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MEMORIALS

OF

INDIAN GOVERNMENT;

BEING A SELECTION FROM THE PAPERS

OF

HENRY ST. GEORGE TUCKER,

LATE DIRECTOR  COMPANY.

JOHN WILLIAM KAYE.

971

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PREFACE BY THE EDITOR.

I THINK it is right that something should be said about the circumstances under which this volume is published.

On the 14th of June, 1851, the career of Henry St. George Tucker, then in his eighty-first year, was brought to a close. He had been for a quarter of a century one of the ablest and most energetic Directors of the East India Company, and for more than half a century had been personally associated with, and deeply interested in, the affairs of the great empire of which he came to be one of the rulers. He read much; he thought much; he wrote much. And he left behind him a great mass of papers written by himself, partly of an official, partly of an unofficial character—a selection from which constitutes the present volume.

The publication of such a collection of papers was contemplated by the author during his lifetime; and the Editor of the present series, whilst preparing the volume now offered to the public, had before him a letter from Mr. Tucker to a friend, whom he greatly loved and respected, indicating the parti-

cular papers which he desired to lay before the world. "If I thought," wrote Mr. Tucker on the 30th of November, 1850, "that, by printing some of these papers I could promote in any degree the interests and credit of the Court, by showing that we are not unmindful (as is, I fear, suspected in some quarters) of our public duties; or if I could flatter myself that the discussions in which I have engaged were likely to throw light on the questions which must soon occupy the attention of the Court and of the Government, I should not hesitate to contribute my share to the general stock of materials to be used for framing the new Charter. I should not, of course, think for a moment of introducing any *personal* questions. The selection would have reference—1st. To our Revenue systems of administration, including the Salt, Opium, and Customs. 2ndly. To our judicial administration, including the measures adopted in this country for prosecuting the appeals of her Majesty in Council. 3rdly. To our political proceedings, including the Afghan treaty of June, 1838, the seizure of Scinde, &c. I should be much tempted to add my comment on the confiscation of Colaba, and on the general policy to be observed towards the Princes and Chiefs of India. 4thly. I should be disposed to introduce my paper on Cotton, my remarks on the powers of the Secret Committee, and other miscellaneous matters; but some of these would require careful consideration." I have endeavoured to carry out the intentions of the writer as declared in this letter, but I can hardly hope that I have adequately fulfilled them.

The task was, indeed, by no means without its difficulties. The papers were, for the most part, of an official character, and there were many public and private considerations to restrict the free exercise of the Editor's power of selection. There were State secrets of recent date, not to be divulged without public inconvenience; and there were the feelings of living individuals which might be wounded, whilst their acts, scarcely belonging to the legitimate domain of Indian history, might not warrant public discussion. There was another class of papers, too, of which it was necessary to make sparing use—papers, very ably written, embodying sound opinions and comprehensive information, but relating to a by-gone state of things, of little interest in the present day. Indeed, next to the desire to carry out Mr. Tucker's own recorded wishes, I have been guided in my selections by nothing so much as the wish to illustrate the present important discussions on the future Government of India, by giving open expression to the sentiments of one, the weight of whose authority is admitted by men of all shades of political opinion.

In the arrangement of the papers I have endeavoured, as closely as possible, to follow the classification of subjects adopted by the Parliamentary Committees now sitting. As there are few subjects connected with the administration of British India on which Mr. Tucker has not recorded his opinions, the materials at my disposal have enabled me to illustrate, with more or less completeness, nearly all the topics embraced in the present Parliamentary in-

quiry. There is not one of these on which the opinions of the writer will not be received with respect. If on some of these points the evidence is not as copious as might be desired, the deficiency must not be laid to the account of Mr. Tucker, but rather to that of the Editor—or perhaps, he may be permitted to plead, to the necessity, under which he labored, of selecting from a vast mass of papers materials only sufficient to fill a moderately-sized volume.

The majority of these papers explain themselves. In many instances I have been able to cull from Mr. Tucker's writings an historical introduction explanatory of the circumstances under which the particular paper was written. Even the few editorial notes, scattered thinly through the volume, have not been introduced without reluctance, so unwilling have I been to obtrude myself where comment, whether in the shape of approbation or dissent, would have been equal presumption. I cannot help having my own opinions. To the indulgent friends who attach any weight to them, I may say, that on a large majority of the subjects illustrated in this volume, they coincide with those of Mr. Tucker. But the selection has not been made with any reference to this concurrence of opinion. The work is designed to be a fair exposition of the views of the able and experienced Anglo-Indian statesman who wrote the papers of which it is composed.

