

## NOTE.

THE following pages contain a verbatim report of the proceedings of the public meeting held in support of Lord Ripon's native policy in India, at Willis's Rooms, on Wednesday, August 1st, 1883. The speeches delivered on that occasion presented so complete a view of the arguments in favour of Mr. Ilbert's Bill, that it has been decided to publish them in a permanent form. These speeches, moreover, are valuable as expressing the opinions not only of enlightened statesmen who have long taken the deepest interest in the welfare of India, but of experienced Anglo-Indian administrators and judges. The meeting also had the advantage of listening to an address by Mr. Lahmohun Ghose, who attended as the spokesman of a numerous and educated body of his countrymen. We commend his speech to the reader as being the first authoritative statement of the native view of the question which has been submitted to the English public.

In 1879 Mr. Ghose visited this country on behalf of the Indian Associations, for the purpose of protesting against the Vernacular Press Act, and other reactionary measures of Lord Lytton's government; and it is worthy of remark that he then addressed a meeting at Willis's Rooms under Mr. Bright's presidency. The native communities of India, in sending one of their number to England on such missions, show a respect for, as well as a confidence in, the public opinion of this country, which has been amply justified by the result.

We publish in an Appendix Professor Max Müller's admirable reply to the minute of the Calcutta judges. The footnotes on pages 51 and 53 were written by Mr. Ghose.

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## LORD RIPON AND THE PEOPLE OF INDIA.

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A PUBLIC meeting was held at Willis's Rooms, St. James's, on Wednesday, August 1st, in support of Lord Ripon's native policy, with special reference to what is known as "the Ilbert Bill," and to the proposed extension in various parts of India of the principle of local self-government. The hour of the meeting was fixed for three o'clock, but at half-past two the hall was densely crowded, and large numbers of persons were unable to obtain admission. The proceedings commenced some time before the appointed hour. The chair was taken by the Right Honourable John Bright, M.P.

Among those present were the following: Mr. ex-Justice Markby, Reader of Indian Law at the University of Oxford; Mr. W. Chichele Plowden, Census Commissioner for India; Mr. R. Cust, late Judicial Commissioner in the Punjaub; Mr. John Annan Bryce, of Bombay and Rangoon; Sir Henry Ricketts, late member of the Viceroy's Council, the Rajah Rampal Sing, Mr. Lalmohun Ghose, and upwards of thirty natives of India; General Sir Andrew Clarke, R.E., Mr. Hodgson Pratt, Colonel Osborn, General Tremenhare, C.B., Mr. Wilfrid Blunt, Sir John Bennett, Mr. E. D. Sethna, Mr. George Sibley, late Chief Engineer of the East India Navy; Major-General Osborn Wilkinson, Rev. G. C. Bellew, St. Mark's Vicarage, Marylebone; Mr. C. C. Macrae, the Rev. William Hodgson, Colonel Therry, Captain Swinny, the Rev. Dr. Oliver, Mr. Raymond Knight, Mr. T. W. Rhys Davids, LL.D., Mr. R. S. Parry, J.P., the Hon. F. A. R. Russell, Mr. T. Pagliardini, the Hon. Mr. Justice Denman, Captain C. Norton, Mr. W. F. Cook, Captain W. J. Eastwick, formerly Chairman of the East India Company; Major-General T. B. Harrison, Mr. J. Carvell Williams, Mr. Howard Unwin, C.E., Mr. E. A. Bayley, Mr. W. H. Judge, Mr. C. Plowden, Mr. St.

G. L. Fox; Dr. G. Wild, Mr. H. N. Mozley, the Rev. Dr. Kennedy, Mr. G. J. Holyoake, Professor Warr, the Rev. J. Llewelyn Davies, Mr. A. T. Astley, the Rev. F. Storrs Turner, Captain E. A. Campbell, Mr. Seymour Keay, Mr. C. H. Allen, Mr. J. H. Raper, Professor Beesly, Mr. C. Fitzgerald, the Rev. Donald Fraser, D.D., Mr. John Noble, Mr. J. G. Fitch, Mr. J. G. Alexander, Mr. A. Dunn, Mr. Lewis Sergeant, Mr. P. S. King, Dr. D. Hack Tuke, Mr. Arthur J. Williams, Mr. A. H. Loring, Sir James Marshall, late Chief Justice of the Gold Coast Colony; Mr. George Foggo, late of Bombay; Mr. C. D. Collet, Protap Chunder Mozoomdar, the Rev. Malcolm Maccoll, Mr. Edward Wright, the Rev. Mark Pattison, Rector of Lincoln College, Oxford; Dr. Karl Blind, Major E. Bell, Mr. Walter Wren, Mr. W. Martin Wood, late of Bombay; the Hon. Dudley Campbell; Mr. Charles Hancock, and Mr. Chesson, Hon. Secretary.

