

INDIA INTESO.

BY

SIR RICHARD TEMPLE, BART.,

G.C.S.I., C.I.E., D.C.L.,

i.ATE GOVERNOR OF BOMBAY, LIEUTENANT-GOVERNOR OF BENGAL,
AND FINANCE MINISTER OF INDIA.

THIRD EDITION.

WITH TWO MAPS.

JOHN MURRAY, ALBEMARLE STREET.
1881.

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LONDON :

PRINTED BY WILLIAM CLOWES AND SONS, LIMITED, .
STAMFORD STREET AND CHARING CLOSS.

V2, L.M.8

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TO HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS

ALBERT EDWARD

Prince of Males,

IN MEMORY OF HIS VISIT TO INDIA,
ON WHICH MOST AUSPICIOUS OCCASION
GREAT BENEFIT WAS CONFERRED

ON THE

PRINCES; NOBLES, AND PEOPLE

OF THAT EMPIRE

WITH A POTENT AND ENDURING EFFECT ON THEIR HEARTS AND MINDS,

THIS BOOK IS,

WITH THE GRACIOUS PERMISSION OF HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS,

Bedicated,

BY HIS DUTIFUL AND LOYAL SERVANT,

THE AUTHOR.

PREFACE TO THE THIRD EDITION.

THE issue of a third edition seems to be a suitable opportunity for adverting in general terms to the notices which this book has received during the eighteen months that have elapsed since its first appearance. I am thankful to find that it has been favoured with some commendation from the Press, and that no material error whatever has been discovered. Still there has come from several organs of opinion some criticism which deserves attention, and may be considered as relating to, first, the want of definiteness in the expression of opinion regarding at least a few important points; secondly, the optimism alleged to characterize parts of the work.

The first heading of criticism, then, relates to the supposed want of definiteness in the expression of opinion regarding several important points. Now, as stated in the introduction, at page 3, the work was meant to be a dispassionate survey, and to supply the reader with the means of judging for himself regarding difficult and disputed questions rather than to establish any particular conclusions. I trust that this much is in some degree effected, and that the various sides, phases, or aspects of many doubtful matters are duly presented. Still in the course of the exposition, my own view was meant to be indicated, though it might not be dogmatically expressed. For instance in chapter IV. the political advantages accruing to the British Government from the existence of the Native States, the elements of security thereby afforded to the Indian empire, are positively set forth. By chapter VI. it was intended to imply distinctly that the

land can support the additional numbers which are yearly being added to its vast population, that the wealth of the people is increasing fast under British rule, and is fairly well diffused among all classes except the very humblest, that even these humblest are not so depressed as they were in former times, and feel poverty less than the corresponding classes among Northern and Western races. In chapters VII. and VIII. it is fully explained that the moral effect of British rule upon the various sections of the people is beneficial, with but few exceptions, that mental progress, though slow among the majority, is rapid among several important classes, that the character of the educated classes is greatly improved by the Western education, and that public instruction, though as yet defective and insufficient, is beginning to scatter blessings abroad. A large degree of success is claimed for the Christian missions in chapter IX.. and a decisive influence for good is attributed to them. By chapter X. the legislation for India is declared to be excellent in all respects, and the charge of over-legislating is answered. In chapter XI, the repression of violent crime is affirmed, while the police and prisons are pronounced to have been really much improved, despite many defects still remaining. The settlement of the land revenue and of landed tenures is unreservedly commended in chapter XII., the recognition by the Government of a property in the land is declared to be a valuable concession to the people, and a perpetual boon, while the status of the proprietary classes, whether landlords or peasant proprietors, is held to be satisfactory. But while those tenants who have occupancy rights are protected against oppression, those who have not such rights are unprotected, and have a fair claim to better protection in future. Still the rank and file of the agriculturists are on the whole flourishing. In chapter XIII. the land revenue is declared to be well and carefully assessed. the salt-tax to be paid without real difficulty by the poor, and without sensibly affecting consumption, the opium is held to be a legitimate subject of taxation not truly open to

the moral objections recently adduced against it. The entire abolition of the import duties on British piece goods is suggested. By chapters XIV., XV., and XVI. the canals of irrigation are shewn to be works of which any country might be proud, to be efficacious in times of famine, and financially profitable; the railways are proved to be successful whether under the guarantee system or under State management; the trunk roads are found to be finely engineered. Respecting natural and industrial products in chapter XVII. the need of forest conservancy is urged in the most emphatic manner, and the danger is indicated of stifling the art-genius of the Natives by the misapplication of European ideas. The allegations that India is drained yearly of much produce, receives an unequal amount in return, and is injured by the obligation to remit large sums annually to England in payment for value received or service rendered, are controverted in chapter XVIII. regarding commerce. The cause of sanitation is earnestly pleaded in chapter XIX., and the means of saving life in times of famine are clearly outlined in chapter XX. The requirements of agricultural instruction for the people are pressed strongly in chapter XXII. relating to physical science. By chapter XXV., regarding the army, the reduction of fighting strength is deprecated, and the need of maintaining the European and Native forces at full strength is set forth. The possible embarrassment to Indian interests from the Russian movements in the Turcoman country, and from the approach of Russia towards Afghanistan, are explained in chapter XXIV. Lastly, in chapter XXVII., regarding finance, endeavour is made to do justice to the objections which have been brought to bear upon the financial situation, but the soundness of that situation is vindicated.

