

Indian Speeches and Addresses

SIR HENRY COTTON
K.C.S.I.

CALCUTTA
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and Mr. Cotton's action, like that of his distinguished grandson in connection with the Assam Labour question, was severely animadverted upon by the Anglo-Indian Press of the time. The verdict of history has long since, however, been cast in his favour, and the invective of his opponents consigned to oblivion.

In 1831, Mr. John Cotton's son, Joseph John, entered the Madras Civil Service, from which he retired in 1863, a representative Haileybury Civillian of the old school. Mr. J.J. Cotton's second son, the subject of this memoir, passed at the open competition in the spring of 1865. Sir Henry's second son, Mr. Julian James Cotton, in his turn was appointed to the Madras Civil Service in 1893, and a nephew, Mr. W. B. Cotton, has been a member of the covenanted service in the United Provinces since 1894. It will thus be seen that Sir Henry represents a practically continuous service of five generations in this country—a record probably unique. For more than a century and a half the interests of his family have been wrapped up in India; and Sir Henry has written of himself in the pages of *New India*:—"It is my pride that I am, as it were, an hereditary member of the administration."

He received his early education at Magdalen College School, Oxford, under Dr. J. E. Millard; and was for a short time also at Brighton College. In 1861, Sir Henry's father sent him for a year to the Applied Sciences Department at King's College, London, to undergo the necessary training for a civil engineer, but he showed no aptitude for this branch of study, and was eventually allowed to enter the general department. Here he rapidly distinguished himself in Divinity, winning not only the scholarship in 1863 but also the lifelong friendship of Professor E. H. Plumptre, afterwards Dean of

SIR HENRY COTTON, K. C. S. I.

A BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH.

SIR Henry John Stedman Cotton, K. C. S. I., was born on the 13th September, 1845, at Combaconam, in the Madras Presidency. For generations past, his family has been associated with India. It was in the middle of the eighteenth century that his great grandfather, Captain Joseph Cotton, of Leyton, the son of Cowper's poet-physician, Dr. Nathaniel Cotton, came to India in the commercial service of the Hon'ble Company; and on his retirement, held for 28 years the position of a Director of its Court, and of Deputy Master of the Trinity House, where a bust by Chantrey perpetuates his memory to this day. Two of his sons attained to eminence: William Cotton, D. C. L., F. R. S., Governor and "Father" of the Bank of England, and inventor of an automatic machine for the weighing of sovereigns, still in use under the name of the "Governor," whose son, the late Right Hon. Sir Henry Cotton, was from 1877 to 1890 one of the Lord Justices of the Court of Appeal in England; and John Cotton, who arrived in India in the year 1800 as a writer on the Madras Establishment, and served for 15 years as Collector of Tanjore. On his retirement, Mr. John Cotton became a Director of the Company, and in 1843 succeeded Sir J. L. Lushington, G. C. B., as Chairman of the Hon'ble Court. It was during his Chairmanship that Lord Ellenborough received notice of recall from India. The step was taken by the Directors in spite of the strong opposition of the Board of Control;

He arrived in Bengal on the 29th October, 1867, and was posted to the Midnapore District, where he served his early training under Sir William Herschel, Bart., author of the well-known system of identification by thumb marks, and Mr. Herbert Reynolds, C. S. I. In July, 1869, he was appointed Sub-divisional Officer of Chooadangah, in the district of Nuddea, under Mr. James Monro, C. B., subsequently Chief Commissioner of the London Police. In March 1872, he was made Small Cause Court Judge of Sealdah, and in the following January, was brought into the Bengal Secretariat where he organised the new-formed Statistical Branch of the office—a service which elicited the special thanks of Sir George Campbell. He temporarily left the Secretariat for one year to officiate as Registrar of the High Court under Sir Richard Couch the then Chief Justice. During his connection with the Bengal Office, he wrote several administration reports, which were favourably noticed by Government, and one report on the external trade of Bengal won commendation from the late Marquess of Salisbury, at that time Secretary of State for India. Through all these years, Sir Henry Cotton enjoyed the entire confidence of his chiefs, and was a special favourite of both Sir Richard Temple and Sir George Campbell. The former refers to him in his "Men and Events of My Time in India" as one of the most promising officers in the country, and Sir George Campbell singles out his name for honourable comment in his autobiographical memoir.

