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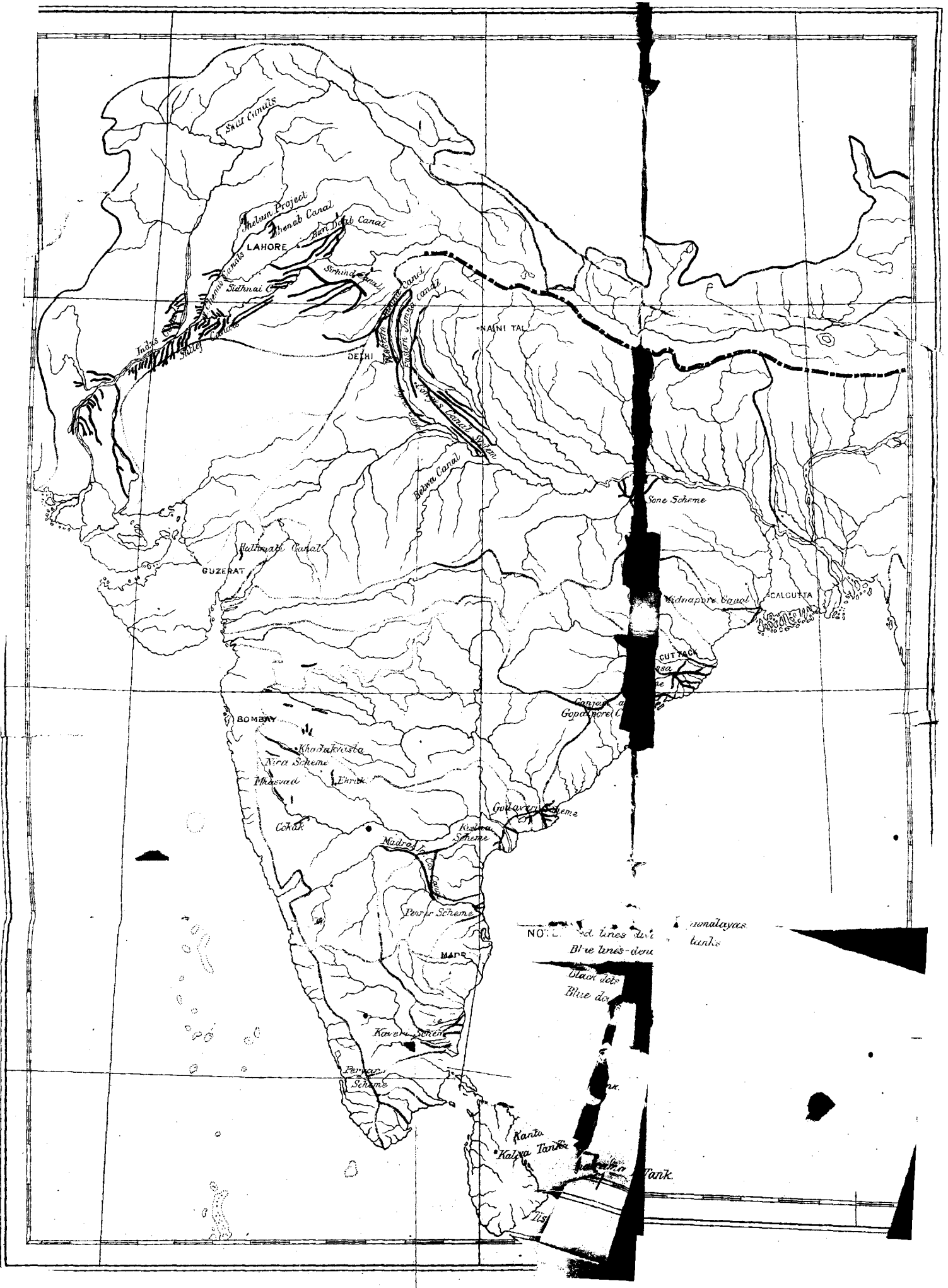
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# IRRIGATED INDIA

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AGRICULTURE

BY THE  
HON. ALFRED DEAKIN, M.L.A.

*Formerly Chief Secretary and Minister of Water  
Supply of Victoria Australia*

*WITH A MAP*

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## AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

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THE present work is a recast of a series of newspaper articles, the product of a tour through India in the cold weather of 1890-91, undertaken at the suggestion of Mr. David Syme, proprietor of the *Melbourne Age*, in order to afford to the Australian public, interested in irrigation, a sketch of what is being accomplished by its means in the peninsular empire of Southern Asia. It proved impossible to do this intelligibly without indicating in outline the circumstances of the country and its people, novel to colonists, unique in history, and important to all subjects of the Queen. The past as root of the present, and the present in its political, social, and religious aspects are, therefore, rapidly reviewed in the opening chapters. The physical and other conditions of the several Presidencies are next glanced at, the general character and prospects of native agriculture noted, and some chief irrigation schemes, with their lessons, briefly described. Detailed summaries of the achievements of the several Irrigation Departments and their financial results, proportionately of considerable length and in some parts a little technical, are added as an Appendix.

This volume makes no pretence to adequacy of treatment, even of its special subject. The writer is not an engineer, but having held the portfolio of Minister of Water Supply in Victoria for several years, and having in that capacity reported upon the systems of artificial watering in vogue in the United States (1885), Egypt and Italy (1887), he has gathered a sufficient acquaintance with them to become convinced of their applicability to Australian soils and climates. Both in this relation, and in his treatment of other questions relating to India, he has suited the manner of his comments, so far as he was able, to the miscellaneous audience addressed through the daily press, not hesitating to pass judgment upon the gravest issues with an easy infallibility that is almost editorial.

