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# SUGGESTIONS

RELATIVE TO THE

RE-ORGANIZATION, DISCIPLINE,

AND

FUTURE MANAGEMENT

OF THE

BENGAL ARMY.

BY

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BENGAL ARMY—RETIRED LIST.

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# NOTES

RELATIVE TO THE

## REORGANIZATION OF THE BENGAL ARMY.

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In one of the able letters of Indophilus, I find the following remarks:—"In considering the great Indian question, we ought as a practical people to direct our attention to the part which demands an immediate solution. This, clearly, is the reconstruction of the Bengal Army."

Entirely concurring in the soundness of the above advice, I venture, though with great diffidence, to offer the following suggestions on the above important subject.

### INFANTRY OF THE BENGAL ARMY.

This branch of the Bengal Army, to be denominated in future the Royal Army for service in India, and to consist, in addition to the existing European regiments in the Company's service, of 37 European regiments, and 74 Native battalions.

For the sufficient officering of the 37 regiments, the European officers of two of the old Native

regiments should be clubbed together ; an arrangement which would give 52 officers to each regiment,\* and would admit of a moderate number of absentees without affecting the discipline of such regiment.

From the above 52 officers, 8 should be selected for the command and staff duties of the 72 Native battalions, so as to provide each battalion with a

Commandant on a consolidated allowance of 1200 rps. per Mens.			
Second in Command	”	”	800
Adjutant	”	”	500
Supernumerary Officer doing duty			400

Each battalion company to be under the command of its senior Native officer, who, in addition to his pay, should be authorized to draw the command allowance of a company. The former, as a stimulus to exertion, and reward for meritorious conduct might be fixed at 100 rupees per mensem. Such an arrangement would do much to satisfy the most sanguine aspirations of the Native officers, and would greatly tend to remove any feeling of jealousy and discontent caused by the existing system, which always keeps them in the back ground, and subjects them to the authority, not only of the youngest and most inexperienced European subaltern in the regiment, but, what appears a strange anomaly, also to the authority, and not unfrequently to the vulgar and unmerited rebukes of the European non-commissioned officers.

\* Till all the present incumbents are absorbed, there should be a separate line of promotion for the officers of each of the old regiments.

The feelings of disgust, and sometimes of bitter contempt, which such a system is likely to engender, have, it appears to me, been altogether overlooked in accounting for the extraordinary disaffection of our Native soldiers, and their readiness to combine in favour of any change which might operate to relieve them from the domination of a government which, though not exactly oppressive, has not scrupled to wrest from them all the most honourable and lucrative appointments which the service affords.

We have all heard of the virulent animosity manifested by the poorer classes in France towards their superiors during the great French Revolution, caused in a great measure by the custom which secured to the dominant race in that country a monopoly of all posts of honour and emolument; and as in this feature, human nature is everywhere, I conceive, pretty much the same, we need not be surprised if many of the more aspiring natives of India are constantly chafing under the deprivation of similar distinctions.

Should the plan above recommended be deemed deserving of consideration, too much care could not be taken in the selection of the European officers to be attached to the Native batalions. Not only should they be men of judgment and approved ability, but likewise of active and energetic habits, kind and liberal dispositions, and, above all, well versed in the native languages. The Native officers

and soldiers, thus constantly brought into contact with men of cultivated minds, and conspicuous for their professional acquirements, would naturally become imbued with feelings of respect for, and admiration of the European character, such as can hardly be expected to exist under a system in which a majority of the European officers, however well they may be disposed towards the Natives, have usually a very imperfect knowledge of their languages, and are often, besides, sadly deficient in those qualifications which are alone calculated to make a favourable impression on the Native mind, and to re-establish that confidence which formerly existed between the European officer and the Sepoys. Moreover, as according to the old proverb, "Birds of a feather will flock together," the greater the number of European officers in a regiment, the less disposed are they to associate with the Natives.\*

As, under the system suggested the European officers attached to the Native battalions would not be permanently removed from their regiments, no separate rule would be required for their promotion, and it might be deemed advisable for such officers to rejoin their regiments on attaining the rank of

\* Colonel Jacob, in his tracts, justly observes, that too many of the English officers are seen idling away their time, and wasting their energies, in frivolous pursuits; and thus the example of the idle, and indifferent, tends greatly to destroy the prestige of the superior race.



Lieut.-Colonel. The adoption of this rule would ensure the presence of a certain number of experienced Indian officers at the head quarters of the European regiments—would give promotion to the second in command and other officers of the Native battalions, and would create an opening in these battalions for some aspiring and intelligent officer of the European force.

In the Native battalions, as a general rule, it would perhaps be prudent, if not essential, as regards promotion, to adhere to the rule of seniority; but not so as to shut the door to distinguished merit. To effect this, three fourths of the men might be promoted according to seniority, and the other fourth of the steps might be reserved for men remarkable for superior intelligence, or who may have distinguished themselves in action, by some brilliant and well authenticated service. 'Tis Jomini—a great authority in these matters—who, to the best of my recollection, writes:—“ Quant aux récompenses il est essentiel de protéger l'ancienneté des services, tout en ouvrant une porte au mérite; les trois quarts de chaque promotion devraient être selon l'ordre du tableau, et l'autre quart réservé aux hommes qui se feraient remarquer par leur mérite, par des actions d'éclat, ou services bien constatés.”