Thus with the exception of those few chapters which are purely descriptive, the whole work abounds with opinions of mine definitely enuntiated. The reader may or may not accept these opinions; but he is always warned of any counteropinions which may be known to exist, and he is apprised of the arguments on both sides in case he desires to form his own judgment. Thus, my opinions, though free, as I hope, from incisiveness or dogmatism, will not actually be found wanting in definiteness.

Doubtless the tenour of these opinions is very favourable to the Indian empire. Certainly I feel the pride which all Englishmen have felt on contemplating the wondrous achievements of our countrymen in the East. But if by optimism is meant the disposition to observe the bright parts only of the picture; and not its shadows, then I have no intention at all of being an optimist. Indeed, nothing in my judgment could be more dangerous than to encourage the British public in a belief that the Indian empire is free from disadvantages and perils, and may be left to take care of itself without incessant vigilance on the part of the governing race. My intention, therefore, was to point out every one of the troubles greater or lesser to which the empire is exposed; and I did this to the best of my recollection. A few references (following as nearly as possible the order of the pages) will convey some idea of the manner in which this part of my task has been fulfilled, for example:

- the several kinds of discontent pent up in the British territories and needing a safety valve to be supplied by the Native States, p. 63;
- the possible embarrassment from the military forces of the Native States being maintained at an excessive strength, and from their arsenals becoming efficient, p. 66;
- the Arab element in the army of the Nizam in the Deccan, p. 68;
- the national and perhaps hostile sentiment surviving among the Mahratta States and Mahratta mountaineers, p. 72;
- the probability of the Gurkha nationality in Nepal asserting itself in event of any general commotion, p. 74;
- the causes, climatic and other, producing more than ordinary sickness and mortality among the people, p. 81;

- the impossibility of preventing the periodical recurrence of famine, pp. 87, 337;
- the difficulty of sustaining the cattle at certain seasons, and the consequent murrains, pp. 99, 362;
- the inadequate application of human labour and the extreme lowness of wages in some rural localities, p. 100;
- the comparative poverty shewn by the smallness of the income tax proceeds, p. 102;
- the inevitable unpopularity of British rule with certain classes of the people, pp. 107, 500;
- the probability of the old spirit of plunder breaking out again if the bonds of order were loosened, p. 110;
- the disaffection and fanaticism occasionally manifested among the Muhammadans, pp. 114, 120;
- the uneasiness prevailing among the decayed Native aristoeracy, p. 116;
- the unconquerable pride of the Hindu priesthood; p. 118;
- the inflammable character of Sikhism in the Punjab, p. 120;
- the political ideas and aspirations of the educated Natives, pp. 125, 126;
- the unfriendly tendencies sometimes evinced by the vernacular press, p. 132;
- the discontent among highly qualified Natives who cannot find scope for their abilities, pp. 133, 134;
- the paucity of children at school relatively to the vast population, despite all our educational efforts, p. 139;
- the want of technical instruction, pp. 143, 144;
- the backwardness of female education, p. 159;
- the oppression practised by usurious creditors upon ignorant debtors, p. 187;
- the political import of gang-robbery in Western India, p. 198;
- the sudden outburst of rioting at various times, p. 199;
- the faults remaining in the police even after the reorganization, p. 205;

viii PREFACE.

the not infrequent occurrence of serious mortality in the prisons, p. 211;

the partial failure of the Permanent Settlement in Bengal to ensure the outlay of capital on the land, p. 115;

the indebtedness among some classes of the peasant proprietors, pp. 221, 222;

the want of elasticity in the revenues, pp. 244, 447;

the hesitation of the people in some provinces to use the water provided by canals of irrigation, p. 258;

the difficulty of framing projects for irrigation in a manner that shall ensure the State being repaid for the outlay, p. 262;

the extension of railways checked by expensiveness in construction, p. 277;

the mischief arising from wasteful cutting of the forests, p. 296;

the danger to the public health from impure drinking water, p. 323;

the bad ventilation of urban dwellings, p. 325;

the slow exhaustion of the soil and the absence of agricultural instruction, pp. 361, 362;

the insufficiency of naval force to fully protect British interests in Indian waters, p. 376;

the incompleteness of defensive works for the coasts and harbours, p. 377;

the destructive effects of cyclones, p. 380;

the limits of the fidelity of Native troops, p. 394;

the diminished attractiveness of British military service in Native estimation, p. 401;

the difficulties of military transport, p. 409;

the specific risk to India if Russian influence were to be established in Afghanistan, p. 434;

the menace to Herat from the Russian movements in the Turkoman districts, p. 431;

the drain upon the finances from the recurring expenditure for the prevention of famine, p. 459;

the loss by exchange on the remittances to England in silver to be measured by a gold standard, p. 459.