While on leave in England in 1877, Sir Henry Cotton contributed two important papers on Indian questions to the *Fortnightly Review*, which was then in the heyday of its fame under Mr. John Morley's editorship.

On his return from furlough in 1878, he was

Wells. In Classics, Orlando Haydon Hyman, a remarkable son of a remarkable father, Benjamin Haydon (the painter) was his tutor; but his special strength lay always in English History, Language and Literature.

In his London days, Sir Henry Cotton organised a literary society, which was destined to exercise an important influence on his after life. Among its members were Edouard Naville, the Egyptologist; Arthur O'Shaughnessy, the poet; J. T. Nettleship, the animal-painter; Edward Byrne, now a Judge of the Chancery Division of the High Court of Judicature in England; Professors Corfield and W. K. Clifford; E. Nettleship, the eminent oculist; Charles Lyall, now K. C. S. I. and C.I.E., and Judicial and Public Secretary at the India Office; and the late Professor Evan Buchanan Baxter, who was later to achieve distinction as a leading London physician and successful teacher of medicine. It was in the year 1864 that Sir Henry Cotton's attention was drawn to John Stuart Mill's two Essays upon Auguste Comte, then appearing in the *Westminster Review*. He was led on to a perusal of Comte's own writings and became, with Dr. Baxter, a regular attendant at Dr. Congreve's lectures in Bouverie Street, Strand. The audience at that School of Humanity, though small, was already a distinguished one; and included such well-known names as Miss Evans ("George Eliot"), Frederic Harrison, Professor Beesly, Dr. Bridges, Judge Vernon Lushington, and Henry Crompton. The Positivist principles, now acquired by Sir Henry Cotton, have always remained with him, and the spirit of their teaching has pervaded the whole of his Indian career. If there has ever been an official in India of whom it can faithfully be said that he has always "lived for others," and "lived openly," it is he.

active working of the landed system, even in the most difficult and least understood District of Chittagong, with the more extensive knowledge and opportunities for considering and comparing general results, which his position as Secretary in the Land Revenue Department of the Board of Revenue affords to him. It would be difficult to overestimate the value of the report which Mr. Cotton prepared."

In 1883, Sir Henry Cotton went home to England on leave. It was the memorable year of the Ilbert Bill, when race-feeling ran so high. In London he delivered an address to a Positivist audience, in which he vindicated the policy of Lord Ripon's Government, and foreshadowed the principles subsequently enunciated in *New India*.

In 1884, he was nominated by the Municipal Commissioners of Calcutta to represent them in an official enquiry into the sanitary condition of the metropolis, and his services were acknowledged by the rate-payers in a proposal to place his bust in the Town Hall. The offer was, however, respectfully declined.

The year 1885 is an important landmark in Sir Henry's career. It was in November of that year that he published "*New India or India in Transition*," which has since passed through several editions, and has been translated into the principal vernacular languages. The object of this well-known book was to draw attention to the great political, social and religious changes gradually taking place in India. It urges the encouragement of the aspirations and spontaneous tendencies of the Indian people, and endeavours by proposals of a constructive character to show how, in Mr. Gladstone's words, the "internal liberties" of the country "ought to be carefully and systematically enlarged." This work

appointed Magistrate and Collector of Chittagong, the heaviest fiscal district of Bengal, and on two occasions officiated as Commissioner of the Chittagong Division. There he not only performed his official duties with success but found leisure to compile an admirable "Memorandum on the Revenue History of Chittagong," which has been justly described as a model of official writing. Not only is it replete with curious information regarding the early administration of Bengal, but it displays an equal mastery of the technical details of government and of the literary skill which turns a dry subject into a document full of human actuality. The account, for instance, of Joynarain Ghosal's forged ~~success~~ can be read with more interest than many a novel. In the appendices to this work are to be found an interesting series of articles based on the Collectorate Records dating from 1761, the year of the appointment of Mr. Harry Verelst to be first "Chief" of the district. From Chittagong he also wrote an article which was published in the *New Quarterly Review* of October, 1879, entitled "India's Need and England's Duty."

