

**INDIA'S NEEDS:
MATERIAL,
POLITICAL, SOCIAL,
MORAL, AND RELIGIOUS**

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India's Needs: Material, Political, Social, Moral, and Religious by John Murdoch

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JOHN MURDOCH

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BY

JOHN MURDOCH, LL.D.

"The longer one lives, observes, and thinks, the more deeply does he feel there is no community on the face of the earth which suffers less from political evils and more from self-inflicted or self-accepted, or self-created, and, therefore, avoidable evils, than the Hindu community!"

Raja Sir T. Madhava Rao, K.C.S.I.

"The permanent remedies for the poverty of India rest with the people themselves."

Hon. W. W. Hunter, LL.D., C.S.I.

— 1886 —

MADRAS:

SOLD AT THE TRACT DEPOT, MEMORIAL HALL COMPOUND.

1886.

PREFATORY NOTE.

It is an encouraging sign that never before in India were so many of her sons interested in her welfare, and never before did their efforts on her behalf promise to be attended with greater results.

It is of the utmost importance that the labours of reformers should be wisely directed. Changes may be proposed which would be mischievous instead of beneficial; attention may be given to matters of comparatively little importance, while those on which the well-being of the country mainly depends may be neglected.

In the land of castes, there is great danger of a false patriotism taking the form of race hatred. Those who try to sow discord between Europeans and Natives are no true friends of either.

Some persons assert that India is becoming poorer and poorer under British rule. That the reverse is the case, is proved in the following pages. No one can deny that she is growing in knowledge; it is equally true that she is growing in wealth. At the same time, it is admitted that millions, as before, are on the verge of starvation, and that the food supply must be increased to meet the wants of the country.

The interests of Natives and Europeans are identical. Both should work heartily together to promote the prosperity of India, and may the great "Governor among the nations" crown their efforts with success!

MADRAS, *January 15th, 1886.*

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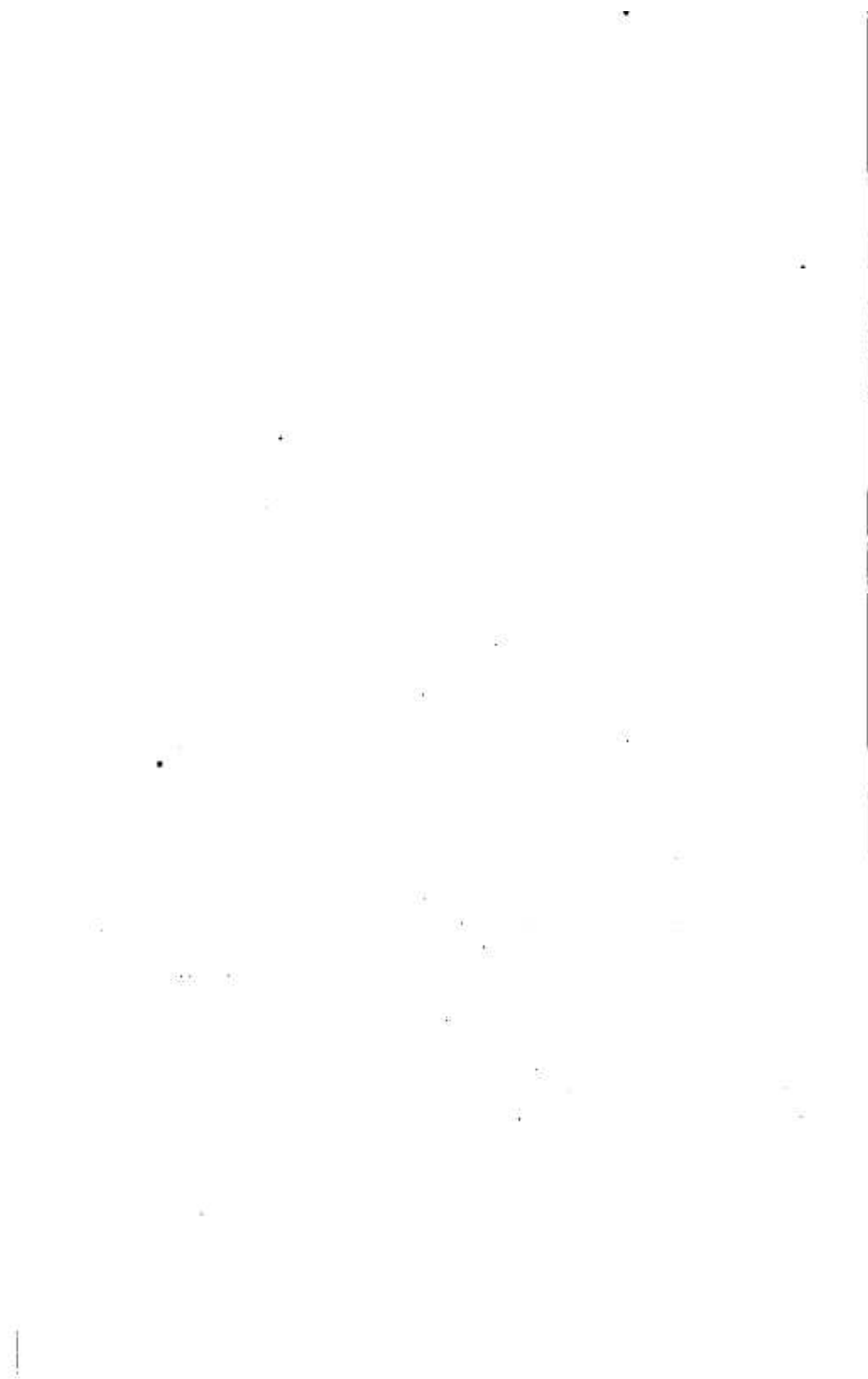
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INDIA'S NEEDS.