The rank of soobahdar, to which would be attached the command of a company, and, therefore, a position involving much responsibility, should be conferred only on men of an intelligence, energy,



and active habits ; and all Native officers should be required, at least to read and write fluently. The first Napoleon, I am informed, however liberal he might be in the distribution of crosses to his most distinguished soldiers, made it a rule never to promote an entirely uneducated man to the rank of a commissioned officer. In the selection of our Native officers we should do well to adopt the same rule ; and, moreover, to let it be known, to every soldier who enlists, that, “ *cœteris paribus*,” a competent knowledge of the English language would be considered an additional claim to promotion.

Every Native officer on attaining the age of 56 years should be placed on the retired or pension list. In the French Army it is the custom to place on the retired list, “ *dans le cadre de réserve*,” all Generals of Brigade who shall have attained the age of 62, and all Generals of Division who shall have attained the age of 65 years. The adoption of a similar rule, in regard to the European officers of the Indian Army, would do no harm ; especially if, in consideration of the deleterious effects of the Indian climate on the constitution of Englishmen, the retirement of such officers should be made obligatory at a somewhat earlier period. The arguments which have so often been directed against the seniority system, in regard to the Native soldiers and officers, apply, owing to their superior authority and responsibility, I should say, in greater force to the European officers ; but the obligatory retirement of

such officers, at a certain fixed age, would, in a great measure, obviate the defect complained of.

The rule of promotion by seniority, if not too rigidly adhered to, appears to me to possess one great advantage, viz., that it gives a heart to the whole army. Were we to abolish it altogether, the majority of our Sepoys, who, naturally indolent and apathetic, require some stimulus, finding that they were constantly superseded by younger men, would yearly become more disheartened and depressed—would lose all zeal for the service—and, under the “cui bono” impression, would cease to take any pride in the performance of their duty. We should, no doubt, obtain a few smarter non-commissioned officers; but, as in so doing, we should run the risk of alienating the attachment of the great body of our Native soldiers, the defects of such a plan would, I fear, overbalance the advantages.

It will be seen that I am far from advocating a too rigid adherence to promotion by seniority; but abolish it altogether, and the great mass of our Native Army, the essentially working portion of it, deprived of all hope of advancement, and with its spirit consequently in a state of atony, would, in my opinion, based on what I know of the character of the Bengal Sepoy, greatly and rapidly deteriorate in discipline, and all the more requisite qualifications of the soldier.

I am aware that, by some writers, it has been alleged, that discipline is a thing which has never been known in the Bengal Army. Colonel Jacob, in

some tracts containing many judicious remarks, but, on the other hand, full of strange delusions, and vituperative sneers, in regard to the European officers of that army, has taken great pains to imbue the public mind with this notion. The chief object, however which the gallant Colonel appears to have in view by the publication of the above tracts is to prove first, that there is only one man in India of sound discrimination, only one man capable of justly estimating the character, and properly directing the military instincts of our Native soldiers: secondly, that the Scinde Irregular Horse is immeasurably superior to every other corps of Regular or Irregular Cavalry in the Company's service; and thirdly, that of all armies in the world, the Royal Army of England has ever been the most helpless, the most ignorant, and the worst managed; the Bengal Army, of all armies in the world, the most wanting in discipline and efficiency of every description; smarting under the severe strictures, the unsparing condemnation of so harsh a critic, it is some consolation to reflect that this most helpless army in the world, in every quarter of the globe, has rarely failed to make patent its superiority over every other army with which it has come in contact; and that the Bengal Army during an entire century, with all its want of discipline, and under the command of its effeminate, and much disparaged officers, has been quite as conspicuous for valour and daring, and has contributed quite as much, if not more, towards the establishment of our marvellous

Indian Empire, as either of the armies of the sister Presidencies.

To have effected so much without the A. B. C., as the gallant Colonel expresses it, the first rudiments of discipline, is indeed an astounding accident, and only suggests to us, what a wonderfully efficient Native Army we may hope to see in Bengal, should our Sepoys ever chance to acquire a little insight into this A. B. C. of a soldier's duty; and, (discarding all historical prejudices in favor of such men as Ochterlony, Nott and Pollock, Nicholson, Gilbert, Wilson and Lawrence, &c. &c., discarding the chivalrous examples of such men as Fraser and Fitz Gerald, immortalised by their heroic deeds at Seetabuldee and Purwundurah\*) should the pampered and effeminate officers of that army, ever be induced to renounce all connexion with khidmutgars, khansamans, and that long list of Oriental phantoms, which appear to be ever dancing before the eyes, and so cruelly to haunt the imagination of the gallant Colonel; it is somewhat strange, that as a fitting pendant to the above edifying picture of Asiatic follies, that distinguished officer should have overlooked its European prototype—the princely messes, the gorgeous services of plate, the claret, hock, champagne and tokay of some of the crack regiments of Her Majesty's ser-

\* The chivalrous achievement of Fraser and the officers of the 2nd Cavalry at Purwundurah, is hardly to be paralleled in the glorious annals of our military history, and surpasses even if possible in daring and heroism the magnificent, though calamitous affair of Balaclava.



vice;\* however, Colonel Jacob, with his particular views of discipline, would probably be equally as-