In 1880 he was appointed Secretary to the Board of Revenue and held that office for many years. The late Mr. C. T. Buckland, formerly a Member of the Board, thus refers in his pamphlet on the Bengal Tenancy Act to a memorandum which Sir Henry drew up at the request of the Select Committee on the Bill:—"In order to satisfy this want the Government of Bengal directed Mr. H. J. S. Cotton to prepare a memorandum on the subject for the use of the Committee. It would hardly have been possible to find a more competent officer than Mr. Cotton for the purpose, as he combines in himself a very considerable local and practical experience of the

made a great stir at the time of its publication and was most highly spoken of by such diverse authorities as *The Times* newspaper and Mr. John Bright. *The Times* wrote :—"Mr. Cotton, who has rendered efficient aid and gained much experience in the Bengal Civil Service, has mingled much with the native community, who have given him their confidence in an unusual degree. His volume is the work of a thoughtful man, and even when its arguments do not command entire assent, they afford food for reflection." *The Pall Mall Gazette* also used the following language :—"It is not often that an English official in India makes for himself sufficient leisure and possesses sufficient independence of judgment to criticize the silent transformation which is being wrought in the Indian continent by Western civilisation. Every one who desires to catch a glimpse of this momentous revolution, will find plenty of matter for reflection in Mr. Cotton's unassuming volume. Nothing can impair the genuine value of his observations and of his bold sketch of the future that attends the Indian races." But the most conspicuous tribute to the book and its author was rendered by Mr. John Bright in a speech delivered in the Birmingham Town Hall on the 8th December, 1885. "I have been reading," he said, "within the last few days a very remarkable book called 'New India or India in Transition.' The author of it is a Mr. Cotton of the Bengal Civil Service, and it is published by Kegan Paul Trench and Co., in London. I give these particulars, because I wish to state that nothing could be happier for this country and India in regard to Indian questions than that the book should be carefully read by every man who, during the last fortnight, has been elected to sit in the House of Commons."

The chapters on the religious and political tendencies of India, written as they are from a controversial standpoint, evoked considerable outcry, and Sir Henry Cotton was roughly handled in the Anglo-Indian Press. It was, perhaps, only natural also that his independence of attitude should have gained disfavour in official circles, and that for a time he should have become a marked man. But his abilities were too great to shut him out from a portion at least of the promotion which was his due, and not even his bitterest opponent has ever been found to say that his individual opinions or personal predilections have in any way impaired his sense of official responsibility.

In 1887, he was appointed to officiate as Commissioner of Police and Chairman of the Corporation of Calcutta during the late Sir Henry Harrison's absence on leave. His services in this capacity will be remembered in connection with the new central thoroughfare now known as the Harrison Road, which was sanctioned mainly through his advocacy. At the close of the year, he was placed on special duty as President of the Commission to enquire into the working of the Sone Canals, and the report submitted by him, though it ran counter to departmental prejudices, and was therefore not well received in the Irrigation Department, has resulted in many important administrative improvements.

In 1888, Sir Henry Cotton was selected by Sir Steuart Bayley to act as Revenue Secretary to the Government of Bengal, and on the death, two years later, of Mr Colman Macaulay, C. I. E., he was confirmed in the appointment of Financial Secretary. In 1891, he received the further honour of appointment to the Bengal Legislative Council. From the 26th November to the

4th December, 1891, Sir Henry was placed on special duty as President of the Calcutta Police Commission, and from the 5th of the latter month he officiated as Chief Secretary to the Government of Bengal, being confirmed in that office on the retirement of Sir John Edgar in July 1892. On the 25th May 1892, his services to the State were recognised by his appointment as a Companion of the Star of India. In April, 1896, he availed himself of two months and 12 days' privilege leave, and on his return was selected by Lord Elgin to act as Home Secretary to the Government of India. In November, 1896, he was appointed Chief Commissioner of Assam, in succession to Sir William Ward, and held that office until his retirement from the Indian Civil Service in October, 1902. He was gazetted as an additional member of the Viceroy's Legislative Council in November 1900, and took a prominent part in the debates on the Assam Labour Bill during that cold weather session, resigning his seat in March, 1901, when the measure was passed into law. The climax of his distinguished official career was reached on the 26th June, 1902, when he was promoted to the dignity of a Knight Commandership of the Order of the Star of India, and received the honour of knighthood at the hands of King Edward himself at Buckingham Palace.