This may seem a long list of troubles for an empire which is in the main secure and flourishing. In fact the Indian empire teems with difficulties, and its security depends on the watchfulness of the ruling power. Still, if England is true to herself, the imperial interests are safe, and the difficulties will be encountered with more or less of success by English resources, while some of them may even be removed with English perseverance. But if the precautions heretofore so well maintained were to become relaxed, then the dangers, inherent in a foreign rule, would thicken fast, like clouds gathering to burst in a tempest.

Since the publication of this book in December 1880, the proceedings of Russia in the Turkoman country have been largely developed. The occupation of Merve has not been actually effected, only because a still more important line of operations has been adopted by Askabad and Serakhs, close along the north-eastern frontier of Persia. A railway has been made from the eastern shore of the Caspian to Kizl Arvat for the transport of Russian troops and material to the Turkoman territories, and will probably be soon extended along the Persian border in the direction of Afghanistan. The Turkomans appear to have been subdued with a completeness surpassing anticipation. Their almost unique resources in cavalry will be at the disposal of the conqueror. It may be foreseen that ere long the Russian forces will be within a comparatively short distance of Herat.

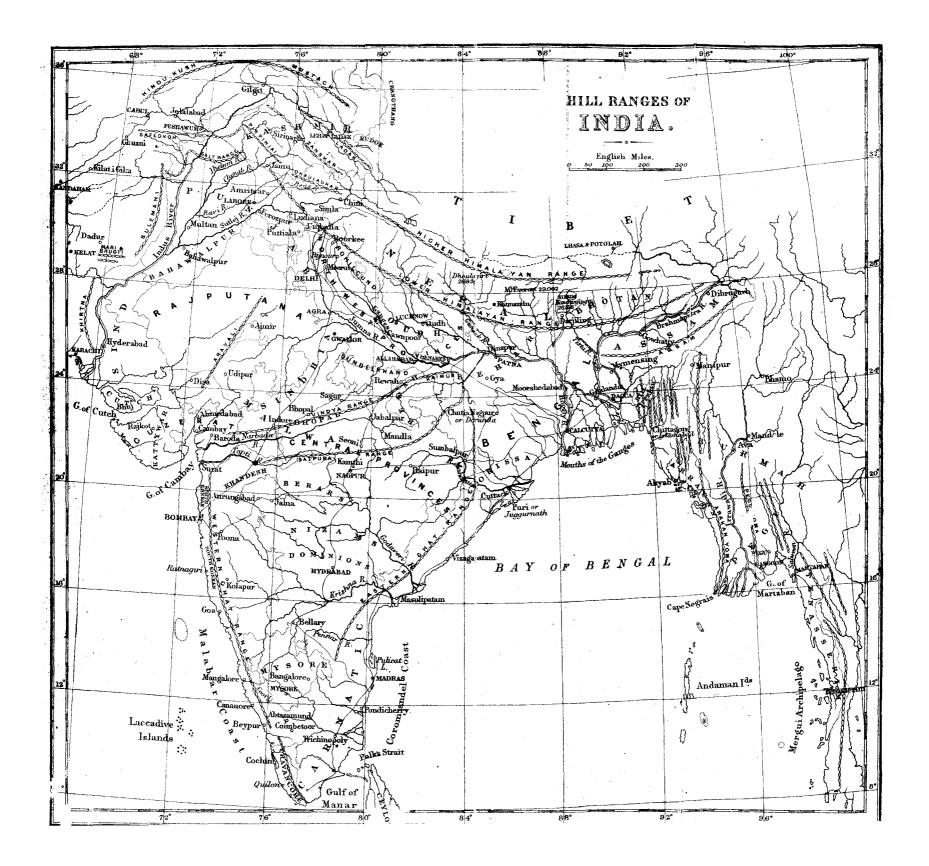
The favourable view taken in 1880 regarding the finances of India has been fully borne out by all that has since occurred. With the help of a contribution of five millions sterling from the English treasury, India has paid or will very shortly pay out of her own current revenues and cash balances the expenses of the late Afghan war, or twenty-one millions sterling, without making any addition to her public debt on that account.

This defrayal of the war charges by India is the more remarkable as she has paid from her current revenues fifteen millions sterling within the last few years for the relief of her people from starvation by famine. Even now, with considerable reduction of taxation both of the salt-duties and of the customs, her finance is in a condition of surplus. And notwithstanding the mortality from recent famines her population has increased by thirteen millions of souls during the last ten years.

R. T.

THE NASH, KEMPSEY, near WORCESTER.