\* I have remarked that Colonel Jacob's Tracts are full of delusions, and caricature, in regard to the habits of the officers of the Bengal Army. Far from fearing the sun, as they are represented, in page 28 of the Tracts, to do, I have known men, who, out tiger shooting, have been exposed to the sun during the entire month of May, from sunrise to sunset; and have returned to their cantonments with their faces, necks, and hands, almost blacker than those of their Native attendants. I have also known men, who, as a mere pastime, have been in the habit of riding their 140 miles between breakfast and dinner; enough, I should suppose, to satisfy the most fastidious Bombay officer in these matters. As to the Bengal Griffin, with his host of useless servants and his otherwise effeminate habits, the picture is very amusing, and no doubt intended to be very edifying; but, unfortunately, at least, as far as my experience goes, the picture is mere fiction and caricature; yet taking it "quantum valeat," to what, after all, do these fantastic notions amount; admitting that, here and there, there are a few Bengal Griffins to be found riding in Palkees, and surrounded by a retinue of Khan-samans, Khidmutgars, Hooqquburdars, bottle holders, &c. &c., do not the most manly characters,—soldiers and civilians,—to be found in England, do exactly the same thing; have they not their butlers, footmen, pages, grooms, coachmen, &c. &c., and do they not sometimes condescend to ride in a carriage, and—"proh pudor"—sometimes even to use an umbrella; and does Colonel Jacob really imagine that these men are less English at heart, and less manly in their habits, than the youth, who, through necessity, is satisfied to put up with the services of a maid of all work, the prototype, I suppose, of the "man of all work" attached to the Bombay Griffin; then, as to the Palkee,—is there really anything so very shocking in the fact, that—"more majorum"—we Bengalees sometimes indulge in such an equipage, to avoid being half broiled, and drenched in perspiration, when about to pay a few visits to the fair sex, or buttoned up to the throat in full uniform, when about to visit some distant part of a cantonment on duty; if the Bombay Griffin, on such occasions, prefers a

tonished, compared with the British standard, at the (in some respects) apparent slackness of discipline in the French, and other Continental armies; tattoo or poney, all I can say is, there is no accounting for taste in these matters—" *De gustibus non disputandum.*"

"That clever General Sir C. Napier, says Colonel Jacob, went "half mad at the first sight of the camels that accompanied his "little force in Scinde." The gallant colonel appears to have been affected much in the same way at the first sight of the Bengal Palkees, Hooqquburdars, bottle holders, &c. Cleverness, again remarks Colonel Jacob, is full of prejudices; genius is independent of local circumstances; under this view of the case, to which category the gallant colonel belongs can be no very difficult matter to determine; if Colonel Jacob is in the habit of indulging in classical or historical reminiscences, the contemplation of the luxurious habits of such first rate soldiers as Alexander, Cæsar, Pompey, Wallenstein, &c., must have caused him many a bitter pang—

" *Omnibus in terris quæ sunt à Gadibus usque*  
 " *Aurorem et Gangem, pauci dignoscere possunt*  
 " *Vera bona, atque illis multum diversa, remotâ*  
 " *Erroris nebulâ.*"

There is less excuse for the aspersion which has been cast upon the Bengalees by Colonel Jacob, inasmuch as Bombay, to which Presidency he belongs, has been blessed with two splendid specimens of the Bengalee, in the persons of the Hon. Mount Stuart Elphinstone and Sir G. Clerk, both as remarkable for manliness of character, manly habits, and ability to rough it, as they were for their liberality of disposition, and princely hospitality. Sir G. Clerk for horsemanship, pluck and stamina, had scarcely perhaps his match in India, and the Hon. Mount Stuart Elphinstone was, I am told, equally conspicuous for the same qualities. These distinguished men were both probably sybarites, as far as a show of khansamans, khidmutgars, and bottle holders could make them so, but notwithstanding these vanities, which in Colonel Jacob's eyes, so militate with the true dignity of manhood, I believe I am correct in saying that they are the two most popular governors Bombay has seen during the present century.

—and yet the Bengal Army, which in our many and arduous struggles for supremacy, has ever so faithfully served us, was in its normal state less in want of the rod and frown of the martinet, than any of these armies, or any other army perhaps in existence.

I recollect reading in a German newspaper, the “*Kölnische Zeitung*,” that no nation was so much talked of; so often at one time lauded to the skies, at another time consigned to the lowest depths of hell, as the English,—“so oft bald zum Himmel erhoben, bald zur Hölle verdammt als die Engländer;” and so it has been for some years, to a certain extent, with the unfortunate Bengal Army. “*Laudatur ab his, culpatur ab illis*; the machine it is true, from causes yet to be revealed, has at last broken down, and different persons, will, of course, entertain different notions, in regard to its merits; but duly to appreciate the glorious career of that army, and to show how much it is entitled to our gratitude and admiration, we have only to open the eloquent pages of the *Historian of British India*, or to point to the map of that mighty Empire, with its befitting commentary, the despatches of Lake, Wellesley, Hardinge, Ellenborough, and other illustrious Indian statesmen.

To the question, what has been the cause, of the present unparalleled, and certainly unexpected convulsion in India, no one has yet been able to give a satisfactory solution; but when the mist in which this subject is shrouded shall have passed away, I do not believe, that to any want of what is strictly



called military discipline, will be traced that spirit of bitter animosity, which, at a time when there was no apprehension of any general explosion, appears to have pervaded all ranks of the Bengal Army, has urged our frantic soldiers to conspiracy, incendiarism and revolt; and which, but for the interposition of Providence, and the fidelity and energetic assistance of those chiefs and princes, whose independance we have respected, would have quenched itself in the blood, the indiscriminate slaughter probably of the entire British population of India.

