# THE REBELLION IN INDIA: HOW TO PREVENT ANOTHER

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649177479

The rebellion in India: how to prevent another by John Bruce Norton

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

### **JOHN BRUCE NORTON**

# THE REBELLION IN INDIA: HOW TO PREVENT ANOTHER

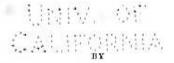


#### THE REBELLION

TN

### INDIA:

#### HOW TO PREVENT ANOTHER.



#### JOHN BRUCE NORTON.

"Certe id firmissimum longè imperium est quo obedientes gaudent."— Livy, l. viii. c. 13.

#### LONDON:

RICHARDSON BROTHERS, 23, CORNHILL, E.C.

1857.

[ The Right of Translation is reserved.]

100178

## TRESPONDA California

RICHARDSON BROTHERS, PRINTERS, 23, CORNEILL, E.C.

HENRY MOUSE STEPHENS

#### PREFACE.

Forbid to make any comment in India on the startling events now passing before my eyes, forbid even to make any enquiry into the causes of the rebellion, I turn—in common, no doubt, with many others—to England, where the liberty of the Press is not yet shackled.

I state a fact. It is not my intention here to discuss the merits of the Gagging Act. From many quarters abundant strictures will pour in on that subject.\* The only point of view in which I wish

\* The Calcutta journals expect to enlist the indignation of the English Press in their cause, as though it were a common cause. To me, such an event seems problematical. It seems to me almost impossible to predict what view will be taken of this measure by the Press in England. The danger is so imminent and overwhelming, and there is so prevalent a general idea that the English Press of India is licentious and scurrilous; it has been so assidiously branded as "lying," "rascally," and the like, that perhaps the Press and public at home may not regard the attack in its true light. They may regard it in some measure as necessary and merited, and there will be poured in from a hundred quarters, statements which may seem to justify Lord Canning's Act. Be it remembered, however, that these representations proceed from the very parties who have everything to gain by the suppression of the liberty of the Press.

to present it, is to warn the people of England against being misled by this most iniquitous device for blinding them. I utterly deny that Lord Canning has shown any sufficient reason for his indiscriminate application of one and the same measure to the loyal English, and the treasonous Native Press. As well might we confound the power of Printing-house-square with the filth of Holywellstreet. Lord Canning expressly says, that "poison " has been poured into the minds of the people by a " portion of the Native Press, within the last few " It is to this quarter then," he continues, "that I direct the attention of the members " of the Legislative Council." He expressly exonerates the European Press. He says, "the remarks " I have made against the Native Press, I do not "direct against the European Press;" he gives credit to the "many able and intelligent men who " conduct the newspaper Press in this country, for "the feeling they have shown at this period;" and forthwith, with an inconceivable logic, proceeds to say that he can draw no line of demarcation between the European and the Native Press, and at once confounds liberty and license, loyalty and treason, in one common catastrophe!

Now I warn my fellow-countrymen in England against being deluded by this feeble sophistry. Let them depend upon it, that this attack upon the

Press is in reality intended to screen the cowardice and incapacity of the real authors of the revolution. Lord Canning's arm may have dealt the blow, but there is a power behind which directed the arm. It is not that the crisis necessitated the measure; but that the crisis has been seized as the fittest moment for striking a long meditated blow at the Press, and gratifying a grudge of ancient standing. capital has been made out of the bloodshed in the North-West. The arm of the law was amply strong enough before the Gagging Act to meet the alleged evil: and the best proof is, that Mr. Beadon, since the passing of the Act, has prosecuted certain Native papers for treasonable writings published before. A public prosecution would at any time have been sufficient to curb the unbridled license of the Native On Lord Canning's own shewing, it would Press. have sufficed to legislate for the Native Press. the intention had been merely to provide against the chance of injudicious statements, or erroneous information, finding their way to the public ear during a season of great excitement, the institution of a censorship would have met the object. Prevention is better than cure. But if it was sought to stifle all inquiry and all comment, then the measures of the supreme Government were admirably adapted towards accomplishing such a consummation. Act itself is sweeping and indefinite enough: but the

real sting of the transaction lies in the conditions, since notified, on which licenses to printing presses will be granted. The first is as follows;—

1. "That no book, newspaper, pamphlet, or other work printed at such press, or with such materials or articles, shall contain any observations or statements, impugning the motives or designs of the British Government, either in England or India, or in any way tending to bring the said Government into hatred or contempt, to excite disaffection or unlawful resistance to its orders, or to weaken its lawful authority, or the lawful authority of its civil or military servants."

Under this the Government, and the very lowest of its civil and military servants, enjoy perfect immunity and impunity. Such acts as those of Mr. Thomas can no more be commented on: and Mr. Thomas's conduct is venial in comparison with many other illegalities, which are at this moment running their career. Any attempt to trace the causes of the rebellion to the wicked, foolish policy of the past few years; to show how the hesitation of military men, the incapacity of civilians, has precipitated an unavoidable event; how the Commissariat reforms of Lord Dalhousie have paralyzed our arm at the moment we would put it forth to suppress insurrection; every sug-

gestion for the future guidance of our rule, may be construed without warning or notice into an offence punishable by a fine of 5,000 rupees, imprisonment for two years, the seizure of a tradesman's entire stock in trade,—in short, total ruin; this at the discretion of the magistrate—such magistrates as obtain in India! The other conditions are these:—

- 2. "That no such book, pamphlet, newspaper, "or other work shall contain observations or state- ments, having a tendency to create alarm or suspicion among the Native population of any intended interference by Government with their religious opinions and observances.
- 3. "That no such book, pamphlet, newspaper, "or other work, shall contain observations having "a tendency to weaken the friendship towards the "British Government of Native Princes, Chiefs, "or States in dependence upon, or alliance with it.
- "The above conditions apply equally to original "matter, and to matter copied from other publica-"tions."

The third is of course expressly intended to prevent any allusion whatsoever to our shameless usurpation of our neighbour's property—a cause which I, for one, believe lies at the very root of the rebellion.

Further, as these conditions extend to extracts