April 22nd, 1882.



PREFACE.

This work presents briefly to the world the results of an experience extending over nearly thirty years in India. is also intended to be a general reply to the important enquiries which have been from time to time addressed to me by the many persons in English society, who now interest themselves in the welfare of the Indian empire. As the attention which English people are bestowing upon India must greatly affect her future prospects, it is incumbent on those Englishmen, who have long resided in that country, to place their knowledge at the disposal of the public. The subject naturally divides itself into numerous branches. Questions have been asked by some, regarding every one of the many topics which are mentioned or explained in the following pages. The characteristic of any work, which deals with India as a whole, will be the diversity of the matters embraced in the exposition. This variety is inseparable from the magnitude of the Indian empire, and enhances the difficulty of preparing an adequate description. If, in undertaking to give such a description from my own knowledge, I shall seem presumptuous, I may state that the demands of public duty have compelled me to visit every part of the Indian empire from Thibet to Ceylon, from the Khyber pass to the frontier of Ava, from the valley of Assam to the city of Candahar. It has been my fate to serve in the three Presidencies of Bengal, Madras, and Bombay, and in every province of the empire with one exception, to be brought in contact with the Native States and the North-west frontier, and to be employed, in some capacity or other, under all the departments of the State. These circumstances are mentioned in order to shew how the materials have been acquired upon which this volume is founded. I have, with trifling exceptions, not only beheld but made sketches of, every scene which is described in these pages. I have been from first to last concerned in, or otherwise personally cognizant of, almost all the affairs which are here discussed. Nevertheless, despite the utmost care in rendering the statements accurate there is the fear of falling casually into some error of detail among many diverse concerns and widely scattered interests. With the view of obviating this risk, nearly every chapter has been laid before some friend who is an expert in the matters which it comprises. The chances of accidental mistakes have been thereby much diminished. I have to thank warmly those of my friends who have been so good as to accord to me the benefit of their criticism and revision.

Chapters II. and III., on the objects of beauty in nature and in art, also Chapter XXIII., on wild animals and sports, are specially designed for the consideration of intending travellers who at the outset desire to rapidly form an idea of the sights most worth seeing in India. An attempt is there made to conjure up before the memory some visions of these things of beauty, which are joys for ever to all who have perfectly seen them, but to which no word-painting can do justice.

India might well have furnished many places of pilgrimage to Childe Harold. To him Delhi would have seemed a "Niobe, of nations," and a "lone mother of dead empires"; the Tâj mausoleum at Agra would have appeared "a beautiful thought softly bodied forth;" the Nerbadda would have been the river where "the delicate waters sleep prisoned in marble;" and the rainbow spray of the Gairsopa cascades would by him have been likened to the "Iris sitting like Hope upon a death-bed" or as "Love watching madness."

The sacred groves near the temples of India might have inspired the verse of Wordsworth when he wrote,

Chapters VII., VIII., and IX., on the mental and moral progress of the Natives, on national education, religious establishments and missions, may, it is hoped, be of interest to moralists, philanthropists, and those concerned in the propagation of religious truth, whose hearts yearn towards their Asiatic fellow-subjects living in need of enlightenment. If the facts and considerations therein set forth shall be accepted, then hope will spring eternal in the breasts of all who are moved by charity towards the distant races which Providence has committed to the care of England.

Chapters XIX. and XX., on public health, sanitation, and relief of famine, will leave on the minds of humane reformers some impression of the measures requisite for alleviating the physical ills of an Eastern population.

Chapters VI., XII., XIII., XVII., XVIII., XXVIII., and XXVIII., on the material progress of the Natives, the revenues, products, commerce, finances, and the summary of statistics, will offer to the student of statesmanship and political economy some general information regarding the resources and capabilities of the country, their present growth, and the prospects of their development.

Chapters IY., X., XI., and XII., on the duties of civil officers generally, on law, legislation, crime, police, prisons, the administration of the land-tax, and the nature of the landed tenures, will explain the practical work that actually devolves on those who manage the affairs of an empire consisting of many

nationalities with divers types of civilization, all of which are strange to English experience.

Chapters XIV., XV., and XVI., on works of irrigation, railways, electric telegraphs, roads and communications, will afford to those who know what the application of science has done, and may yet do, for material improvement, an assurance that these national concerns are occupying a due place in the thoughts of Anglo-Indian statesmen.

Chapters XXI. and XXII., on learned research and physical science, will indicate to Englishmen how their countrymen in the East, amidst countless distractions and avocations, do yet pursue many of the highest ways of culture, and

. . . "musing mount where science sits sublime, Or wake the spirit of departed time."

Chapters V., XXIV., XXV., and XXVI., on the Native States, the naval defences, the army, the foreign relations, and the conclusion, may furnish some help to those who patriotically reflect on the best means of holding a widespread dominion with the strong arm of authority, of guarding this mighty heritage against danger from without, and of vindicating British rights in Asia.

