

**BARODA AND
BOMBAY; THEIR
POLITICAL MORALITY**

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Baroda and Bombay; Their Political Morality by John Chapman

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JOHN CHAPMAN

**BARODA AND
BOMBAY; THEIR
POLITICAL MORALITY**

BARODA AND BOMBAY;

OR

POLITICAL MORALITY.

UNIV. OF
CALIFORNIA

A NARRATIVE

DRAWN FROM THE PAPERS LAID BEFORE PARLIAMENT
IN RELATION TO THE

REMOVAL OF LIEUT.-COL. OUTRAM, C.B.,

FROM THE OFFICE OF

RESIDENT AT THE COURT OF THE GAEKWAR.

WITH

Explanatory Notes,

AND

REMARKS ON THE LETTER OF L. R. REID, ESQ.,

TO THE EDITOR OF THE DAILY NEWS.

By JOHN CHAPMAN,

AUTHOR OF "THE COTTON AND COMMERCE OF INDIA CONSIDERED IN
RELATION TO GREAT BRITAIN."

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MDCCLXIII.

TO THE
UNIVERSITY OF
CALIFORNIA

HENRY MORSE STEPHENS

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P R E F A C E.

THE following narrative is drawn from the documents comprised in the return made by the East India Company, to an order of the House of Commons, on the motion of Mr. Anstey, "of all Correspondence and Papers on the subject of Colonel Outram's removal from the office of Resident at the Court of the Guicowar; or on the subject of the alleged Corruption of Officers of the Bombay Government with bribes from Baroda."—(June 30, 1852, No. 560.)

The bulk of these Blue Books, 1514 folio pages, and, still more, the extraordinary misarrangement of their contents, render an abstract of some kind necessary to many who require to be acquainted with the complicated facts related in them. One instance of the confusion which prevails throughout must suffice to characterise the whole.

Part of the papers relating to the case of Nursoo Punt are contained in a "collection" which begins at page 944. We first come at page 960 to matters in serious discussion between the Bombay Government and Colonel Outram respecting this native officer; then at page 988 we have a mere note at the date of Colonel Outram's transmission to the Government of a "Statement of Facts" seriously inculpatating him; then we have 65 folio pages of orders, proceedings, minutes, petitions, judgments, objections of Government and replies to them, and it is not until we have entered on *another collection of papers* that we find, at page 1054, the very important "Statement" which ought to have been given where the note of its transmission is placed, on which "Statement" all these discussions are founded, and without which a great part of them is unintelligible. The Government, however, thus stated their own case first, and involved the whole in perplexity. The

actual suppression of a highly important paper of this series will be found noticed in its proper place.

The papers appear to have been laid before Parliament, by the East India Directors, exactly as they came from the Government of Bombay. The only index given is useless until the book is almost known by heart.

Whether this universal disorder came of a routine unfit for practical uses, or of a desire to conceal in confusion that which feared the light, it is necessary that the intricacy be disentangled as well as that the mutual relations of the chief facts be exhibited. It was found that these objects could only be accomplished by means of a narrative, the incidents of which should be referred for authority to their singularly scattered places in the papers. References to original documents have been generally preferred where such were available, although Colonel Outram's several Reports frequently exhibit the same facts to the reader more conveniently; the latter, however, will be more easily found by each person for himself than the former. A single number in the margin refers to a page of the Blue Books; a second after it gives the paragraph, letter, note, or other division of the page, as may happen. The first or perhaps principal paragraph or letter is often alone referred to; the reader will follow on for himself as far as seems to be required.

Many of the notes and observations are intended to afford some such help as familiarity with Indian subjects would render unnecessary. The treatment of the whole subject, as well as the opinions expressed, are to be attributed to myself alone, although I am happy to have had such aid from Colonel Outram as has prevented, I trust, any serious misapprehension on my part, of important facts.

I am sorry that Mr. Reid's pamphlet, lately published, has compelled me to add a "Postscript" to my original design. The Dissents of thirteen Directors of the East India Company (part of the majority who agreed in them) became available for publication only at the last moment.

J. CHAPMAN.

March, 1853.

