day.

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