That many parts of the interior of the Australian Colonies need the application of water to the land to ensure success in agriculture and horticulture, and to improve pasture, has been demonstrated only too often by the rigours of recurring droughts. The fact that Victoria, South Australia, and Queensland have already legislated, while New South Wales is upon the point of legislating, to provide for irrigation in arid districts is an official recognition of the need. There are at least 10,000,000 acres on the continent commanded by water supplies ample for the maintenance of schemes such as those of Bombay, the Panjab, Southern California, Utah, or Colorado: within the next few years it is certain that several hundred thousand acres will be regularly cultivated by these means, and, judging by the experiments already instituted, with returns as large as have been obtained in the most favoured localities of the old or new worlds. Any contribution to the study of irrigation, or exposition, however cursory, of its methods elsewhere is of possible value at the present time.

Apart from this, the future relations of India and Australia possess immeasurable potencies. Their geographical proximity cannot but exercise a very real and reciprocal influence upon the forces of national life in each, presenting to both vital problems of common interest, and possibilities of political development as vast as they are vague. The reference to such topics in these pages is slight and incidental, intended to serve as the rudest of finger-posts to such of the writer's fellow-countrymen as take a thoughtful view of their responsibilities and cherish a high ideal for the coming Commonwealth.

The writer expresses his great obligations to His Excellency the Marquis of Lansdowne, Viceroy of India, to Lord Harris and Sir James Lyaal for their generous hospitality, and to their Excellencies the Earl of Hopetoun and Sir Henry Norman for letters of introduction which proved of high value. The purpose of his visit was greatly assisted by the kindness of Colonel Ardagh, private secretary to the Viceroy, Colonel Forbes, chief engineer of irrigation to the Central Government, Colonel Ottley, assistant secretary of public works, and chief of the Irrigation Department of the Panjab, Mr. G. T. Walsh, chief engineer of the Madras Presidency, Mr. C. T. Hughes, chief engineer of the Bombay Presidency, Colonel Neill, chief engineer of Bengal, Colonel Harrison, chief engineer of the North-west Provinces, Mr. R. McBride, chief engineer of Ceylon, Mr. A. G. Reid, C.M.G., C.E., Mr. T. Benton, C.E., Mr. E. Price, chief secretary of Madras, Mr. R. Blechyngen, secretary of the Agricultural

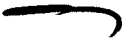


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Society, Calcutta, Mr. D. P. Masson, of Lahore, Mr. A. W. Ferguson, of Colombo, and Mr. Herbert Syme, his comrade in the tour. He has to thank Mr. David Syme, proprietor of the *Melbourne Age*, the proprietors of the *Daily Telegraph*, Sydney, and Messrs. Burden and Bonython, proprietors of the *Advertiser*, Adelaide, for permission to republish the articles which appeared simultaneously in the three journals above-named.

To the Right Hon. Sir Charles W. Dilke, Bart., M.P., and Mr. Philip Mennell, of London, he is under heavy obligations for their friendly services in seeing the work through the press.

Melbourne, *Sept.* 1892.



## PREFACE TO THE ENGLISH EDITION.

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It may safely be said that the component parts of the Empire know too little of each others' idiosyncrasies and achievements. There is no need to go from under the shadow of the British flag in search of precedents for grappling with the complexities which confront the pioneers in the later developed areas under the Imperial rule. To a large extent, even on the continent of Australia, the several colonies carry on their experiments, social and economical, as though they lay abreast of alien communities, of whom pride and patriotism forbade them to learn. Federation will shortly, it is to be hoped, eradicate this fatal provincialism. And in the meantime all honour is due to those who possess sufficient individuality to break through an insularity, which having no warrant from antiquity, is vastly more absurd than that of our tradition-haunted island.

Mr. Deakin taught and—he would admit—learnt much during the time when he figured before the British public—or before that small portion of it which pays any heed to Imperial questions—during the era of what red-tapists style the “Colonial,” but what those of wider vision rightly misname the “Imperial Conference of 1887.”

Having acquired this lesson in cosmopolitanism, Mr. Deakin, whose future rests on the fact that he, best of all Australasian politicians, realises the truth that on the development of the internal and interior resources of the Australian Continent, and not on loan-mongering and land-booming, depends its future status as an autonomous member of the Imperial comity, recently made an observatory tour of the great irrigational works of India, the result of which is embodied in the following pages.

As the sponsor of Irrigation in Australia, Mr. Deakin has thus reinforced the arguments based on local circumstances, and illustrated by American models, with comparisons drawn from the experiences of the greatest irrigating country in the world, and that too included within the bounds of the all-climate, all-condition embracing, British Empire.

For English readers the chief interest of the book, outside of expert information, must lie in the fact that it presents an outsider's view of the work, which, largely oblivious of the economic theories which pass current as axioms at home, the British rulers of India have brought into play for the fructification, and even salvation, of their great trust towards the subject myriads of India.

To avoid misconception, the English reader must bear in mind that Mr. Deakin writes from an Australian standpoint, viewed occasionally through purely Victorian spectacles, and that for some anachronisms the fact that the articles upon which the work is based were written in the winter of 1890-91, must be accepted as sufficient apology.

There is one technical expression which Mr. Deakin in several instances makes use of, which may puzzle the general reader. It may, therefore, be explained that the term referred to—"the duty of water"—implies the area of land which a given quantity of water will irrigate. As Mr. Deakin himself puts it in a previous work on American Irrigation: "The quantity of land which any given unit of water will irrigate is governed, first, by the kind of soil, subsoil, the rainfall, temperature, and evaporation of the particular area irrigated; next by the kind of crop grown, and the method of watering it, as well as by the length of time which that land or neighbouring land has been irrigated; and lastly by its position with regard to seepage and its capacity of capillary attraction."

P. M

London, Dec., 1892.

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