

**LETTERS ON INDIA:  
TO JOHN  
TREMAYNE, ESQ.**

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Letters on India: To John Tremayne, Esq. by Edward Sullivan

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**EDWARD SULLIVAN**

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# LETTERS ON INDIA.

BY

EDWARD SULLIVAN,

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"A TRIP TO THE TRENCHES;" ETC., ETC.

TO JOHN TREMAYNE, ESQ.

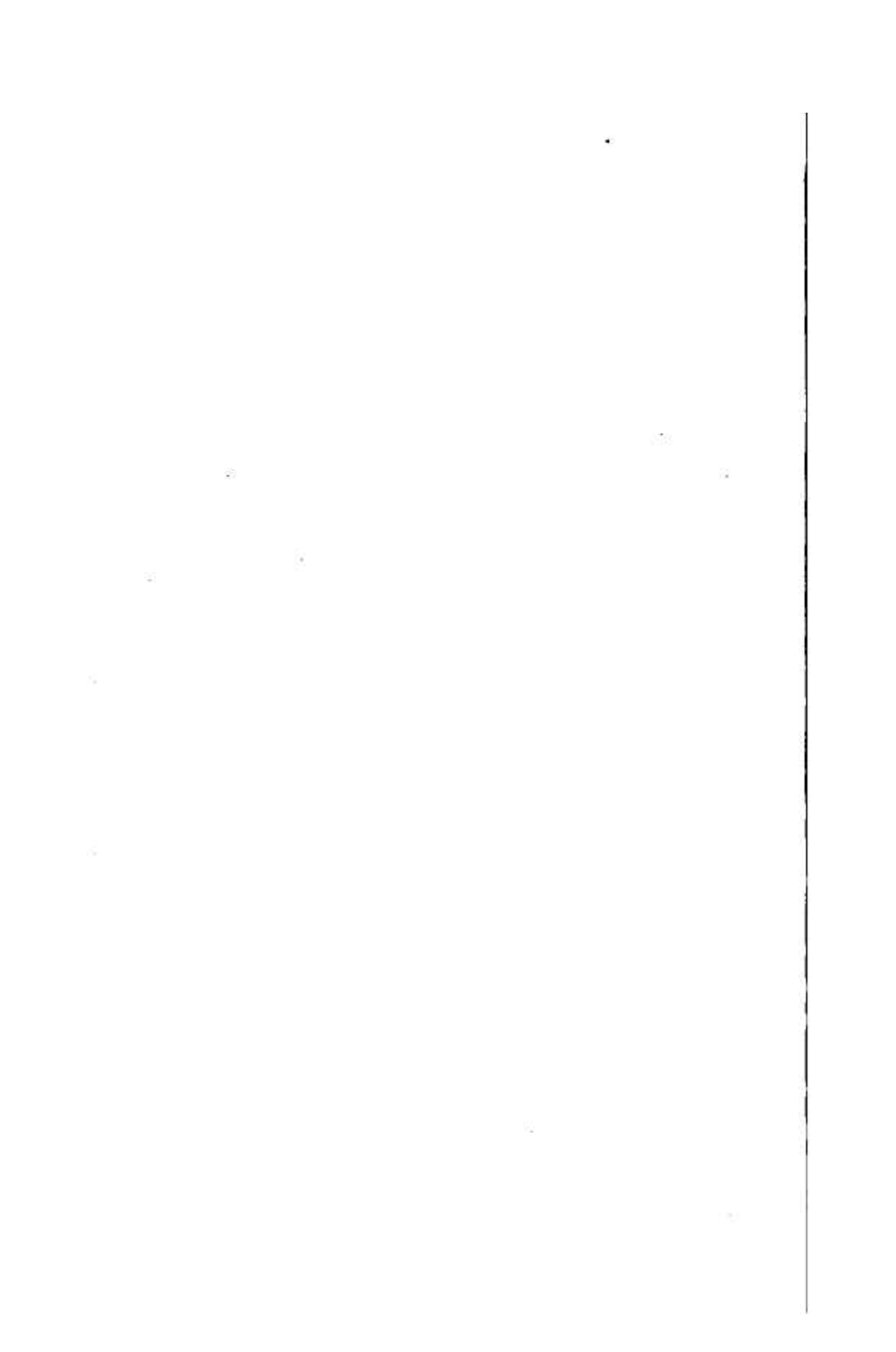
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1858.

