

**NEW INDIA; OR,  
INDIA IN  
TRANSITION**

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New India; or, India in transition by Sir Henry John Sterdman Cotton

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SIR HENRY JOHN STEDMAN COTTON  
K.C.S.I.

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## PREFACE

My object in writing this book is to draw attention to the great changes which are taking place in India—changes political, social, and religious—and to the spirit which, in my judgment, should inspire our policy in relation to them.

The political situation demands decisive treatment. The conditions of our occupation combine to show increased difficulties in administration; a waning enthusiasm on the part of English officials, occasioned by a livelier consciousness of the drawbacks of Indian life; and a greater friction between the governors and the governed, attributable to many causes, but especially to the arrogance in thought and language of the ruling race, which has been brought out into stronger relief by the extension of education and the growth of independence and patriotic feeling among the people. Able and energetic Indians, enlightened and educated by ourselves, expanding with new ideas and fired by an



## Preface

ambition to which English education has given birth, make demands which are continually more and more reasonable and more irresistible. The waves of the ocean of Indian progress are dashing against the breakwater of English prejudice. The members of the Anglo-Indian community, like the courtiers of Canute, call loudly on the Government to restrain the advancing tide. The Government, insufficiently attuned to the requirements of the situation, unlike Canute, is not yet strong enough or wise enough to turn a deaf ear to their advice.

India's political problem is the growth of an Indian nation; her economic problem is the poverty of her people. The solution of the problems lies in the sympathetic and systematic encouragement of legitimate aspirations and spontaneous tendencies. A constructive policy is needed which shall not only guide and control events during the period of transition, but shall also when necessary abstain from interference. The difficulty is to pass from the old to the new order without disturbance.

In their religious and social aspect the changes taking place are not less considerable. The function of Government in this case is to preserve, as far as possible, the existing basis of order by a policy of wise conservation.

## Preface

I have confined myself to the discussion of general questions, avoiding detail as much as possible, principally because details are unsuited to the English reader for whom this book is primarily intended. If I appear to have written strongly, it is because I feel strongly. I am profoundly convinced of the importance of the changes which are taking place. No one is in a better position than I am to appreciate the benefits which our rule has conferred on India. I have served for thirty-five years as a member of the Indian Civil Service. My father and grandfather were members of that service before me for sixty years. My son is now employed in that service. It is my pride that I am, as it were, a hereditary member of the administration, and I have never been deficient in respect and loyalty to the Government. A spirit of devotion to the people of the country is not inconsistent with, and has never obliterated, my sense of official duties. But while I am not slow to recognise the valuable qualities of our English rule, I am equally assured that the benefits we have conferred will never receive their due fulfilment, unless we can raise ourselves above associations of the official groove, and prepare ourselves for the exercise of higher functions than those of mere administration. The Government has

## Preface

deliberately infused new life into the Indian nation, and must not shrink from the responsibilities which are involved in giving full effect to this policy. What these responsibilities are, and what our future line of policy should be, are subjects which I have deemed it right to place before the consideration of the public.

IL. J. S. COTTON.

*January 1922.*

*Note.*—The first edition of this book appeared in 1885. It has been out of print for many years, and is now republished in a revised and enlarged form. Although it has been rewritten for the most part, there is no change in the method of treatment or in the substance of the original work.