

THE SYSTEM
OF
ADMINISTRATION IN INDIA

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THE SYSTEM
-
ADMINISTRATION IN INDIA

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INDIAN POLITY

A VIEW OF

THE SYSTEM OF ADMINISTRATION IN INDIA

BY

GENERAL SIR GEORGE CHESNEY, K.C.B., M.P.

COLONEL COMMANDANT ROYAL ENGINEERS

Οὐ μόνον ἔρα δυνατὸν, ἀλλὰ καὶ ἄριστον πόλει νόμιμον ἐτίθειμεν

(Thus the system we have proposed is not only practicable, but is also best for the state)

PLATO, the *Polity*, Book V. 457

THIRD EDITION

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PREFACE

TO

THE THIRD EDITION

THE long period, nearly a quarter of a century, which has elapsed since the last edition of this book was published, has made that work out of date in every sense, especially because the numerous reforms, civil and military, which it advocated, have in the interval been in great measure carried out. The book has therefore been rewritten throughout—except the historical introduction in Chapter II.—and treats of the new and greatly altered conditions, political and administrative, which have now to be dealt with.

While this edition is thus a new book, the old title has been retained, as remaining appropriate to the subject. Reform of the Indian administration is still as much needed as ever, but reform addressed to new circumstances, and needing new methods. With the progress of time, the problems which present themselves for solution, while as ever many and various, become ever more delicate and complex.

The opportunity has been taken to bring under

review the Home Government of India, as well as the administration in that country.

The acknowledgments of the author are due to the publishers for the completeness of the elaborate map attached to this edition, which is, he believes, the first to show in one view all the administrative divisions of British India.

LONDON :
November, 1894.

PREFACE
TO
THE SECOND EDITION

THE reforms in Indian administration during the past two years, have included certain proposals put forward in the first edition of this work, and involve considerable alteration now, in order to bring the descriptive portion into accordance with existing facts. The rapid development of policy in regard to public works which has taken place during this time, and the new aspect presented by the financial condition of the country, have rendered it necessary to re-write in part the concluding chapters.

That reconstruction of the Indian army, which was before strongly advocated, has still to be entered upon, although the necessity for an entire change in its organisation becomes every day more apparent. The part of the work which refers to that subject is, therefore, reprinted almost without alteration.

LONDON:
June, 1870.

PREFACE

TO

THE FIRST EDITION

THE FOLLOWING PAGES have for their twofold object to furnish an outline of the system under which British India is ruled, and to bring to notice some points in that system which appear to call for improvement. Ten years have already elapsed since the direct government of that country was assumed by the Crown, and its affairs made matters of Imperial interest. The time, then, has arrived when the whole course of Indian administration may fitly be reviewed, as a preparation towards modifying it where policy and wisdom recommend, instead of leaving its reform to the pressure of chance ; and on this head some considerations are offered which, it is believed, if simple, are also original. The attempt has also been made to show clearly that the defects now most prominently apparent are, so to speak, accidental ones, arising out of the fortuitous manner in which our Indian Empire has grown up, and which only require the exercise of some administrative vigour to remove. When this is clearly apprehended, the path of reform is made easy.

The writer on Indian subjects is at every point met by the difficulty of adapting his treatment to the very

slight acquaintance of them possessed by most readers, without making it tedious to the better informed. But as for the distaste which it is usual to assert is felt for Indian affairs, the author can only say that, so far as personal experience is a guide, the interest expressed about them appears often to exceed the knowledge possessed on the subject. Nor is it surprising, in view of the rapid transition through which India has lately passed, that even those personally connected with the Indian service should have only the most indistinct notions as to the functions its members perform. The want thus felt it is hoped the present volume may supply.

With respect to the Indian Army, for example, it may be surprising to hear, after all the discussion of late years, that its real reform has yet to be undertaken; that what has been done so far is at best only a provisional arrangement, suited for a temporary emergency. Yet such is the conclusion which is inevitable from a consideration of the facts. And this is but one of the problems before Indian administrators, and which for their solution demand a closer knowledge of the subject than is usually to be found. Some of these questions will certainly before long engage public attention; and as a contribution towards the discussion which will then arise, it is hoped that these pages may not be without their value, especially as regards the important subject of the share to be granted to the natives of India in the administration of that country.

HARROW-ON-THE-HILL:
May, 1868.

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