### NOTICE.

THE following Letters were printed for private circulation several weeks before the recent change of Government.



# LETTERS ON INDIA.

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## CHAPTER I.

### INTRODUCTORY.

WHEN these letters were originally printed, I had no intention whatever of submitting them to the tender mercies of a critical public: they were intended for private circulation only, and on that account possibly contain freer remarks on men and matters, than is advisable in a work that courts publicity. Be that as it may, for some reason or another, probably because everything on India goes down now-a-days, they have attracted more attention than I expected, and consequently, to use the stereotyped phraseology of modest authors under similar circumstances, "I have consented to give them to the world."

The multitude of books of all sorts, sizes, shapes, and prices, on every imaginable subject, is one of the



infiictions of the age. The number of those who write, is quite out of all proportion to those who read, and till these numbers are more fairly balanced, I question whether we should not display more real zeal for knowledge, and more regard for our own limited intellects, by increasing the existing taxes on knowledge, than by repealing those we have. Nobody gains by the present multiplicity of books; those who read a little of what is written on any one subject, get confused before they can arrive at a fair conclusion about it; whilst truth herself, overwhelmed by diverse opinions, runs the chance of sharing the fate of that young man at Athens, who was actually smothered under the cloaks of the enthusiastic spectators in the Odeon, who fancied they detected in him a likeness to the statues of Hector.

In these days, when the liberty, if not the ability, to write, is common to all, no apology is expected from an author who sees fit to impart an idea to his friends or acquaintances; but "he that increaseth knowledge increaseth sorrow," and when he undertakes to multiply *ad infinitum*, "this same unmeaning thing he calls a thought," the case is altered, and he is justly expected to give his reasons in writing, for thus adding to the already overstocked world of letters.

My reason for publishing at the present time is very simple; it is merely to induce every man who

has time and inclination to think for himself on this great Indian question. The following letters are suggestive, not didactic, and I wish rather to point out possible alleviations, than to advocate specific remedies.

On all matters, great and small, the world is most unequally divided between those who do form their own judgments, and those who do not; of course I do not expect to influence any of the former.

"'Tis with our judgments as our watches; none  
Go just alike, and each prefers his own."

A man will tell you what o'clock it is by his watch, and when and where he set it, and why he *must* be right; but I never yet met one who was willing to alter his time to suit that of another; whilst those who take their time from their neighbours, will see so much in these letters contrary to their immemorial tradition of Indian Government, that their ideas are not likely to be much influenced by them; but there are always a certain number in the transition state, whose judgments are undergoing the process of solidification, and it is quite possible that a stray thought or two sown broadcast, may attract the attention of some of them, and under more favourable auspices, and in a better soil, assume a form of practical utility.

No man ever intends to be convinced by an argu-

ment, written or spoken, if he can possibly help it; he enters on the subject armed with his own ideas, which he believes to be the best in the world. If he is convinced, he is defeated, and naturally disgusted; he may be obliged to desert his own stronghold, but it is very improbable that he will immediately take refuge in that of his opponents. Of course argument will occasionally triumph, as in the case of those two brothers, a Roman Catholic and a Protestant, who meeting to discuss their adverse faith, found each other so convincing, that they actually converted each other, and parted the very reverse of what they came; but this was a remarkable exception, and does not affect the general rule, that no man is convinced by argument. But although you cannot convince a man, you may occasionally induce him to consider, and that is a process far more conducive to real truth than rapid conversion; let a man once convince himself, and his energy in defence of his new principles will only be eclipsed by the determination with which he will attack his old.

The question of Indian Government is not like the thousand and one that yearly agitate our political world; it is the greatest question that has affected this country since she has attained her present lofty place amongst nations; directly or indirectly, India has been one of the chief stepping stones to England's greatness; the question, therefore, of the permanence