The effect of all the chapters in combination will, it is hoped, be to display the present state of the Indian empire, its elements of security, its prospects of danger, its sources of weakness, its basis of ultimate prosperity.

To European eyes, India is a region of kaleidoscopic brightness; in the heated atmosphere everything seems to dance and quiver under the noonday glare. Some notion may be gathered of the strange, quaint, fantastic, and often fairy-like aspect of the sunny land, from W. H. Russell's "pictured page," recounting the tour of the Prince of Wales, or Rousselet's illustrated volume depicting the life of the Native States, or Grant Duff's graphic notes of travels in India. There is a vivid freshness

also in the descriptive passages of Edwin Arnold's 'Light of Asia.' The rural scenes are presented to the mind's eye, where,

"In the mango-sprays

The sun-birds flashed. . . .

. . . Bee-eaters hawked

Chasing the purple butterflies, . . .

The pied fish-tiger hung above the pool, The egrets stalked among the buffaloes, About the painted temple peacocks flew.

. . . the swart peasant urged

The great-eyed oxen through the flaming hours, Goading their velvet flanks."

The urban scenes, too, are delineated, where dwell

"The traders cross-legged 'mid their spice and grain,
The housewives bearing water from the well,
The weaver at his loom, the cotton-bow
Twanging, the millstones grinding meal, . . .
The dyers stretching waist-cloths in the sun
Wet from the vats; . . .

There a long line of drums and horns, which went With steeds gay painted and silk canopies To bring the young bride home; and here a wife Stealing with cakes and garlands to the god."

The marvels of the gorgeous East must, however, be seen in order to be realized; to set them forth appropriately in words would be to "describe the undescribable." But my story will have been told in vain, unless the reader shall be induced to feel an affectionate regard for India and the Indians.

R. T.

THE NASH, KEMPSEY near WOBCESTER. December 1, 1880.

CONTENTS.

CHAPTER I.

CLAIMS OF INDIA ON THE CONTINUOUS ATTENTION OF ENGLAND.

Need of steadfast attention to Indian affairs on the part of Englishnen—Changeful character of India under British rule—Necessity of observing current events—Therefore survey undertaken of India in 1880—Circumstances interesting to travellers and sportsmen—To those connected with art and science—To the friends of missions— To those concerned in public affairs—To economists and statesmen

CHAPTER II.

OBJECTS OF BEAUTY IN NATURE.

Objects of beauty in divers places—Improved facilities for travelling nowadays—Variety of climatic aspects—Phenomena of the rainy season—Different characteristics of the country on the north and on the south of hill ranges forming the backbone of the Indian continent—Pleasant mountain retreats during summer for European residents—Fine views from mountains looking towards the sea—Noble prospect from Himalayas looking towards the plains of India—River scenes—Marble rocks—Cascades—Mountains clothed with perpetual snow—Loftiest peaks yet discovered in the world—Lake region—Scenery of Cashmir valley—Features of the several Indian races—Picturesque effect of their costumes

CHAPTER III.

OBJECTS OF BEAUTY IN ART.

Architecture under British rule—Interesting views at Bombay, at Calcutta, and on lines of railway—European churches and cathedrals—Beauty of Native architecture—Buddhist caves, rock-cut temples, pagodas and monasteries—Ancient frescoes—Sacred mountains of the Jains—Hindu or Brahminical structures—Mention of the finest

PAGE

1

6

	·
23	temples—Mountain fortresses—Beautiful palaces—Excellence of Muhammadan architecture—Interesting remains at many places—Largest dome in the world—City of the dead—Mosque, palace and tomb of Akber the Great—Grand mosque at Delhi—Pearl mosque at Agra—Matchless beauty of Taj Mehal mausoleum
	CHAPTER IV.
	EUROPEAN CLASSES, OFFICIAL AND NON-OFFICIAL.
	Importance of the Covenanted Civil Service—Results of new system of competition—Interesting duties of civil servants—Historic names of Civil Servants in the past—Military officers in civil and political employ—Distinguished names among them—Several classes of covenanted officers—Medical officers—Military and civil engineers—The clergy—Eminent prelates—Uncovenanted European and East-Indian officers—Non-official Europeans—Mercantile firms—Chambers of commerce—Indigo-planters—Tea and Coffee-planters—The Anglo-Indian press
	CHAPTER V.
	NATIVE STATES
	Relations of the Native States with the British Government—Loyalty of Native Sovereigns during the war of the mutinies—Order of the Star of India—Imperial assemblage at Delhi—Visit of the Prince of Wales—Advantages to the empire from the existence of Native States—Education of young Native Princes—Internal administration of Native States—Their military forces—Mention of largest States—The Nizam of the Deccan—Jammu and Cashmir—Protected Sikh States—Rajput Princes—Mahratta Princes, Sindhia, Holkar and the Gaekwar—The Princess of Bhopal—Travancore—Political importance of the Deccan—Mysore—Kingdom of Nepal—Khan of Khelat—Eminent Native Statesmen
,	CHAPTER VI.
	MATERIAL PROGRESS OF THE NATIVES.
	Census of the population—Gradual growth of the people in numbers— Expansion of cultivation—Land can yet sustain increasing people— Cultivable waste in India itself—Emigration from India to British colonies—Sufficiency of food supply in India—Her wealth under

C	יאו	מדיו	NT	rs.