INTRODUCTION.

THE DIFFICULTY OF GOVERNING INDIA.

India contains one-sixth of the earth's population—double the number that ever acknowledged the sway of Imperial Rome. They are bone of our bone ; flesh of our flesh ; toiling, struggling, fainting like ourselves in the battle of life. Wave after wave of invasion has swept over their country ; they have been crushed under the heel of the oppressor ; sometimes the heaven that is over them is as brass, and the earth under them as iron, and millions lie down to die.

The difficulties connected with the government of India are in proportion to the needs of its people. Addressing an English audience, Lord Churchill justly said :—

“ Your rule in India is, as it were, a sheet of oil spread over the surface, and keeping calm and quiet and unruffled by storms an immense and profound ocean of humanity. Underneath your rule are surging up the memories of good dynasties, all the fanaticism of rival creeds, all the baffled aspirations of many nationalities, and it is your most difficult task to give peace, individual security, and general prosperity to 250 millions of people who are affected by these powerful forces, to bind them and weld them by the influence of your knowledge, your laws, your higher civilization, and in the process of time into one great united people.”

Lord Dufferin, in his Belfast speech, thus pointed out the arduous duties he was about to undertake :—

“ The Government of India is not only a laborious task ; it is one presenting problems of the very greatest doubt and intricacy from day to day. The most complex questions are submitted to the attention of the Executive, which, from their very nature, are incapable of an altogether satisfactory solution, and in regard to which the choice lies, not between the absolutely good and the absolutely bad, but is dependent upon such a delicate comparison of advantage and disadvantage upon either side as to render it very difficult for even those who have every opportunity of acquainting themselves with the elements of the case to discriminate between them. Out of these circumstances must arise a vast amount of intelligent and conscientious criticism, and while on the one hand it can scarcely be expected that he who is ultimately responsible for what

happens will be invariably in the right, it is certain that he will frequently appear to many intelligent observers to be altogether in the wrong. Hence it must inevitably follow that very conflicting estimates will be formed of the success with which the Governor-General of the day is conducting the arduous administration over which he presides."

He calls attention to a point which is often forgotten :—

"Above all, let me remind you that when dealing with such vast subjects as those which occupy the statesman of Calcutta when handling the tremendous forces which are evolved out of the complicated and multitudinous political systems which exist within the borders of the Indian peninsula, when endeavouring to mould by slow and cautious efforts the most ancient, the most continuous, and the most artificially organized civilisation to be found on the face of the earth into forms that shall eventually harmonize more and more with those conceptions which the progress of science and the result of experience have shown to be conducive to human happiness, the result of the ruler's exertions and the flower of his achievements are seldom perceptible at the moment, but far more frequently bring forth their fruit long after those that tilled the field and sowed the seed have rested from their unrecognized and sometimes depreciated labours."

While Governments have their faults, they are often subjected to much ignorant and unjust criticisms. In every alehouse in England "village politicians," muddled with beer, may be heard at times denouncing the folly and wickedness of British statesmen. Everywhere, sons are apt to consider themselves wiser than their fathers. The same self-conceit leads young men, fresh from school, to suppose that they could govern a country better than its actual rulers. More than two thousand years ago, Glaukon, a Greek, not twenty years of age, thought he could improve the administration of the Athenian Republic. His friends tried in vain, by means of ridicule, to dissuade him from addressing the people. At last Socrates took him in hand. He asked him question after question about things necessary to be known by all who would govern a country, which the young man could not answer. The moral drawn was, "What a dangerous thing it is to meddle, either in word or in act, with what one does not know."

To rule well even a single household requires much wisdom. It is a proverb that things occasionally go wrong even in the best regulated families. To govern a single nation is no easy task. The difficulty is vastly increased when, as in India, an empire contains many nations, speaking different languages, and professing different religions. Every sensible man will make allowances for the circumstances of the case, instead of cavilling and attacking Government for every imaginary error.

It must be admitted that there is much in British rule which the people cannot understand and must even dislike. The Hindu is intensely conservative; he wishes to follow the customs of his