To attribute any share of this virulent hatred, any share of the many clandestine, and undermining influences which must have been at work to bring about this lamentable catastrophe, this hostile and treasonable combination against the British Government, to so inadequate a cause as the imperfection of our regimental discipline, is a notion too preposterous, to be entertained by the most inveterate censors of the Bengal Army. In my humble opinion, moreover, it is quite a mistake to suppose, that our generally very quiet and well-conducted Sepoys require to be governed by the same stern system of discipline which is requisite for the maintenance of order and regularity in our European regiments. Under ordinary circumstances, I believe a thousand Sepoys, will be more easily governed, and give far less trouble, than a single company of Europeans; a too rigid discipline, I believe to be hateful to the Sepoys, and from the irritation which it causes, far from doing

good, is likely only to create the spirit which it seeks to repress, to produce those elements of disquiet and disaffection, which, from their demoralizing tendencies, we should ever be on the watch unnecessarily to avoid rousing. On the other hand, too much cannot be done to win their respect, and by kindness, that golden link in the chain, which binds together the most discordant elements of society, to secure the attachment and confidence of the Sepoys ; and this, I maintain, will be best accomplished, by the selection, as above recommended, of competent officers to command the Native battalions.

To shew that I am not speaking without some little experience in these matters, I will only mention, that as Commandant of the Mewar Bheel Corps, which, as far as I am informed, has never wavered in its allegiance, I had to deal with some of the wildest, and most turbulent tribes to be found in any part of India ; and yet without any very rigid system of discipline, in 1848, as will be seen by the annexed\* copies of letters, I left this

\* "Home Mead, Lymington Hants, 15th Feb., 1856.

" My dear Hunter,

" I have to acknowledge your letter of the 13th inst., with enclosure ; tho' gratified at seeing your hand-writing again after so long a hiatus, I regret to find you have been necessitated at your age to forego the advantages of the finest Service in the World, and that from ill-health and inability to bear up against the climate of India. What a contrast to my long sojourn, who, thank God, never was compelled to quit the soil of India for a period of 52 years' actual residence there, either on sick certificate or private leave.

corps as contented, as well drilled, and in many respects, I believe, as well disciplined as any regiment in the Indian service.

“I possess a very perfect recollection of having inspected the Bheel Corps under your command at Neemutch in 1846, and the gratification and surprise I experienced at the perfect and wonderful state of discipline you had brought it to, its general and satisfactory appearance, steadiness, dress, and style of manœuvring as a Light Infantry Corps and as a Corps of the Line. We were, I remember, all struck at the intelligence, the smartness, and off-hand way in which these wild men performed the field movements, and their compactness elicited the wonder of the Officers of the Station, who had regarded them hitherto as plundering savages of the Jungles, whose hand was against every man. I had however, perhaps better opportunities of knowing the people you had in so short a time reduced to something like order and system, having been employed for six years at Pertaubgur, 30 miles S. of Neemutch, in command of the Rampoorah Local Battalion, and constantly in contact with these tribes. I can assure you a most favorable report was forwarded by me to the Military Secy. to Government, giving yourself and officers every possible credit. The Bheel Corps being a Civil Corps was not under the immediate control of the Comr. in Chief, and no documents connected with it would be found in the Adjutant-General’s Office.

“With my best wishes, believe me,

“Yours very sincerely,

“C. W. HAMILTON.”

“*From Lieut-Col. J. Sutherland, Agent Govr.-Genl. for the States of Rajpootana, to H. M. Elliot, Esq., Secretary to the Government of India.*

“SIR,

“(D) Camp, Ulwur, 8th May, 1848.

“It is with much regret I have the honor to lay before the Right Honble. the Govr.-Genl. in Council an application from Major Hunter (received through Lieut.-Col.

Colonel Jacob talks with great confidence, and composure, of the unassailable loyalty of the Scinde Irregular Horse ; but this distinguished corps,—instead of being quartered in one of our distant frontier provinces,—had it been nearer the focus of insurrection, had it been exposed to the instigations of bigotry, and to the contagion of universal example, would not perhaps have realized these too sanguine expectations ; the same turbulent soldiers, the same ferocious citizens, who, during the early days of the French Revolution, committed such enormities, and under the cover of their barricades in Paris, set all authority at defiance, would, no doubt, under the command of one of their able

Robinson's letter, No. 126, dated the 1st inst.) to resign his appointment of Commandant of the Meywar Bheel Corps from the 20th proximo, on account of health, and preparatory to retiring from the Service.

“ 2nd. I have been an anxious observer of Major Hunter's proceedings in the difficult and delicate position in which he was placed in 1841, for the organization of the wild and predatory Bheels of the Meywar Hills when they came from their mountain fastnesses with their bows and arrows, until now, when he leaves them as highly disciplined a corps, I hear, as any in the Indian Army.

“ 5th. The success which has attended our measures for the tranquilization of the Meywar Bheel tracts is another fine example, and on the largest scale, of the possibility of disciplining uncivilized and predatory races of men, and rendering them quite competent to keep their brethren in order and to give peace to the country.

“ I have, &c.,

(*Sd.*)

“ J. SUTHERLAND, Agent-Govt.-Gen.”