On the events which have signalized Sir Henry Cotton's administration of Assam there is no need to enlarge in this place. They have been gratefully recorded by the people of the Province in the farewell address presented by them at Gauhati in May 1902, on the occasion of his handing over charge of the administration before his departure on privilege leave: and Lord Curzon has taken advantage of each of his visits to Assam, to acknowledge both at Gauhati and Silchar in

eloquent terms, his personal appreciation of the services rendered by the Chief Commissioner during a period of unusual difficulty and distress. It was certainly not Sir Henry's fault that the great earthquake of 1897 crippled his resources, or that the many schemes launched by him for the improvement of the province were not suffered to work smoothly. Had he had his way, Assam would be to-day studded with a network of feeder tramways, and an important step forward would have taken in the matter of colonizing the millions of acres of culturable land which remain untilled for want of capital and labour. But he had not the happiness to be one of those favourites of fortune who spend nine-tenths of their official lives at Simla, and hence Simla afforded him no assistance and no encouragement. In other directions, however, his beneficent energy was permitted to exert itself. The Cotton College at Gauhati and the Berry-White Medical school at Dibrugarh attest his zeal in the cause of education : and the startling decrease of the mortality among the prison-population from 59 to 22 per mille in the course of six years speaks convincingly of his humane efforts to improve the jail administration of the province. Sir Henry's popularity with the people of the country has always been remarkable, and the planters in Assam, appreciating the keen interest evinced in their welfare, were also amongst his staunchest admirers until, in the discharge of his duty, he felt it incumbent upon him to point out that the abnormal system under which their labour was recruited harboured many abuses which reflected credit neither on the employer nor on the Government which was charged with the task of supervision. The merits of the controversy may be left undiscussed : yet it must not be forgotten that Sir Henry, in his farewell speech at Shillong, pointedly observed that

the investigation, which was to bring him into collision with the tea-industry, was not of his own seeking, but was imposed upon him from without. The full and complete history of the new Assam Labour Act has evidently still to be written, but Sir Henry, who, as he told his Assamese friends at Gauhati, is "true to his salt," will be too loyal to write it, and Lord Curzon too well appreciates the nature of the treatment accorded by him to his lieutenant to suggest it. However this may be, the Chief Commissioner's reward for his honesty and independence was a torrent of vituperation of the most vulgar and personal description from the planters' organs in the Press, and scant recognition and support from Simla which did not scruple to sacrifice justice to expediency in its anxiety not to offend a powerful combination of capitalists. Sir Henry himself, as he assured his hearers at Gauhati, has been little affected by the ink-slinging of which he has been the target. Opportunism has always been abhorrent to him, and he holds to the opinion that no public officer should shrink from declaring what he honestly believes to be the plain truth, however unpalatable and unwelcome that truth may be at the time. He looks to posterity for the justification of his labour policy, and posterity will triumphantly vindicate him, as it has vindicated Sir Frederick Halliday and Sir John Peter Grant, who in their day also championed the cause of the weak against the strong.