The following peers and members of the House of Commons were also present: The Earl of Dalhousie, Lord Stanley of Alderley, the Right Honourable W. E. Forster, Sir George Campbell, K.C.S.I., late Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal; Sir Arthur Hayter, Bart., Sir Wilfrid Lawson, Bart., Sir R. Green Price, Bart., Sir John J. Jenkins, Mr. W. C. Borlase, Mr. J. R. Holland, Mr. J. D. Peddie, Mr. Frank Henderson, Hugh Mason, Mr. Colman, Mr. J. A. Blake, Mr. G. Palmer, Mr. H. Richard, Mr. A. McArthur, Mr. Hardcastle, Mr. Earp, Mr. Collings, Mr. O'Connor Power, Mr. Arthur Arnold, Mr. Sydney Buxton, Mr. B. Armitage, Mr. Allman, Mr. Storey, Mr. G. Russell, Mr. T. B. Potter, Mr. Jacob Bright, Mr. Summers, Mr. Arthur Pease, Mr. Thomasson, Mr. Arnold Morley, Mr. Illingworth, Mr. C. Russell, and Mr. Mappin. There was a large attendance of ladies, including Lady Hobart, Lady Ann Blunt, Lady Hobhouse, Lady Lawson, Lady Campbell, Mrs. W. E. Forster, and Mrs. Fawcett.

#### SPEECH OF THE CHAIRMAN.

MR. BRIGHT, who on rising was received with loud and prolonged cheering, said: Ladies and gentlemen,—I have been requested, by the committee who have called this meeting, to occupy this chair, and perhaps you will permit me to make a few observations on the question about which we are assembled, before I call upon the speakers who will ask you to agree to only two resolutions. The subject which we are about to consider appears to me—and,



I believe, appears to everybody who looks at it for the first time—to be one of no great moment. And yet we find, as the result of great discussion in India and in this country, it has grown and now appears to be a question of great importance to India. Most of you who have read the newspapers of late—and the more so if you have read the Indian papers—will be aware that in India the question has given rise to not a little clamour and discord, and in this country among persons connected with India we have seen that there is a great divergence of opinion. Last week—I think, on Thursday—a deputation of a most formidable character sought an interview with Lord Kimberley, now Secretary of State for India. They told the Secretary of State that they represented not less than 700 persons who were interested in this question, of whom they said 450 had the honour to be employed in the service of the queen in the Indian Empire, and that 250 were otherwise connected with India, but had not been in the public service. If 700 persons could take this interest in the question, and could take the view which the deputation were appointed to represent to the Indian Secretary, we may be quite sure that the question is assuming an importance which justifies our discussing it here to-day. Now, what is the cause of all this clamour and discord in India, and of this discussion here? The cause of it is a very small Bill introduced into the Legislative Council of India, and which goes by the name of “Ilbert’s Bill,” because Mr. Ilbert, the legal member of the Council, introduced it, and is, in his department, in some sort specially responsible for it. Well, I asked the other day a gentleman well acquainted with the affairs of India to give me some account of what this Bill was intended to do, and I will try to convey to you the same idea which he conveyed to me. He said that the result of it, if passed in its present shape, would be to admit three or four natives of India—lawyers, magistrates, or judges—to the exercise of certain powers which now they did not possess; that these three or four persons are members of what is called the Covenanted Civil Service; that they are native gentlemen who had come over to this country, who had been educated here, and on going back to India entered the Covenanted Civil Service. With regard to the increased powers with which they were to be entrusted, he said they were to occupy a certain rank; that they were to have these powers and these appointments only after some years of service, and then were to be equal

with Englishmen ; and also that they must be in what he termed "the same grade." He said that after all that I have described they were to be admitted to the same powers, exercised with the same limitations, as are given to and operate upon Englishmen in the same position. Now I must inform you that at present in the three principal cities, the three presidential cities of India—Calcutta, Madras, and Bombay—the native judges have all the power which it is proposed by this Bill to give to those few judges who are to exercise their authority in the country apart from the three presidential cities. We have never heard of any great harm, or of any harm, that has arisen from the exercise of these powers in those cities. (Hear, hear.) But it must be borne in mind further that of all the population of India that are English subjects of the queen, exclusive of the army, I suppose more than half, I believe three-fourths, live in Calcutta, Madras, and Bombay. (Hear, hear.) Therefore, this Bill which men are so alarmed about will not have the slightest effect on three-fourths of the English population, exclusive of the army, but only upon one-fourth, who live in other cities and towns, and in the country districts of the Indian Empire. Now that appears to me to be a matter of great importance. It reduces the magnitude of the Bill and the effect of it, and enables us to judge of it with greater facility, and to measure the magnitude of the issue which is placed before us. But what the opponents of the Bill will say is this : "This is only a beginning." That is exactly what people said in this country about sixty years ago, when it was proposed to disfranchise places like Gatton and Old Sarum (hear, hear), and to enfranchise Manchester and Leeds. It is only a beginning! Well, that is a very serious thing if it is a beginning of evil, but if it is a beginning of what is necessary and good, then it is no argument against this Bill. (Cheers.) They say that in future, although now there may be only three or four that can be admitted to these increased powers, there will be more and more. Well, I hope that is true. (Cheers.) I regret to say that the increase must be very small for a long period, and must come about by degrees. It makes us almost melancholy to think that such difficulties should be interposed. Those gentlemen who may be disposed to join the Covenanted Civil Service to get into the position of these judges, must come over from India to this country to be educated, they must go back, and suffer all the inconvenience of such a regulation, they must be involved in all