“ *Camp, Ulwur.*”



Marshals in Algeria, have been as orderly and well-conducted members of society, as the gallant troopers of the Scinde Irregular Horse; but in Paris, the revolutionary vortex was too strong to be resisted, and the atrocities, and deeds of darkness committed in that devoted capital—not by Heathens against Christians and low caste foreign usurpers, for such we are in the eyes of the natives of India—but by Christians against their fellow-countrymen and brother Christians, have hardly been surpassed by the Nanas, and other monsters of India, destined henceforth to share with those of France, the execration of posterity.

I have nothing to say to palliate the cruel atrocities which have lately disgraced India, but those who trace them, as some do, entirely to the non-conversion of Hindoos and Mahomedans to Christianity, appear to have overlooked the circumstance, that, at one time under the impulse of religious fanaticism, at another time on the plea of political expediency, atrocities equally diabolical have been perpetrated in countries, where Christianity was the professed religion of the entire population; in proof of this assertion, I need only refer to the barbarous crusade against the Albigenes, the heart-rending annals of the Inquisition, the wholesale massacre of the Huguenots on the eve of St. Bartholomew\*, and the more recent atrocities

\* In some Christian countries still, as in the days of the Catholic League, and the Evangelical Union, so violent and

of the great French Revolution. As it is not, however, my intention to attempt to develop the causes of the present unhappy episode of our Indian history, I will now revert to my proper subject, the re-construction and future organization of the Bengal Army.

#### STRENGTH OF THE ARMY.

The strength of each European regiment and Native battalion, would, of course, be regulated according to circumstances, and the wants of the country, and would probably fluctuate from 600 to 1000 rank and file; but it would be advisable so to regulate matters, as to have at all times under arms in India, one European for every two Native soldiers; in other words, one-third of the regular troops of the Bengal Presidency to consist of Europeans, the other two-thirds, drilled and armed in the same manner, of Natives.

In addition to the above regular force, should the aid of any irregular corps of infantry be required, I would submit for consideration whether it might intolerant are the bigotry and sectarian prejudices of various Christian communities, that but for the restraint of the laws, and through the instrumentality of the press, the enlightened state of the public mind, persecution and torture in their worst and most hideous forms—the rack, the stake, and the wheel, would again, I fear, be the order of the day; the bigotry of caste in India is bad enough, but nothing can surpass the awful atrocities which have on various occasions emanated from Christian intolerance.—“*Quantum Religio potuit suadere malorum.*”

not be wise to place them under the command of loyal, able, and meritorious Native officers; such a relaxation of our exclusive policy would be sure to conciliate, and rivet the attachment of men so honored; and would, I think, be attended with no danger, provided the distinction were conferred only on men conspicuous for unblemished character, eminent services, and superior professional attainments.

Indophilus, in one of his able letters, has suggested the propriety of amply rewarding those Natives, who, through the various dark phases of the present protracted insurrection, shall have continued staunch in their fidelity to the British Government; and the above boon might possibly be deemed a safe and suitable manner of evincing our appreciation of the conduct of these men. In such case, (if not immediately,) at all events at a later period, an examination before competent judges would be required, to test the professional qualifications of candidates for such commands; this alone would give a wonderful stimulus to education, hitherto a dead letter in the Native Army, and would, no doubt, in the long run produce, as Lord Macaulay tells us, it has already done in other sections of Native society, the most salutary effect on the hearts and understandings of the Native soldiers.\*

\* Two trustworthy Europeans of the uncovenanted service might be attached to these corps, one in the capacity of pay master, the other as quarter-master and commissariat officer.



In addition to the officers required for the purely military staff appointments, as well as the eight officers from each of the 37 European regiments, which, agreeably to the proposed plan, would be attached to the Native battalions, should the services of other officers be required for civil or diplomatic duties, they should on accepting such appointments, be struck off the strength of their respective regiments, and be placed in a separate corps, to be denominated the Civil Staff Corps; the promotion of these officers might be adjusted, so as to have effect at the period it would have occurred had they remained in their respective regiments, or it might be regulated according to a fixed period of service, say to the rank of—

Captain after 14 years service.

Major do. 20 do.

Lt. Col. do. 25 do.

Colonel do. 30 do.

Such officers not to be eligible to any military command, but they should be allowed to retire from the service with the pension of their rank, and on promotion to the rank of Colonel, should be entitled to an allowance equivalent to that drawn by Regimental Colonels under the title of off-reckonings.

It has often occurred to me that few things would conduce more to make an impression on the apathy and indolence of the Native character, gradually to enlighten and expand their minds, and to disabuse them of their many silly and inveterate

prejudices, as the sending to this country, to be relieved every five or six years, a single regiment or legion of a thousand men, to be organized by volunteers from every corps of Native cavalry and infantry in the Indian Army. To form some notion of the probable effect of such a system on the minds of our Native officers and soldiers, we have only to contemplate the conduct of Jung Bahadoor of Nepal, and other Natives, who from having resided in this country, and here associated with Europeans of superior mind and education, have duly learnt to appreciate our motives, and to acquire an insight into our character, our views, and the magnitude of our resources.

