

**BRAHMINS AND PARIAHS. AN APPEAL
BY THE INDIGO MANUFACTURERS OF
BENGAL TO THE BRITISH
GOVERNMENT, PARLIAMENT, AND
PEOPLE, FOR PROTECTION AGAINST THE
LIEUT.-GOVERNOR OF BENGAL**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649094141

Brahmins and pariahs. An appeal by the indigo manufacturers of Bengal to the British government, Parliament, and people, for protection against the lieut.-governor of Bengal by Anonymous

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

www.triestepublishing.com

ANONYMOUS

**BRAHMINS AND PARIAHES. AN APPEAL
BY THE INDIGO MANUFACTURERS OF
BENGAL TO THE BRITISH
GOVERNMENT, PARLIAMENT, AND
PEOPLE, FOR PROTECTION AGAINST THE
LIEUT.-GOVERNOR OF BENGAL**

BRAHMINS AND PARIAHS.

AN APPEAL

BY THE

Indigo Manufacturers of Bengal

TO THE

BRITISH GOVERNMENT, PARLIAMENT, AND PEOPLE,

FOR

PROTECTION

AGAINST THE

LIEUT.-GOVERNOR OF BENGAL;

SETTING FORTH THE PROCEEDINGS BY WHICH THIS HIGH OFFICER HAS INTERFERED WITH THE FREE COURSE OF JUSTICE, HAS DESTROYED CAPITAL AND TRADE OF BRITISH SETTLERS IN INDIA, AND HAS CREATED THE PRESENT DISASTROUS CONDITION OF INCENDIARISM AND INSURRECTION NOW SPREADING IN THE RURAL DISTRICTS OF BENGAL.

"Every office in the country is held by men pledged to oppose the settlement of Europeans in the country, and they are able to make their own statements."—Letter from "The Times Calcutta Correspondent," dated from Calcutta, 8th December, 1860, and published in the Times of 14th January, 1861.

LONDON:

JAMES RIDGWAY, 169, PICCADILLY, W.

1861.

India - Pauline
and government

R

BRAHMINS AND PARIAHHS.

CHAPTER I.

A CONTRAST.

Two of the principal staples which India produces for exportation are opium and indigo.

In one respect, and in one respect only, opium and indigo resemble each other. They are both cultivated by "a system of advances, which presents some features absolutely identical."*

In all other respects these vegetable products can only be compared to be contrasted.

Opium is a drug which is grown for traffic with China, and is that "foreign medicine" which now passes through the Chinese custom houses at a settled duty; indigo is a harmless dye, which is very welcome at Manchester, and exercises only beneficial effects upon our relations with the rest of the world. Opium is the result of "a system of poppy cultivation under a Government monopoly."† Indigo is produced by independent "British settlers, in whose future increase lies the only permanent prosperity of British India."‡ Opium is produced under a coercive

* Report of Indigo Commission of 1860, par. 14.

† Idem.

‡ Opinions of Lord William Bentinck and Lord Metcalfe, quoted and adopted in the Report of the Colonization Committee, 1859.

system which is of such an unrelaxing character that the remuneration to the Ryot has in a quarter of a century scarcely varied, while the remuneration for indigo has kept pace with the increased value of labour, which it has itself tended to create, and is now three times the amount which it was thirty-five years ago.* Indigo has cleared the jungle and turned the wilderness into corn-fields, and the lair of the wild beast into villages; while opium has only covered rich arable lands with poppies, and fixed a system of forced labour akin to slavery upon the people.

In other respects the contrast is still more remarkable. Opium has always been the object of the most tender care to the Government, while the manufacture of indigo has always been a thing to be discouraged, and, if possible, destroyed.† The system by which opium has been produced has always been veiled from the public eye and excluded from all public inquiries; while the system by which indigo is produced has always been made to bear the onus of every passing disturbance, and has been, as State Papers now prove, industriously calumniated by the agents of the governing Company.‡ The obligation of the Ryots to cultivate opium has been enforced by remedies so summary and by punishments so stringent, that neglect or opposition is almost unheard of; while the contracts to cultivate indigo have been denuded of all practical legal remedy, and the planter has been, in this respect, a mere outlaw, left to right himself or to suffer wrong, watched

* In 1825 the Ryot received a rupee for twelve bundles of indigo plants, then it rose to a rupee for ten bundles, then to eight and to six. It is now at four bundles the rupee; and as the price of labour increases, the price of the plant will still further rise.

† Evidence of Mr. C. Hollings, Indigo Commissioner, 1860. Evidence.

