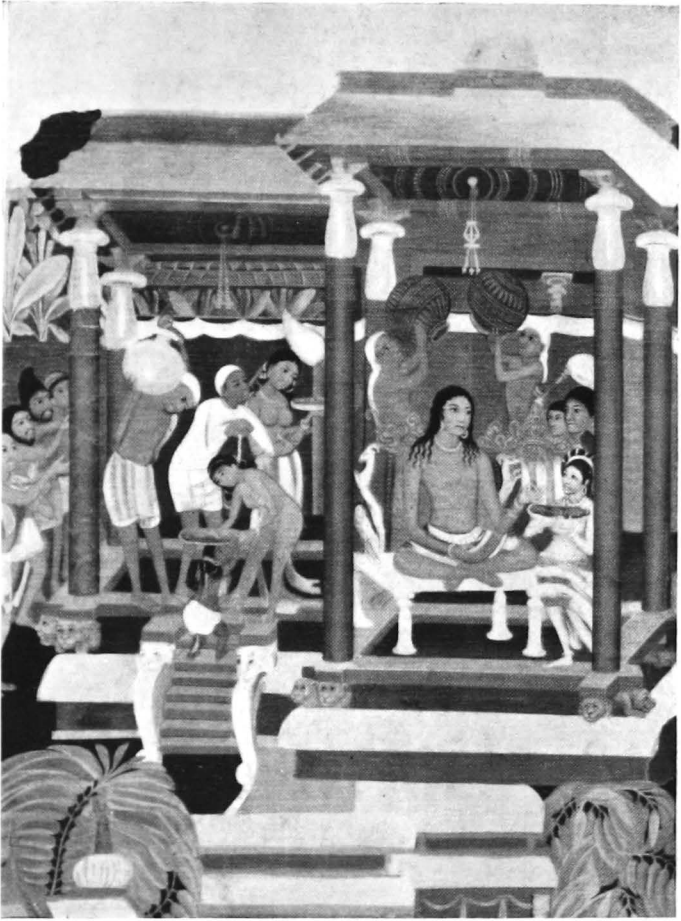




THE PRINCES OF INDIA



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THE CORONATION OF AN INDIAN SOVEREIGN

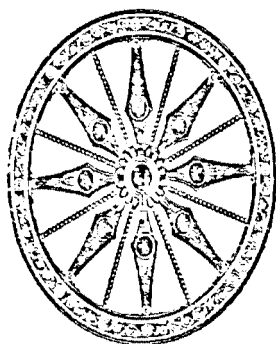
From the Ajanta Frescoes

THE PRINCES OF INDIA

WITH A CHAPTER ON NEPAL

By
SIR WILLIAM BARTON
K.C.I.E., C.S.I.

With an Introduction by
VISCOUNT HALIFAX
K.G., G.C.S.I.



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TO
MY WIFE

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INTRODUCTION

WITHOUT of necessity subscribing to everything that this book contains, I am very glad to accept Sir William Barton's invitation to write a foreword to this contribution to our knowledge of a subject at present occupying so large a share of the political stage.

Opinion differs widely upon many of the issues raised, and upon the best way of dealing with them. But there will be no unwillingness in any quarter to admit that in the months to come the future of India will present to the people of this country the most difficult task in practical statesmanship with which they have ever been confronted.

If the decision is to be a wise one it must rest upon a sound conception of the problem itself, and in that problem the place that is to be taken in the new India by the Indian States is an essential factor. Should they join the rest of India in a Federation? Would they bring strength to a Federal Government, or weakness? Are their interests compatible with adhesion to an All-India

Federation? What should be the range of the Federal Government's jurisdiction over them? These are some of the questions upon which keen debate will shortly arise.

It is, I think, true to say that less is known in this country of the Indian States than of any other of the principal elements in the Indian question. It is not always remembered, for example, that Nepal, on which Sir William has much of interest to say, is not, and never has been, an Indian State, and rightly values its independent nationhood. Nor, of course, are the Indian States themselves British territory, their inhabitants are not British subjects, and, except for short intervals and in special circumstances, the States have never been administered by the great Indian services which have contributed so much to the welfare of British India and our knowledge of its people.

Sir William Barton in this interesting book fills the gap in our knowledge, and no one is better qualified by long service and shrewd judgment to claim attention upon the subject of which he writes. He would be the last to profess that he has given the answers to all the questions which I have just propounded. But he has set out in clear and arresting form much of the material upon which the answers must be based, if they are to have any value.