Sir Henry Cotton has, as a matter of fact, always held views in advance of his contemporaries, and in this connection his evidence before the Public Service Commission in 1887 is of particular interest. Of the 443 witnesses examined by the Commissioners, almost all assumed the Covenanted Civil Service as the *res qua non* of the Indian

polity, and the schemes propounded by them had all more or less reference to the remodelling and recruiting of the Service as necessitated by the altered conditions of the time. Sir Henry alone ventured to modify the central position and formulate a scheme of reconstructive policy. While not slow to accord deserved praise to the able band of administrators belonging to the Covenanted Service, who have contributed so much towards the consolidation of the Indian Empire, he held that so centralized a system of Government was already outworn in the more advanced Provinces, and that the time had come, especially in the judicial branch, for gradually replacing it by some more suitable machinery. He was among the foremost, if not the first, to advocate the extension of Local Self-Government and the enlargement of the Legislative Councils. To maintain English supremacy in India intact, and at the same time to shape into another mould the favoured monopoly of the Civil Service, to utilize all that is wisest and most effective in English guidance, and yet to develop native powers of government, to reduce the cost of administration, to promote sympathy between rulers and ruled, to bring justice to the doors of the poor, to kill the anomaly of a prosecutor-judge,—these are the problems which Sir Henry has busied himself to attempt to solve, and with which his name will always be associated, whether as pioneer or prophet.

As Chief Secretary to the Government of Bengal, he achieved an unqualified success. His genial and conciliating disposition, his knowledge of men and things, his quick and alert intelligence, his tact and faculty of judicious discrimination, made him an ideal adviser to a ruler of the type of Sir Charles Elliott. Many were

the occasions upon which that well-meaning but impetuous administrator was saved from an ignominious fall by the sagacious counsels of his wiser subordinate : and it is an open secret that the ill-starred Jury notification would never have seen the light, if Sir Charles Elliott had hearkened to the warning of his Chief Secretary. With officials of every rank, from the Commissioner of a Division to the Sub-deputy Magistrate of the lowest grade, Sir Henry Cotton's popularity was universal, and when he left Bengal for Assam, he was awarded the signal honour of a congratulatory dinner at the hands of his fellow-civilians. To the people of the country, his attitude was invariably one of sympathy and encouragement : and his influence was always exercised in the direction of Indian advancement. It was, naturally, not seldom the case that he was unable to prevail, for he had to deal with a chief whose opinions on many questions were diametrically opposed to his own : but the liberal character of much of Sir Charles Elliott's administration bears striking testimony to the fact that while the hand at the helm might be that of a reactionary Esau, the voice was often that of a very opposite Jacob. Nor is it one of the least remarkable features of a remarkable partnership that so dissimilar a pair should have remained throughout on terms of the closest personal friendship, and that their intimacy should continue unimpaired in the days of their retirement.

While Sir Henry Cotton was in Calcutta, there were few men more busy from morning till night ; and he has been with reason described as one of the hardest worked men in India. For more than three years he held the office of Honorary Secretary to the Bengal Branch of Lady Dufferin's Fund ; no one was better known at

Municipal meetings while he was a member of the Corporation; and both at the Senate House and in the Syndicate he has taken his full share of work as a Fellow of the Calcutta University. His private life and habits are simple, and few are aware of the extent of his private charity. Many educated natives of Bengal owe their worldly position to his discriminating kindness: and it may safely be said that rarely has an Englishman counted more Indians among his friends. His doors were always open to visitors, high and low, and even the poorest left his presence cheered by kind words and sympathy. More than most men, he possesses that charm of manner which wins the loyalty of subordinates: and it is one of his proudest boasts that never once during the course of his career has he had occasion to fine a servant or employé.

Sir Henry Cotton is an enthusiastic advocate of exercise, athletic sports, and games. In his student days, he was an active Swiss mountaineer, and climbed Mont Blanc on the 30th August, 1863, before he was 18 years of age; and most of the well-known peaks and passes at Chamounix, Zermatt and in the Oberland were scaled by him in the sixties when their ascent was no common feat. In 1866, he was elected a member of the Alpine Club. At Brighton College, he distinguished himself as a swimmer and fencer. He was once a player at rackets, and was for long one of the best-known lawn-tennis players both in Calcutta, and at the Hyde Park Tennis Club in London. He is devoted to chess and with his friends, Sir Henry Harrison and the late Mr. Robert Steel, C.S.I., was a great patron of the game among Indian players. At home, as a member of the M. C. C. he is a *habitué* of Lords, and his face is a familiar one at the

Savile Club. He is a fluent and practised debater and speaker, and a natural hesitation which has always remained with him only serves to ensure a remarkable clearness in his enunciation.

