

**NEW INDIA, OR
INDIA IN
TRANSITION**

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New India, or India in Transition by H. J. S. Cotton

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H. J. S. COTTON

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H. J. S. COTTON

BENGAL CIVIL SERVICE

POPULAR EDITION

LONDON

KEGAN PAUL, TRENCH, & CO., 1 PATERNOSTER SQUARE

1886

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I DEDICATE
THIS LITTLE BOOK
BY PERMISSION
WITH MUCH RESPECT
TO THE
MARQUIS OF RIPON

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P R E F A C E.

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 and immediate treatment. The conditions of our occupation combine to show increased difficulties in administration arising from financial pressure; a waning enthusiasm on the part of English officials occasioned by a livelier consciousness of the drawbacks of Indian life; 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 growth of independ-

ence among the natives. The people of the country, enlightened and educated by ourselves, expanding with new ideas, and fired by an 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 native 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.

The crisis is acute, and can only be overcome by making a prompt and liberal concession to legitimate aspirations. To neglect this duty can only be characterised as culpable and dangerous blindness. But we cannot expect the co-operation of Europeans in India in this direction. On the contrary, we have the best reason for assuming that the attitude of Anglo-Indians will, in general, be one of uncompromising opposition to such a policy. We can

rely on the Government only for a disposition to take the required action. For the motive power which shall rouse the Government to bestir itself we must look to public opinion in England. It is on public opinion at home that every Indian must depend who desires to promote the practical interests of his countrymen.

The problem before us is the systematic encouragement of the aspirations and spontaneous tendencies of the Indian people. 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.

I have confined myself to the discussion of principles: avoiding detail, principally because details are unsuited to the English reader for whom the book is intended, and partly because the short leisure from Indian service which I