I am aware that the above proposition is liable to the charge of being too Utopian, and that my opinion on this subject is not likely to meet with much encouragement; but unless in the reconstruction of our Indian institutions we are prepared to deviate from the old worn out track of routine and hereditary traditions, and, as recommended by some of our greatest Indian statesmen, boldly to adopt measures of progress and improvement, we may, no doubt, succeed in reestablishing the supremacy of England, but we shall in vain hope to witness the regeneration of unhappy and afflicted India.

#### CAVALRY AND ARTILLERY.

The Cavalry might be remodelled on the same plan as the Infantry; but the Artillery, Foot and Horse, should be composed entirely of Euro-

peans. With our artillery, and the other arms organized in the way I have proposed, we should have nothing to apprehend in future from the Native Army, and our Indian Empire would thus be placed upon a basis of greater security than ever. The armies of the other Presidencies might eventually be remodelled on the plan suggested for Bengal.

#### NUMBERS OF THE EUROPEAN AND NATIVE TROOPS.

In the *Times* newspaper it has been suggested, no doubt by the advice of competent judges, that in the Bengal Army, instead of keeping 18,000 Europeans and 150,000 Natives, we should keep 30,000 Europeans and 60,000 Natives

Now, in accordance with the above suggestion, let us have for the Infantry branch of the service 37 new European regiments, each of 600 rank and file, making a total of 22,200 men, and 74 Native battalions, each of 600 rank and file, making a total of 44,400 men—

Say, Europeans . . . . .	22,200
Natives . . . . .	44,400
	<hr/>
Total of Infantry	66,600

This would leave a wide margin for the other arms, Artillery and Cavalry, viz.

Europeans . . . . .	7,800
Natives, for Cavalry only . .	15,600

Should the above force, in addition to the existing European regiments of the Bengal Army, be

considered sufficient for the duties of that Presidency, a portion of the Royal Army might gradually be withdrawn from the Bengal Presidency, and, if not required for the Madras and Bombay Presidencies, sent to England, where the presence of a few additional regiments would greatly add to the strength, security, and confidence of the nation.

#### POWER OF COMMANDING OFFICERS.

I have hitherto said nothing regarding the power to be exercised by Commanding Officers, as that subject, I presume, will come under the consideration of the authorities in this country, and in India; at present, I believe, it is generally admitted that those powers, especially with regard to the Commandants of Native corps, are far too limited, and no doubt the proper remedy will be applied; in a Native corps the more the men are taught to look up to their commanding officer as the paramount authority, the greater, generally speaking, will be the efficiency of that corps.

#### CASTE.

A great deal has been said and written of late regarding the evil influence of the Brahminical caste in our Sepoy regiments; they are undoubtedly far too numerous in proportion to the other castes; but admitting the influence of the Brahminical clique, we must also admit that, during the hundred years that England has been the dominant power in India, the fidelity, and on most occasions

exemplary conduct of the Bengal Native Army has been most conspicuous, and that army, under competent officers, has rarely failed in zeal, courage, or devotion; with good management therefore we have a right to infer that the Brahminical influence would be enlisted on the side of the English, instead of against them, and would, in that case, if restricted within proper limits, prove a valuable ingredient in the future material of the Native Army. By discarding the Brahmins altogether from our ranks, we should run the risk of losing more than we gained; the disaffection of these men would become universal, and actuated by feelings of revenge and discontent, they would probably have recourse to clandestine organization and intrigue, to undermine our influence and authority with the inferior castes.\*

#### PATRONAGE.

The military patronage can hardly find its way into better hands than those by which it is at present dispensed; but in whatever manner Parliament in its wisdom may deem it advisable to deal with this question, I quite agree with Indophilus,

\* The Goorkhas, Bheels, and other Hill tribes make excellent soldiers, but I do not think that generally speaking the low caste men of our own provinces would make such efficient soldiers as the Rajpoots; many of the lower castes are addicted to liquor, which might at times render them turbulent, and difficult to manage, and they are moreover, I think, less imbued with a military spirit, than the high caste soldiers.



who, in regard to the appointment of cadets, observes, “ the best practical arrangement would be  
 “ to nominate three or four candidates for every  
 “ vacancy, and for the best of these to be selected  
 “ by independent examiners appointed for the pur-  
 “ pose; this would combine the advantages of no-  
 “ mination and competition; we should preserve  
 “ whatever benefit is supposed to be derived from a  
 “ presumed knowledge of the previous career of  
 “ the young men, and should add to it some se-  
 “ curity on behalf of the public, that the best of  
 “ the candidates would be chosen. Better can-  
 “ didates would also be put forward when it was  
 “ known that they would have to be measured with  
 “ others. The examination should be collective  
 “ and periodical, so that if there were 50 vacancies  
 “ there would be 200 candidates. Those who failed  
 “ the first time might be allowed one more trial.  
 “ After the cadets have been selected, they ought  
 “ all of them to have at least one year’s professional  
 “ instruction at a military college.”

#### EDUCATION.

Notwithstanding the many additional provisions which of late years have been made in India for the education of our Native subjects; in the Native Army, as before observed, education, up to the present period, has been a dead letter; few of our high caste Hindoo Sepoys are able to read or write, and the minds of these men, from excess of igno-

rance, are particularly open to the bigoted instigations of wicked and designing impostors; some persons I know object to the education of the Natives, and particularly to that of the armed masses of the people, under the impression that they would some day turn their knowledge to account and sweep us into the sea; if such be written in the book of fate we must bow to the decree, but in the mean time, as conquerors, Englishmen, and Christians, it is clearly our duty to improve, as far as we can, the moral and intellectual condition of the people committed by Providence to our rule; our present experience, however, shows, that we have far more to fear from the barbarism, than from the dawning intelligence of our Indian subjects; nothing can be more satisfactory in this respect than the very important and interesting information afforded by Indophilus.