British rule—Remittances of money, public and private, to England—Outlay of English capital in India—Wealth of former times as compared with the present—Capital largely accumulated by the Natives—Increase of cattle—Reasons why India is inferior to Western nations in wealth—Maintenance of the poor—Public opinion regarding material improvements—Industrial employments—General condition of the Natives	PAGE
CHAPTER VII.	
MENTAL AND MORAL PROGRESS OF THE NATIVES.	
- Effect of British rule on the character of the several classes of the people —The peasantry—The aboriginal tribes—The temper of the Muhammadans—The Parsis—The Native nobility—The landlord-class—The traders—The priesthood—The educated classes—Their mental improvement, moral conduct and religious belief—Their loyalty—Their political aspirations—Native munificence—Culture of physical science—Vernacular press and drama—Advancement of Natives in the public service—In other professions—Good effect of Natives visiting England—State of the Native mind and disposition generally.	107
CHAPTER VIII.	
NATIONAL EDUCATION.	
Educational policy declared in 1854—Present number of scholars considered relatively to the population—Educational resources financially, both private and public—Government policy regarding superior and lower education respectively—Primary schools—Village schoolmasters—Middle schools—Want of technical instruction—Normal schools—Vernacular literature—Superior education—Universities in India—Affiliated colleges—Characteristics, moral and intellectual, of Native graduates—Instruction in medicine—In civil engineering—Degrees in science—Agricultural instruction—Schools of art—Ethical teaching—Female education—Zenana missions—Education of European and East-Indian children	138
CHAPTER IX.	
RELIGIOUS ESTABLISHMENTS AND MISSIONS.	٠.

The State Church in India—Maintenance of religion by Native rulers— Their religious-endowments in part maintained by the British Government—Religious establishments of the Portuguese—Attitude of the British Government respecting religion—Christian missions in Native States—The Roman Catholic Church in India—Protestant missions—Unabated efforts of religious societies—Approximate statistics of results—High authorities in favour of missions—Character of Native Christians—Prospects of Native Church—Special missions from Oxford and Cambridge—Moral effect of missions generally

_ _

162

CHAPTER X.

LAW AND LEGISLATION.

6/

Constitution of Indian Government by Parliamentary enactments—
Sacred character of Hindu and Muhammadan law—Administration
of justice under British rule—English law in India—Councils in
India constituted for legislation—Law Commission in London—Civil
courts in the interior of India—Their popularity—Public confidence
in the High Courts of Judicature—Special legislation regarding indebtedness of the peasantry—Arbitration—Patriarchal rule—Nonregulation system—Answer to charges of over-legislation—Need of
continuity in administration

178

CHAPTER XI.

V

CRIME, POLICE AND PRISONS.

General character of crime in India—Good conduct of the people—Thagi, its horrid characteristics, its repression—Self-sacrifice of Hindu widows by burning, its suppression—Female infanticide—Regulation of marriage expenses—Political import of dacoities in the Deccan—Gypsy tribes—Occasional occurrence of serious riots—Penal code and criminal procedure—Regular police—Its former faults—Its reorganization—Condition of village or rural police—General regulations regarding arms—Prisons under British rule—Recent improvements therein—Juvenile reformatories—Convict settlements.

195

CHAPTER XII.

LAND-TAX AND LANDED TENURES.

Nature of land-tax—The tax is a portion of the rent, and a percentage on gross value of the produce—Immense work of field survey and record of rights—Property in land created or recognised by British Government—Value of such property—Fee-simple estates belonging