Nothing more need be said, in this place, about the construction of the present volume; but, perhaps, a few words may not be inappropriately added

regarding its internal character. In this volume is contained a selection from the papers of a member of the Court of Directors of the East India Company. It may be doubted whether the most inveterate opponent of the existing system of Indian government will deny that they exhibit a very intimate acquaintance with the practicalities of a great variety of subjects—broad statesman-like views—and a pure and earnest desire to benefit the people of the vast empire committed to the care of his colleagues and himself. It is hard to say whether Mr. Tucker was more distinguished for his intellectual activity or his moral integrity. He shrunk from no amount of personal labor. He was never driven or beguiled from the path of duty by any personal apprehensions on one side, or selfish inducements on the other. He faced a *Mandamus* on one memorable occasion, and in support of the Right was prepared at any time to face it again. He was honest to the very core; and though some men differed from the opinions he expressed, all appreciated the sincerity and admired the ability with which he enforced them.

It may, indeed, be suggested that, as many of Mr. Tucker's papers did not reflect the opinions of the general body of the Court of Directors, no argument is derivable from their character and tendency in favor of that administrative body. It is clearly, however, not to be expected that a body of thirty gentlemen, drawn from different services or professions, with different antecedents, and different idiosyncracies, should concur in opinion on every one of the

detail questions of administration which come before them in their collective capacity. And, indeed, such concurrence is as little to be desired as it is to be expected. The Court of Directors of the East India Company are a deliberative body. Every matter that comes before them is fully discussed. The varied experience and the varied reflections of many are brought to bear upon the elucidation of every question that is submitted to them; and though collectively, as individually, they may err, they are at least never betrayed into error by those temptations which ordinarily beset men immersed in the strife of European politics. An utter freedom from all party influences characterises the government of the East India Company. And though, as I have said, on questions of administrative detail, complete harmony of opinion is not to be expected, it is to the honor of the Court of Directors, that on questions involving great principles of universal justice, as on those of the invasion of Afghanistan and the spoliation of Scinde, there has been little or no diversity of opinion. The statesmen who condemned the former act—the act of a Whig Ministry—were foremost to condemn the latter, though perpetrated by a Tory ruler. Mr. Tucker was a Tory—as were the greater number of those who condemned the conquest of Scinde and recalled the Governor-General who decreed it—but upon all such questions as these he was of no party. He spoke out as strongly and uncompromisingly upon acts of Conservative misrule

as upon those which defiled the administration of the Liberal predecessors of the men whose home-policy he supported. The general verdict of the public has long since pronounced that, upon both of these great questions, Mr. Tucker and his colleagues wrote and acted in defence of the Right.

It would not become me in this place to dwell any longer upon these things. I only touch upon them here in illustration of the character of Mr. Tucker's writings. He himself cherished the belief that the publication of a selection from his papers would "promote the interests and credit of the Court of Directors;" and I am strongly of opinion that they will. If they indicate nothing more than the fact, that every question that comes before the Court is carefully and deliberately considered, and that a large amount of practical experience is applied to its elucidation, they are creditable to the East India Company. But I believe that they indicate much more than this. No reader of this volume will deny that the papers it contains are distinguished by a profound knowledge of the subjects discussed, and an eager desire to promote the happiness of the people of Hindostan. It may be too much to say that all the members of the Court of Directors have the same extensive experience as Mr. Tucker, and few, perhaps, have the same powers of expression. But the assiduous attention which he devoted to the administrative business of the Company, and the earnest benevolence with which he addressed himself to the promotion of measures

for the amelioration of the condition of the people, were but characteristics common to the general body of his colleagues. He would have been the last to claim for himself any exclusive merit for the possession of these qualities.

It need only be remarked, in conclusion, that for the publication of these papers the Editor alone is responsible. It will be assumed that they are published with the consent of Mr. Tucker's representatives; but from no other source has any assistance been derived, and from none beside has consent been obtained. The papers, it should be emphatically stated, are published merely as "selections." In some cases, they have been divested of their official significance. I may not have published all that I personally could have desired, but I alone am responsible for what has been published; and I believe that the selection honestly represents the opinions of the venerable writer.

J. W. K.

London, June 20, 1853.

ERRATA.

- Page 498, line 15, for "*having* those angry feelings," read "*leaving* those angry feelings."
 In Table of Contents, page xii, opposite "Case of the Guicowar," for "250," read "254."
 Page 102, line 13, for "*that*," read "*but*."
 Page 107, second line from bottom, for "*généreux*," read "*généraux*."
 Page 116, second line from bottom, for "*permit*," read "*admit*."
 Page 135, line 19, for "*contribution*," read "*contributor*."
 Page 149, line 4, for "*in*," read "*on*."
 Page 174, line 9, for "*that if it*," read "*that it*."
 Page 428, line 24, for "*expediency*," read "*inexpediency*."
 Page 442, line 14, for "*were*," read "*was*."

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