In his domestic relations he has been singularly happy. He married early and has three sons, the two elder of whom are in India, the one, Mr. H. E. A. Cotton, as an Advocate of the Calcutta High Court, the other, of whom mention has already been made, as a Madras Civilian. Of them it suffices to say that, while the younger is upholding the family reputation for administrative ability and sympathy for those over whom he wields authority, the elder is not only achieving success in his profession but takes an active part in public affairs as an energetic and outspoken representative of the rate-payers on the Corporation of Calcutta. The third and youngest son, Mr. A. L. Cotton, has devoted himself to literary pursuits in England. Sir Henry's younger brother, Mr. James S. Cotton, after a distinguished career at Oxford, became a Fellow of Queen's College, and was until recently Editor of the *Academy*. He is the author of a valuable treatise on India in the *English Citizen* series, published some years ago by Macmillan, and also wrote the Life of Mountstuart Elphinstone in Sir William Hunter's series of "Rulers of India." His knowledge of India is remarkable and has obtained for him from the India Office the important commission, on which he is at present engaged, of preparing a new edition of Sir William Hunter's *Gazetteer of India*.

Whatever outside opinions may be held about Sir Henry Cotton's political and religious views, the influence of his personality upon Indian policy and Indian aspirations has been of the most striking character. In respect

of administrative talent, intellectual power and literary accomplishments, he will always be ranked as one of the foremost members of the Bengal Civil Service. And it would be hard to point to any other civilian administrator whose popularity with the people of the country has been so universal and so noteworthy. On the occasion of his departure from India in May, 1902, the sentiments of admiration and affection entertained for him by the Indian public found vent in a succession of demonstrations which can only be paralleled by those which accompanied the laying down by Lord Ripon of his eventful Viceroyalty. It was sorrowfully realized that in the ordinary course of events Sir Henry would not return to India at the expiry of the leave granted to him, as he was due to retire in the following October under the operation of the thirty-five years' rule : and all sections of the Indian community came forward to place upon record their appreciation of his services and their regret at the termination of his official connection with the land for which he had made so many sacrifices. (Among purely local manifestations, the gathering of the Siems or semi-independent Khasia hill-chiefs at Shillong, is worthy of special mention. The incident was a unique one in the history of the hill-tribes, and the presenters of the address gave special prominence to the fact that they had never before assembled to render a similar honour to a retiring Chief Commissioner. At Shillong also, Sir Henry and Lady Cotton were entertained by the European residents of the station at a dinner presided over by General Sir A. J. F. Reid, commanding the Assam District, and in his reply to the toast of the evening, which was proposed by Mr. Porteous, the Commissioner and Judge of the Assam Valley Districts, Sir Henry made the memorable speech to which

reference has already been made and in which he disclaimed all idea of hostility to the tea industry, and claiming to be judged by his actions, averred that he had done more to advance its interests than any of his predecessors. At Gauhati, the first stage on his homeward journey, the good-will of the inhabitants of Assam found expression in a crowded meeting at which representatives from every district assembled to bid farewell to their departing ruler. Their feelings were eloquently put into words by His Highness the Maharajah of Durbhunga, who has been for some years past a constant visitor to Kamakhya in the Kamroop district and has invariably taken a keen interest in the affairs of the province. His Highness' speech on the occasion of the presentation of the farewell address, was a remarkable one in many ways. After dwelling upon the manner in which Sir Henry had succeeded in winning the affection and the confidence of the people of the country, the Maharajah went on to quote the famous order passed by Lord Dalhousie on a case in which he had successfully insisted on justice being done, at the risk of a tumult. "I circulate these papers," wrote the Governor-General, "They are an instance of the principle that we should do what is right without fear of the consequences." No quotation could have been more apposite: for in these noble sentiments is to be found the keynote of Sir Henry's whole official career. He has always possessed the courage of his convictions: and no one has ever been able to say of him that he has shirked responsibility for his actions in the face of outcry and agitation or endeavoured to shift it to the shoulders of those whose duty it was to carry out his order. To the successful politician of to-day the doctrine of the subordination of politics to