C	U.	Ni	re	NT	rα
---	----	----	----	----	----

X V

to Europeans—Permanent settlement in Bengal and elsewhere—Importance of village communities in northern India—Tenures in Madras and Bombay—Antiquity of village officers—Indebtedness of peasant proprietors in some districts—Tenant-right—Privileges of occupancy tenants—Tenants at will—Protection accorded to cultivators	
CHAPTER XIII.	
revenues.	**
Land revenue—Average rates of its incidence—Tributes and contributions from NativeStates—Excise—Assessed taxes—Customs—Abolition of import duties on English piece goods—The salt tax—English salt imported — Opium revenue — Objections to it discussed — Stamp revenue—Total of general revenues—Government receipts as contradistinguished from revenue proper—Taxation for local and municipal purposes—Projects for new taxes deprecated	f , :
CHAPTER XIV.	
CANALS AND IRRIGATION.	
Canals for navigation and for irrigation—Canals in Asiatic countries ad jacent to India—Irrigated and unirrigated tracts in India—Irrigation from wells—Native works of irrigation—British system of canal—In Hindostan—In the Panjab—In Behar—In Orissa—In the deltas of the Godavery and the Kistna—In Tanjore—From the Tumbadra river—From the Indus in Sind—Lakes for irrigation in the Madras Presidency—In the Bombay Presidency—Principa rivers from which canals have been drawn—Rivers from which canals to the whole cultivate area—Canal water-rent—Financial returns from the canals—In direct benefits—Navigation of the canals—Immense value of canal irrigation to the country	a s s s s s a d h
CHAPTER XV.	
RAILWAYS AND ELECTRIC TELEGRAPHS.	

Lord Dalhousie's design for railway system—Line from Calcutta to Northwest frontier—From Calcutta to Bombay—From Bombay to Madras
—From Lahore to Karachi—Projected extension to Candahar—Line

PAGE from Bombay to Agra-In Rohilkhand and Oudh-In Behar-In Bengal-In Central India-In Berar and Nagpur-In Southern India -From Goa to southern Deccan-In Burma-Railways of two kinds, Guaranteed and State-Advantages of the Guarantee system-Passenger traffic-Goods traffic-Rolling stock-State railways-Capital furnished by Native States for railways-Broad and narrow gauges-Railways in time of war and of famine-Introduction of electric telegraph—Lines belonging to Guaranteed railway Companies -And to the Government-Telegraphic communication between India and England-Also between India and other countries .

264

CHAPTER XVI.

ROADS AND EMBANEMENTS.

Roadmaking under Native rule-Under British rule-Principal lines of British roads-Their value and character-Their noteworthy features—Bridging and metalling—Pack-bullocks in part superseded - Carts with draught-bullocks substituted - Embankments in Bengal, Behar and Orissa-In the valley of the Indus .

281

CHAPTER XVII.

PRODUCTS, NATURAL, AGRICULTUBAL AND INDUSTRIAL.

Comparison of Indian products with those of other countries-Tea-Coffee - Tobacco - Cinchona - Cotton - Indigenous staple - Local manufactures of cotton by steam machinery-Factory legislation-Production and manufactures of jute-The forests-Their destruction in past times and present conservancy-Their climatic importance-Preservation of pasturage-Communal forests-Forest laws-The forest department-Conduct of the people in relation to forests-Mineral resources-Coal-Iron-Gold-Precious stones -Industrial products-Still flourishing on the whole-Exhibitions of art and industry-Effect on Native taste-Merits of Native art .

CHAPTER XVIII.

COMMERCE, EXTERNAL AND INTERNAL.

Foreign trade of India in former times-The "East-Indiamen" ships-The "Green's" ships-The Peninsular and Oriental Company-The Suez Canal-Direct dealings of India with the Continent of Europe -Africa, Asia and Australia-France-The United States-Italy-

	TE	

w wii	
Y A II	

The Mauritius—Particulars of trade with United Kingdom—Shipping for the most part British—Coasting trade—Balance of trade—How adjusted—The Home remittances—Value to India of her export trade—Food-supply generally sufficient—Internal trade of India—Registration of it—Land communication—River navigation—Tendency towards equalization of prices	309
CHAPTER XIX.	-
PUBLIC HEALTH AND SANITATION.	
Organization of Sanitary Department—Vital statistics—Popular instruction in hygiene—Purification of water supply—Water-works of principal cities—Conservancy in towns—Sanitary engineering—Utilization of sewage—Lodging-houses in towns—Dwellings in villages—Examination of food—Small-pox—Vaccination—Contagious diseases—Hospitals and dispensaries	321
CHAPTER XX.	
FAMINE.	
Famine under Native rule—Under British rule—In Behar and Bengal in 1874—In Madras, Bombay and elsewhere in 1877—Public charity in England—In India—Mortality—Advantages of railways—Calamity in 1874 compared with that of 1877 and 1878—Precautions for preventing mortality—Sanitary department—Distressed people to be prevented from wandering—Relief works—Village inspection—Relief houses—People not demoralized nor pauperized by relief operations—Good-conduct of the peasant proprietors—Prospects of material improvement—Supply of food by private enterprise	330
CHAPTER XXI.	
LEARNED RESEARCH.	
Spirit of research has long existed and still exists—Learned works in the past—In the present—Books written to explain Oriental ideas to European readers—Works of historic fiction—Civil and political history—Biographies—Military history—Ethnological works—Books of travel in countries beyond the Indus—Asiatic Society of Bengal at Calcutta—Bombay branch of Royal Asiatic Society—Antiquarian remains—Archæological Survey—Preservation of ancient ruins and monuments	343

CHAPTER XXII.

				_	
PI	3 Y	RTO	AT.	SCIENC	лc.