His conclusion is that, if the Princes do finally decide to join the Federation, they would be assured, by virtue of their wealth, experience and leadership, of a great position in it, and that they would have both the opportunity and the responsibility of bringing to the Federation that quality of stability, of which they are the chief exponents in political India to-day.

Such is the considered view of one whose experience is unquestioned, and who has no illusions about the difficulties that beset the architects of a durable Indian Federation. That he should reach it may rightly fortify the confidence of those who see in the establishment of such a Federation of All-India the wisest method of dealing with what they hold to be the realities of Indian political development, and the surest way to strengthen the foundations of Indian government.

HALIFAX.

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The ornament on the cover and title-page of this book is a sketch of one of the great wheels from the 11th-century Temple of Kamarak in Orissa. The Wheel has, from ancient times, been the symbol of sovereignty in India.

PREFACE

THE policy of the British Government in attempting a federation of India brings into prominence the fact that one-third of the surface of India and more than a fourth of its people are outside British jurisdiction. As is well known, the government in Indian India is autocratic, and one of the most difficult problems before British statesmen in carrying out the new policy is to effect a synthesis of opposing systems : the personal rule of the States and the democracy of British India.

In these circumstances it is felt that a short but comprehensive survey of the historical and constitutional position of the Indian Princes would be welcomed by many who, while interested in the question of Indian reform, have neither the leisure nor the inclination to study the subject in voluminous classics such as Lee-Warner's *Indian States*, or in the ephemeral literature of recent years.

The Indian States number 562, of which 327 are relatively of very little consequence, and only exist independently as the result of an historical accident. It is obvious that in a book of strictly limited scope it is impossible to do more than touch briefly on the

more prominent States, more especially those directly interested in the Round Table Conference. This explains the omission of a remote State like Manipur, on the Assam frontier, and of the Shan States in Burma.

Again, it may be asked why the chiefs on the Afghan frontier have been left out of consideration. The explanation is that these chiefs are in a different category compared with the Princes of India. All are Mohammedans. Originally their political gravitation was towards Kabul, not to Delhi. Territorially, they are situated between the British administrative boundary and the political boundary between India and Afghanistan, known as the Durand line. As regards their internal administration, these border States are to all intents and purposes independent; there is an implied protectorate against attack from across the Durand line, but the British do not guarantee the chiefs against attacks from the neighbouring border tribes. In contrast to the practice in the Indian States, subsidies are given to most of the border chiefs to strengthen their military position.

There are only seven of these border States, varying in importance from that of the Khan of Kalat, with a wild and arid mountain country of 75,000 square miles, in Baluchistan, and a population of 328,000, to the small state of Phulera on the Hazara border, with an area of 34 square miles. Two of the chiefs, the Mehtar of Chitral and the Khan of Kalat, have the title of his Highness and a salute

of guns. One of the most important is the new State of Swat, founded in the course of the last ten years by the Miangul Shahzada, a descendant of the Ahkhund of Swat, on the Peshawar border.

An attempt has been made to sketch the historical background and to trace the evolution of the British protectorate, which all the Princes are so anxious to maintain.

To the chapters dealing with the States in detail I have prefixed, in the case of those mentioned by name, particulars giving the religion and race, the name of the ruler (preceded by that of the dynasty, where possible), date of accession, area, population and approximate revenue. They will, it is hoped, be of assistance to the reader.

I have added a chapter on Nepal because I feel that readers of the book may desire to have some information on this important kingdom, in view of its association with India during the past century. I hope I have made it perfectly clear that it is not, and never has been, an Indian State. This has been further emphasised in the title.

My acknowledgments are due to Mr. W. H. J. Wilkinson-Guillemard, C.S.I., C.I.E., lately Resident in Nepal, for the loan of photographs ; to Sir Herbert Baker, R.A., for the photograph of the Chamber of Princes at New Delhi ; to Sir Mirza Ismail, Dewan of Mysore, and Sir Krishnama Chari, Dewan of Baroda, for photographs they have sent me ; to officials of the India Office for the use of reference books and for permission to

reproduce the pictures of the Durbar at Udaipur in 1855 and of Old Calcutta ; to the Director of the Victoria and Albert Museum for permission to reproduce the frontispiece and the first illustration, and to Mr. K. de B. Codrington for particular help in connection with these pictures, and with the Wheel from the Temple of Kamarak, illustrated in his book, *Ancient India* ; to Mr. R. E. Enthoven, C.I.E., and the Oxford University Press for the illustration of Colonel Tod, and to the High Commissioner for India and the Oxford University Press for allowing me to use two maps from the Imperial Gazetteer of India as the basis of those which appear in this volume.

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