“ In the Civil Service,” he says, “ the only Native  
 “ officers who, during the present insurrectionary  
 “ movement, have gone against us, are the thorough  
 “ Mahomedan Deputy Collectors and joint Magis-  
 “ trates; the numerous Anglicized Hindus, hold-  
 “ ing similar situations, have to a man, remained  
 “ faithful to us: and no class has been so conspi-  
 “ cuous for its loyalty as the educated Natives of  
 “ Calcutta, and Lower Bengal.” In reference to  
 the Government system of education he further  
 remarks, “ the influence of the existing Govern-  
 “ ment system of education upon the moral cha-



“ racter and religious belief of the Natives, has  
“ been much discussed. The first result is the  
“ destruction of the Hindu system in the minds of  
“ the pupils; it did not occur to the ancient Indian  
“ legislators, when they placed fetters on the human  
“ intellect, by binding up their false theories of  
“ physical science with their false religion, that  
“ the whole fabric might one day be brought to  
“ the ground by the removal of the imported  
“ material. There is no subject of conversion so  
“ hopeless as a Hindu who has been taught accord-  
“ ing to the perfect manner of the law of his  
“ fathers. There is no morality so bad as the  
“ sanctification of every evil propensity of our na-  
“ ture, and its being recommended by supposed  
“ divine example; all which the Hindoo religion  
“ involves. The youth of India are not only  
“ rescued from this state by the Government  
“ system of education, but they are advanced one  
“ stage further; they are taught to think, and their  
“ thoughts are inclined towards Christianity by a  
“ literature which has grown up under its influ-  
“ ence, which always assumes its truth, and is deeply  
“ imbued with its spirit. A new standard of mo-  
“ rality is presented to them. The law is a school-  
“ master to lead us to Christ, and the study of the  
“ writings of Bacon, Milton, Addison, Johnson, and  
“ Locke, establishes this ‘law’ in their minds; it  
“ does not give the effectual motive which a firmer  
“ belief in Christianity would impart, but it creates

“ a conscience, which will continually act upon  
 “ them, until they come to a full knowledge of the  
 “ truth. Without precisely knowing on what foun-  
 “ dation the moral principles of Christianity rest,  
 “ they see the beauty of them, and profess them-  
 “ selves enthusiastic admirers of them. They are  
 “ more honest, and truthful, than the Natives who  
 “ are brought up under the old system, and are for  
 “ that reason generally preferred in making ap-  
 “ pointments to the public service.\*

The testimony of Lord Macaulay on this subject is equally gratifying. His Lordship says, “ I see  
 “ the morality, the philosophy, the taste of Europe  
 “ beginning to produce a salutary effect on the  
 “ hearts and understandings of our subjects; I see  
 “ bloody and degrading superstitions gradually  
 “ losing their power; I see the public mind which  
 “ we found debased, and contracted by the worst  
 “ forms of political and religious tyranny, expand-  
 “ ing itself to just, and noble views of the ends of  
 “ Government, and the social duties of man.”

Now the above very interesting, and important remarks, ought, I think, to satisfy the most deter-

\* In the Government seminaries religion forms no part of the regulated course of instruction, but the Bible was placed in libraries, with the understanding that it might be freely consulted, both by students and teachers, and that the teachers were at full liberty to furnish explanations out of it, of the numerous passages in English authors which cannot be understood without it.

mined opponents of secular education, that the system in its practical working, has not been without some wholesome and civilizing effects on Indian society, and that the tree is likely in the end to bear the best of fruits. Before we can hope to sow the good seed with a fair prospect of success, we must prepare the soil for its reception; secular education may be viewed in the light of the preparation,—the fertilizing matter, which is destined to accomplish the requisite improvement, and to make ready the way for that spiritual instruction, which in due time, with God's blessing, I trust will be productive of more favourable results than have hitherto crowned the labours of the many pious missionaries, whose lives have been devoted to the preaching of God's Word in India.

I could say much more on this interesting subject, but what I have said will perhaps be sufficient to show that we cannot err in imparting some kind of education to our Sepoys, as we have already done to the other classes of the Native population; it would be a sin to lose the present opportunity, of educating good out of evil, and in a judicious system of education, we have at least one most favourable opportunity of realizing so desirable an object; it is only by imparting sound and moral instruction to all classes of the people, that we can hope to raise their character, and release them from the influence of those debasing superstitions which are

at present the great obstacle to the progress of Christianity in India.\*

The natural capacity of the Natives, is perhaps little inferior to that of Europeans, and their minds appear to be admirably constituted for the reception of those sciences, which “if presented to them “by every available avenue,” can hardly fail to open their eyes to the egregious errors and absurdities of the Brahminical theories; at all events it is by thus attacking the keystone of the arch, that we may soonest hope to demolish the entire fabric of Indian idolatries—that we may hope eventually to sap the foundations of a religious system, which is based on all the most unhallowed passions, all the most impure, inhuman, and degrading propensities of human nature.\*

\* As far as my own observation goes, the Natives of India have no more objection to read the Bible, than we should have to read the Koran or the Shasters, indeed I have occasionally heard Natives to whom I have myself read portions of the Gospel, express their admiration of the exceeding beauty of the Christian morality, not unaccompanied, however, I fear by the reflection, that our actions were not always quite in accordance with the self-denying principles of our religion.