INDIAN POLITICAL MORALITY.

BARODA AND BOMBAY.

"KHUTPUT" is a word employed in some of the languages of India to denote active, toilsome, vexatious business; it is conventionally and most frequently used in the sense of endeavouring to accomplish private purposes by means of corrupt and hidden interest; chiefly bribery is understood.

Under the native Governments of India the practice of Khutput was universal and shameless. Where there is no elevated standard of morality, whether of authority or usage, and no constitutional security against wrong, the resort of men with purposes to accomplish in which the Government is concerned must commonly be to underhand arts. In a less advanced state of our own national morality and polity it was with us as it is now with them; although we now attach to these arts some measure of their due shame. The pressure and danger which give prevalence to this practice in the East under native rule, are so generally felt, that indigenous public opinion does not much censure those who employ it. Success, there even more than here, is held in most cases of moral obliquity to justify the means, and especially so in matters connected with Government or money-getting.

The rule of Britain in India is founded on moral in-

fluence. Eighty thousand Europeans, army included, cannot be imagined to keep in subjection 130,000,000 of people by means of physical strength. We rule simply because the natives of India believe they can trust us better than they can trust one another. Whatever injures the confidence of the natives in the integrity, impartiality, and good faith of our Government, weakens in the same degree the foundation of our rule.

This special reason for sternly repressing corruption in our Indian Government, is scarcely more imperative than that supplied by the evils which ever flow from the relaxation, perversion, and unfaithfulness of any system of administration in which clandestine private interests are suffered to mingle themselves with corporate or national objects; and those evils must reach their height in a country where few men hesitate to offer a bribe, and where the abuse of power is necessarily subject to comparatively feeble checks. The East India Company, taught by grievous experience, have long maintained the most stringent regulations, forbidding illicit advantages to their officers, in any form, under the most serious penalties.

21-*. On the 15th of May, 1850, the Government of Bombay issued a circular to its officers, desiring each of them to ascertain whether there existed within his district a general belief, or a belief entertained by particular classes, that improper designs could be promoted by "making Khutput in Bombay," *i. e.* by obtaining the secret and corrupt favour of men in power at that seat of Government.

On the part of the Government the issuing of such a circular at all was a singular step. Some of their most experienced officers had long before drawn their attention to the scandal; they had themselves loftily disdained to notice it; the unflinching determination of Sir George Arthur, then Governor, had brought to light most extensive intrigues of the foulest kind in 1842-3—only seven years before; and since that time two members of council had re-

1347-10.
 1360-33.

1406-7. ceived private intimations that it would be to their advantage to favour a certain wealthy establishment at Baroda, which will figure prominently in the following pages. What more could the Government want to satisfy them that, whatever they really were, the people believed them to be corrupt?

The ostensible occasion of the circular was the reception of certain reports from Mr. Albemarle Bethington, magistrate at Ahmedabad, and Mr. Hart, Enact Commissioner in the Southern Mahratta country, the two extremities of the Bombay presidency. These reports are not, but should be, before Parliament; little more is publicly known of them than that they so loudly complained of the difficulties occasioned by the general belief that Government could not slight them. Probably their effect was aided by the reiterated statements of Lieutenant-Colonel Outram, who was then at Bombay; this officer had long before and often represented to the Government that both their reputation and their measures had severely suffered from this belief at Baroda, where, at times, for fourteen years he had been intimately concerned in public affairs, and where he was then "the Resident," representing the British Government*. It became Colonel Outram's duty, in reply to the circular, to report on the subject in reference to the affairs of Baroda, the capital of the prince styled the Gaekwar; whose dominions, much intermingled with our own, form a great part of the division of India called Guzerat.

The circular of the Government adverted to a "belief," said to prevail "generally;"—to a belief "greatly embarrassing" to the Government and its officers, and "undermining the confidence of the ryots in the justice of the system under which they are governed." It also desired each officer to suggest measures which

* Under our peculiar engagements with most of the princes of India, "the Resident" has to take a part in the management of the country along with the Native Government, far exceeding any interference which is exercised by diplomatic agents in Europe, or which would be attempted by the boldest of them.