‡ Report of Indigo Commission, 1860.

by a police which, as the late Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal complains,* are the most corrupt body of officials which the world has ever seen, and at the mercy of the Bengal secretariat, whose policy has ever been to harass and oppress those who, in the language of the covenanted servants of the Company, were "interlopers" in India.†

Opium is popular in the public offices of Calcutta; and to any suggestion of the grinding slavery it fastens upon the Ryot, the present Lieut.-Governor of Bengal would doubtless reply by some phrase of contempt, such as those he has recently addressed to the indigo planters, or by some bold flight of the imagination, such as those which make up the last Minute he has published. Indigo, on the other hand, after fifty years struggle against the officers of the Civil Service when in its plenitude of power, seems to be at last upon the verge of extinction. In the present Lieut.-Governor of Bengal, the Honourable John Peter Grant, it has found an enemy who unites those qualities in his public functions which are necessary to destroy the constant object of the hostility of the Secretariat of Bengal. At this man's will, and as would appear to us, for no other object than to satisfy the instincts of a traditional hatred,‡ eight millions of

* Sir F. Halliday's Minute on the Police.

† See Minute upon the Complaint of the Bengal Indigo Planters' Association *passim*.

‡ "2692. Mr. CAMPBELL.] What may be the annual value of the indigo produced in India?—The value of the indigo produced in Bengal and the Upper Provinces may be from £2,000,000 to £3,000,000 per annum, varying with the extent of the crops and the market price of the article.

"2693. Is that all produced by English capital and skill, and enterprise? Nineteen-twentieths of it is produced by British capital and skill.

"2694. You have stated that the annual value of indigo produced is from £2,000,000 to £3,000,000: what may be the value of the proper-

British capital are to be destroyed ; an annual trade of £2,000,000 is to cease out of India ; a population of at least a million native labourers are to be cast out of employ ;* and the whole class of planters, who are now reclaiming the wilderness, civilizing the people, curing the sick, relieving the starving, upholding the falling, and accustoming the suspicious native to associate all these blessings with employment under an European—all this class is to be ruined and driven forth, while Mr. J. P. Grant, like a Russian general superintending the deportation of Tartars from the Crimea, affects to weep over the ruins and to deplore the necessity.

This is, in a few words, the complaint which the planters of Bengal make to their countrymen in England. The present Lieut.-Governor of Bengal has sent forth the word for their annihilation. In a country where capital is so scarce that every payment must always be made beforehand—in a country where Government is a despotism, and the native looks upon the ruler for the moment as supreme and irresistible,—the Lieut.-Governor has caused the people to understand, that in all matters connected with the growth of indigo he will abide by the Ryots, and will hold them harmless against the planter ;

ties producing this indigo, and do they belong entirely to English capitalists?—The value of the properties, including the putnees, talooks, and zemindaries throughout India, may be from £7,000,000 to £8,000,000, varying with the value of money and price of indigo, and entirely held by English settlers and capitalists.

“ 2695. Has this capital and property been acquired by men who have gone to India with nothing but that capital which a European carries everywhere, namely, perseverance, industry, and skill?—Yes.—*Evidence of Mr. J. P. Wise, Colonization Committee, 2nd Report, p. 41.*

* In the ploughing season of 1859, before the interference of the present Lieut.-Governor, the indigo factories of R. Watson and Co. had 17,000 ploughs at work, and upwards of 100,000 men engaged in the cultivation and manufactures incident to their concerns. This is the return of one firm alone.

that when his own magistrates shall decide in favour of the planter, he will set aside their decisions; and that even Acts of Council shall be to him no impediment to the pursuit of his own policy, for that he will cause his magistrates to give them what interpretation he may please. In a country where there is no law to compel the observance of a multitude of small indigo contracts; where the native courts are costly, dilatory, and corrupt, and the police are admitted, even by their employers, to be an organized gang of extortioners; where the planter can rely only upon his moral influence for obtaining his own, and the subtle Hindoo and more crafty Mussulman who have pocketed the price of their labour, are eager to seize any excuse for avoiding their obligations;—in such a country, and in such a condition of circumstances as these, the Lieut.-Governor causes, or wilfully suffers the belief to go forth, that Government is desirous that the cultivation of indigo shall cease.* When the natural result happens, and his victims complain, Mr. Grant replies with sneers and by insolent reference to the publicly disproved slanders which were cast upon a former gene-

* In dealing with their own opium ryots, the Government has been very careful to avoid the course which they have adopted with the indigo ryots. So far from exciting them by proclamations, they have ever sedulously refrained from any enquiry as to their grievances. When the opium ryots murmured and almost rebelled, Mr. Farquharson did not issue Commissions or indite Perwannahs. He reported: "I am averse to call for general information from the Districts without absolute necessity. There is no keeping such calls secret, and their spread always does harm in exciting hope or encouraging vain expectation. There can be no doubt in the mind of any one of the fact my simple statement conveys, every sort of country produce being now nearly double what it was three years ago, and labour proportionately high."

A very trifling increase was given, and the rising storm was hushed. This was how the discontents of the opium ryots were met. We shall see, presently, how Mr. Grant interfered, not to quench, but to fan into flame a similar smouldering discontent among the indigo ryots.