	PAGE
Great Trigonometrical Survey—Topographical Survey—Astronomical	
observatory at Madras - Meteorological observations - Botanical	
Gardens, and Herbaria-The Geological Survey-Natural History-	
Imperial museum at Calcutta-Ornithology-Zoological Gardens-	
Death of Basevi and Stoliczka-Pisciculture-Organization of an	:
agricultural. department-Model farms-Popular instruction in	
agriculture-Veterinary art	353

CHAPTER XXIII.

WILD ANIMALS AND SPORTS.

Advantages from sport—Big game in champaign country and in	
mountains—Season for sport—Spearing the wild boar—Tiger-shoot-	
ing-The "man-eater"-The panther-Dangerous when he becomes	
a man-eater-Wounds from carnivorous animals-The hunting	
cheeta—The bear—The elephant—The bison—The rhinoceros—The	
alligator—The Himalayan ibex and Ovis Ammon—Anglo-Indian	
literature relating to wild sports	363

.CHAPTER XXIV.

NAVY AND MARINE.

Early naval enterprises—Piracy—The Indian Navy—Naval arrangement between the Government of India and the Admiralty in London—The Persian Gulf—Defence of Indian harbours and coasts—Steam Navigation Companies—The Indian Marine—Marine Surveys—Tidal observations—Shipwrecks—Native passenger ships—Port of Calcutta—Cyclones in the Bay of Bengal—Pilots on the Hüghli—Madras pier—Dockyards at Calcutta and Bombay—Wet dock and foreshore at Bombay—Karachi harbour—Examination of lesser harbours—Lighthouses

87

CHAPTER XXV.

THE ARMY.

Constitution of the armies in India—The European soldier—Marked improvement of his condition—Short service system—Former local European army—Strength of European garrison in India—The

Volunteer movement—The Native army—Basis of its fidelity—Three Native armies, according to the three Presidencies—Castes and tribes among the Native soldiery—Families of Native soldiery in their quarters—Physique and conduct of the Native army—Enlistment of the Native soldier—His pay and allowances—Recent difficulty in obtaining recruits—Officering of the Native army—Native officers—regular and irregular systems—European officers—The staff corps—The Native cavalry—The ordnance department—The commissariat—The transport service—Audit and account—Established strength of military forces

384

CHAPTER XXVI.

FOREIGN RELATIONS.

India's neighbours, north, east, and west—Aden—Southern Arabia—Socotra—Muscat—The Persian Gulf—Mesopotamia—The straits of Malacca—The kingdom of Ava—Adjacent provinces of China—Eastern Thibet—Yarkand and Kashgar—North-west frontier of India—Afghanistan—Opinion in India regarding Russia—Kokand Bokhara and Khiva—Boundaries of Afghan dominions—Russian embassy to Caubul—Position of Badakshan and Balkh—Relations of Persia towards Herat—Russian advance on Merv—Yarkand—Persian province of Khorasan—Importance of Herat—Freedom of Afghanistan from Russian influence—Amir of Caubul—Khyber Pass—Kurrum Valley—The Pishin frontier—Value of Candahar

414

CHAPTER XXVII.

FINANCE.

Publication of Budget in India—Statement of income and expenditure
—Apprehensions expressed by some authorities regarding Indian
finance—Want of elasticity in the revenue—Control of expenditure
—The military expenses—Cost of the civil administration—
Provincial services—European and Native agency—Cost of material
improvements—Guaranteed railways—State railways—Canals and
irrigation works—Total outlay on public works—Its results during
recent famines—Recurrence of famine—Loss by exchange on remittances by Government of India to England—Former proposals
regarding gold standard—The national debt—Equilibrium between
ordinary income and expenditure—Audit and account—Government
paper currency—Coinage at mints—Savings-banks—Presidency
banks—Cash balances

441

CHAPTER XXVIII.

STATISTICAL SUMMARY.

Area of India—Population—Several religions, castes, professions and employments of the people—Agriculture—Works of irrigation—Embankments—Tenures—Police—Crime—Prisons—Civil justice—Hospitals and Dispensaries—Education—Universities—Literature—Post-office and electric telegraph—Emigration—Railways—Roads—Foreign sea-borne trade—Coasting trade—Harbours—Shipping—Frontier trade—Tea and Coffee—Manufactures of cotton and jute—Exports of wheat and rice—Coal—Forests—Armies—Finance—Revenues and receipts—Expenditure—Coinage and paper currency—Equilibrium of income and ordinary expenditure—

CHAPTER XXIX.

CONCLUSION.

Recent war in Afghanistan—Its results and lessons—Prosperity of the Indian empire, despite some inevitable drawbacks—Adverse calculations contradicted by existing facts—Satisfactory answer to question as to why England should retain possession of India—Virtues and merits in the character of the Natives—Their general contentment under British rule—Happy prospect rising before them.

DIRECTIONS TO BINDER.

488