morals may seem outworn : but intelligent opinion in India, as elsewhere, retains its own method of appraising the merits of public men. In the case of Sir Henry Cotton this was made strikingly apparent, not only by the Assamese but also by the people of Bengal, with whom he has from first to last been a special favourite. He was received at the Scaldah station on his arrival in Calcutta by an assembly of more than a thousand persons : and the presence in the chair at the Town Hall two days later of Maharajah Bahadur Sir Jotendro Mohun Tagore, K.C.S.I., afforded genuine and unmistakable evidence of the universality and spontaneity of the feeling which animated the native community. Nor were these manifestations confined to this side of India. At every principal railway station on the line between Calcutta and Bombay, Sir Henry was the recipient of an ovation : and in Bombay itself the Presidency Association presented him with an address prior to his embarkation on the mail-steamer—a compliment which has never before been paid to a civilian administrator from another province, and which Sir Henry must have all the more valued, as he has never had any connection, official or otherwise, with the Western Presidency.

It is impossible to close this brief record of Sir Henry Cotton's Indian career without a reference to the deep disappointment felt throughout the Lower Provinces at his inability to secure from Lord Curzon adequate recognition of his overwhelming claims to the Lieutenant Governorship of Bengal. Too much need not be made of the circumstance that the question of a successor to Sir John Woodburn was suffered deliberately (as it appeared) to remain in abeyance until the rules of the service had compelled Sir Henry Cotton to send

in his papers, in spite of the prolonged illness which rendered the late Lieutenant-Governor incapable for several months of discharging his heavy and responsible duties. But the fact remains that it was the ardent wish of the whole people of Bengal, voiced by such undisputed leaders of public opinion as the Maharajah of Darbhunga and Maharajah Bahadur Sir Jotendro Mohun Tagore, that Sir Henry Cotton should be appointed to succeed Sir John Woodburn, and that that wish was not permitted to be accomplished. To a man of Sir Henry's energy and intellectuality retirement has not, it is true, meant that extinction which takes place in the case of so many Anglo Indian officials: and his adoption as Liberal candidate for East Nottingham bids fair to put it in his power to befriend India from his place in the House of Commons as powerfully in the future as he has done in the past. But the people of Bengal would fain have kept him a little longer in their midst. Ever since the Libert Bill controversy they have cherished the dream of finding him before the close of his career at the head of the administration of their Province. When Sir Rivers Thompson ignored his claims to promotion to the Secretariat, the Indian Press entered a vigorous protest against what it not unjustly stigmatized as a piece of palpable injustice. When Sir Stuart Bayley repaired the wrong, the whole country approved of the then Lieutenant-Governor's action. When Sir Charles Elliott showed his appreciation of unostentatious worth by appointing him as Chief Secretary, the joy of the Indian community knew no bounds. Lastly, when he was placed in charge of the province of Assam, all Bengal hoped that Suilong might prove the stepping-stone to Belvedere. They will never cease to deplore the unhappy

fate that has deprived them of the man of their choice, whose sympathy for them and their legitimate aims and aspirations has always been, through good-repute and ill-repute, unswerving and unceasing. The memory of Sir Henry Cotton will be perpetuated in marble by a grateful people in the Calcutta Town Hall and in the College at Gauhati which bears his name: but it will not live in marble alone. "For thirty-five years," said the Maharajah of Durbhunga at Gauhati in words that will find an echo in every heart in Bengal, "for thirty-five years, he has devoted himself to us and has won our affection and confidence to an extent which does not fall to the lot of many officials in India, and we cannot bear to think that a few arbitrary months are to shut him out from closing his career among us in the highest post that lies open to an Indian Government servant. But, if it so be that he does not return to us, we must content ourselves with wishing him a long and happy life in England, secure in the recollection of good deeds performed and valiant service rendered, and conscious of the heart-felt affection and regard of the thousands over whom he has exercised authority not only in Assam but in Bengal. Sir Henry Cotton knows us, and we know him: and there is a bond between us, which neither time nor space can loosen or sever."

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