

THE RAJAH

PRINCIPALITY OF MYSORE:

WITH

A LETTER

TO THE

RIGHT HON. LORD STANLEY, M.P.

“Machiavel's errors arose not in consulting the principle of utility, but in making false applications of it. Bad faith is always bad policy.”

JEREMY BENTHAM.

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“ I consider that, in fact, our Government is at the head of a system composed of native States, and I would avoid what are called rightful occasions of appropriating those territories. On the contrary, I should be disposed, as far as I could, to maintain the native States, and I am satisfied that their maintenance, and the giving to the subjects of those States the conviction that they are considered permanent parts of the general Government of India, would naturally strengthen our authority.”

LORD ELLENBOROUGH.

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE
THE LORD STANLEY, M.P.,
ETC., ETC.

MY LORD,

The following statement of the claims of the Maharajah of Mysore to be reinstated in the executive government of his dominions, and to have his adopted son recognised as the lawful successor to his throne, is inscribed to your Lordship as the Minister under whose auspices Her Majesty's Proclamation of 1858 was issued to the Princes and people of India. The case is recommended to your Lordship's consideration as one which in its actual condition threatens to destroy all confidence in the sincerity of that Royal Proclamation—as one which involves the refusal of reform, and the commencement of a new series of annexations.

Your Lordship cannot fail to observe the remarkable features which, in its beginning, its progress, and its actual situation, distinguish this critical case. The administrative sequestration of the Mysore territories originated in a hasty error, which was frankly acknowledged by its responsible author, Lord William Bentinck. During the first sixteen years, the temporary and friendly object of our management was distinctly and repeatedly declared; and no hint was given that any detriment or danger could thereby accrue to the Prince and his family, or to the Native State. It was only during the last year of Lord Dalhousie's

Viceroyalty that the promised reinstatement was absolutely dropped, and the confiscation of the Rajah's dominions at his death was for the first time suggested.

Surely the experiment of enlarging the direct possessions of the Crown in India on every available pretext and opportunity, has been tried on a sufficiently large scale, and with evil consequences to the moral and material strength of the Empire that ought to be sufficiently obvious to the world. By your Lordship those evil consequences have always been deplored and denounced ; and so far as prudence permitted, you have ever endeavoured to apply or to facilitate remedial, restorative and reassuring measures. Whatever view may be taken by us or by posterity of the merits and services of that eminent personage, there can be no doubt that the name of Lord Dalhousie will be for ever identified with the policy of annexation. He had marked down Mysore ; but the life did not happen to fall in during his tenure of office. Will your Lordship be a consenting party to the reconstruction of a systematic territorial Tontine ? Will your Lordship now assist in carrying out one deferred detail in that general scheme, which you have so often and so strenuously condemned ?

It is important above all things to impress upon your Lordship, that the Princes, and those classes of the people of India who by position and education are conscious and reflective, do not believe that their rights and interests are fairly represented, that their wishes are at all understood or respected at the seat of Empire. The Government seem to rely for intelligence solely upon official sources, and to be neither inspired with a distinct purpose nor troubled with any positive misgivings, but to be content to get through each Session of Parliament quietly, without being called upon to explain any great failure or scandal, to express any decided hope, or to declare any consistent plan for the future.

The working of British institutions is much more clearly

understood and appreciated now-a-days in India, than was the case twenty years ago. Newspapers and Blue-books are not only read by natives of English education, but are also transmitted and translated to the dependent Sovereigns, Chieftains and landlords. The names of our leading Statesmen and their avowed or supposed views on Indian subjects, are known and canvassed in the Durbar and the closet of every Native Prince.

The question of the Mysore Rajah's reinstatement and of the succession to his throne, is now a matter of the deepest and most painful anxiety throughout the Native States, as well as in the British Provinces of the Madras Presidency. It is not merely for the Prince, but for the Principality, that all are interested. In the fate of the Mysore dynasty, every Hindoo and Mussulman Chieftain will see the destiny of his own race foreshadowed. With perfect truth it may be said that the Rajah of Mysore is not a man but a system. This is not merely the grievance or the claim of a protected Sovereign, but the appeal of an Empire ; and, if it were rightly understood, it would be seen to involve the whole principle of British supremacy in India.

With the extinction of the Mysore State would disappear the last hope of order and regularity being introduced by our influence into the administration of the larger Principalities. No general scheme of policy, no political future would then remain possible for the British Empire in India, but that of continued territorial acquisitions and the progressive augmentation of the European forces. If the native States cannot be reformed, they are doomed to be gradually annexed.

There is one other peculiarity in this question, which makes it especially deserving of close attention. If it obtains a hearing in Parliament, it will offer the first opportunity that has ever been given to the Legislature of pronouncing on an Indian annexation before it has been completed,—before, in fact, it is too late. No one will be

satisfied with its summary disposal by those Parliamentary tactics, which have become familiar even to the Hindoo mind,—by a debate and a Ministerial majority. Nothing less than the calm deliberation and recorded judgment of a Committee of the House of Commons,—even though that judgment should be adverse,—will convince the Princes of India of the integrity of their rulers. The honour of the Crown is deeply compromised by a doubt being thrown on Her Majesty's royal word. In the fervent hope that your Lordship will give all the weight of your influence to secure that fair inquiry which the case demands from Parliament,

I beg to subscribe myself,

Your Lordship's faithful and obedient servant,

INDICUS.