\* I recollect reading in the life of Sir J. Mackintosh, an account of a Brahmin with whom Sir James became acquainted at Bombay, and whom in all branches of philosophical and metaphysical learning, he pronounced to be vastly superior to any member, civil or military, of the British community at Bombay. The Principia of Newton too, I understand have been well translated into the Persian language by a Native of Lucknow. I merely allude to these facts, to show that the adaptation of the Native mind to the acquisition and mastering of the exact sciences is no myth.

## CONCLUSION.

In the plan I have recommended for the re-organization of the Bengal Army, the principal objects I have had in view are the following:—

1. To afford the Government the greatest possible elasticity of power to reduce, or add to the numbers of our forces in India, without violating the desired ratio of the Native portion, to the European portion of our troops.

2. To ensure the presence of men of talent, judgment, temper, and experience at the head of the Native battalions.

3. To ensure the presence of a certain number of active, energetic, and intelligent Native officers for the command of companies.

4. To ensure the retirement from active service of all Native officers, at an age when they generally become incompetent to the efficient performance of their professional duties.

5. To provide rewards for the most deserving of those men of the Native Army, who have proved faithful to us during the insurrection, as recommended by Indophilus; and to create hereafter, through the attraction and value of such rewards, a powerful stimulus to education in the Native Army.

6. Above all to mitigate the evils of our present very exclusive system, the objections to which have been adverted to in such strong language by the Duke of Wellington, Munro, Malcolm, Lord William



Bentinck, and other Indian statesmen, and our persevering adherence to which system has probably been one of the principal causes of an insurrection, which has shaken our Indian Empire to its foundation.

The Duke of Wellington in reference to that system, says “whenever any portion of the country “is brought under the British dominion, we throw “out of employment all who have hitherto managed “the revenues, or commanded armies.”

Sir T. Munro, says, “there is no example of any “conquest, in which the Natives have been so completely excluded from all share of the government “of their country, as of British India;” again, the same high authority remarks, “our system is much “more efficacious in depressing, than all our laws “and school books can be in elevating the character “of the Natives; we are working against our own “designs, and we can expect to make no progress “while we work with a feeble instrument to improve, “and a powerful one to deteriorate; there can be no “hope of any great zeal for improvement, when the “highest acquirements lead to nothing beyond some “inferior appointment, and can confer neither wealth “or honour.” Lord William Bentinck remarks, “that under the Mahomedans the sympathies of the conquerors and conquered became identified; they intermarried with the Natives, and admitted them to all privileges; our policy, on the contrary,” continues his lordship, “has been the reverse of “this—cold, selfish, and unfeeling; the iron hand of

“ power on one side, monopoly and exclusion on the  
 “ other. *India in order to become an attached Depen-*  
 “ *dency of Great Britain, must be governed for her*  
 “ *own sake, and not for the sake of the individuals*  
 “ *who are sent from England to make their fortunes.*  
 “ *Our Government to be secure must be made popular ;*  
 “ the Government must remain arbitrary, but it may  
 “ also be, and should be paternal.”

The modifications, in our existing system, which I have suggested, would, as regards the Bengal Army, to a certain extent, fulfil the above conditions, and unless we are prepared to close our understandings against the influence of the great authorities above quoted, we should not, in consequence of the late unhappy events, cease in our endeavours, by all practicable means to ameliorate the condition, and, not forgetting the “ingenuas  
 “ didicisse, &c.” of our school-boy days, through the refining influences of literature, and science, to elevate the character of our Native subjects.

We have, it is true, a stern duty to perform ; retribution for the atrocities which have been perpetrated must of course be exacted, and the life of the mutineers must be made to expiate the laws they have violated ; but having vindicated these laws, having vindicated the principles on which repose the security, and well-being of society, let us, in that spirit, which alone becomes us, as a Christian people, again shut up the vials of our wrath ; and in the progressive development of the boundless



resources of the country, as well as in the earnest and vigorous discharge of those duties, which as rulers we owe to the subject race, let it be shown that the welfare and happiness of India are still the paramount objects of the British Government, and that we are not (what Sir J. Malcolm tells us, the Natives represent us to be), “mere tyrants and  
 “low caste usurpers, who have sought India with no  
 “other view, but that of degrading the inhabitants,  
 “and robbing them of their wealth.”

I will finish this paper with the beautiful sentiments to which Lord Brougham, many years ago, gave utterance, but which, notwithstanding the great extension of our Indian Empire, are equally applicable to the present times.

“Should the day ever come,” remarks his lordship, “when disaffection may appeal to 70,000,000  
 “against a few thousand strangers, who have planted  
 “themselves on the ruins of their ancient dynasties,  
 “you will find how much safer it is, to have won  
 “their hearts, and universally to have cemented  
 “their attachment by a common interest in your  
 “system, than to rely upon 150,000 Sepoys’ swords,  
 “of excellent temper, but in doubtful hands.”

W. HUNTER, LT.-COL.

*Nelson Crescent, Ramsgate,*  
*March 16, 1858.*

BENGAL ARMY,  
 RETIRED LIST.