the expense which an English education, lasting over several years, must necessarily throw upon any native of India who comes here. Well, then, the numbers you will see necessarily will be small, and will increase by very slow degrees. But now, having said this, which I think is a fair statement of the effects of the Bill if it becomes law, I should like to ask what ground there is for the clamour which has been raised, and especially when I call to mind the various promises which have been made to the natives of India during the last fifty years. (Hear, hear.) In 1833, just fifty years ago, was passed an Act of Parliament to prolong or renew the charter of the now dead East India Company. I will read to you two paragraphs from that charter, and you will see what was the temper of the House of Commons at that time. Section 85 runs in this way: "Whereas the removal of restrictions on the intercourse of Europeans with the said territories will render it necessary to provide against any mischiefs or dangers that may arise therefrom, be it therefore enacted that the Governor-General in Council shall, and he is hereby required by laws and regulations to, provide with all convenient speed for the protection of the natives from insult and outrage." I was not aware until the other day of the existence of that clause, but it brings before my mind a picture I would gladly not look upon—that the natives of India, in the view of the East India Company, and of the Imperial Parliament, were liable to insult and outrage from English subjects of the Crown in India. (Hear, hear.) Section 87 is as follows: "And be it enacted that no native of the said territories, nor any natural born subject of his Majesty resident therein, shall by reason only of his religion, place of birth, descent, colour, or any of them, be disabled from holding any place, office, or employment under the said Company." (Cheers.) That was the law from 1833 to 1858, the time of the suppression of the great and calamitous Mutiny. After the Mutiny was over, her Majesty the Queen was advised by her Ministers—I presume members of the party not now in power; the late Lord Derby was, I believe, Prime Minister at the time—her Majesty was advised to issue a proclamation—and this is a portion of the proclamation—the magnificent and noble proclamation (cheers)—then issued in the name of the queen to her subjects in India: "And it is our further will that, so far as may be, our subjects, of whatever race or creed, be freely and impartially

admitted to office in our service, the duties of which they may be qualified by their education, ability, and integrity, to discharge. We hold ourselves bound to the natives of our Indian territories by the same obligations of duty which bind us to all our other subjects (cheers), and those obligations, by the blessing of Almighty God, we shall faithfully and conscientiously fulfil." (Loud cheers.) Well, after reading these passages, what are we to say of the clamour now raised as to this Bill, which, as I have shown you, is of a magnitude and of dimensions so small? If this Bill had never been heard of, if under Lord Ripon's Government, and under the advice of Mr. Ilbert and other members of the Council, this Bill had not been brought forward, well, then, the natives of India could always have pointed to those paragraphs in the Act of 1833 (hear, hear), and in the proclamation of 1858, and said, "Though the freedom that is here promised is long delayed, yet we believe it will come, and we are full of hope that a better time is in prospect for our countrymen." (Hear, hear.) But if after these discussions, and the clamour that has been raised in India, after the fulminations in a certain class of newspapers in this country, after the deputation representing 700 persons connected with India, of whom we are told 450 have been in the service of the queen—if, after all this conflict, Lord Ripon were permitted or desired to withdraw this Bill, and it did not become law, then the hope of the people of India would be blasted, and, instead of hope, their souls would be filled with despair (Loud cheers.) And what would that despair mean? It would mean that with a growing knowledge on the part of the people of India—because their advance in English education is remarkable and wide-spreading throughout the country—with that growing knowledge there would be a growing discontent, and with that growing discontent a growing disloyalty, and with the growing disloyalty perils that I would ask this deputation if they would like to face. (Cheers.) I must say that whatever consideration and sympathy one may have for gentlemen who have been many years in India, the clamour that has been raised about this matter is very discreditable—discreditable to their intelligence and to their sympathies. (Hear, hear.) What its origin is it is perhaps difficult to say. Some say its origin is to be found in the strong feelings of resistance prevailing among the Covenanted Civil Service. I met with a gentleman the other day of whom I have

the highest opinion, and who is liberally disposed in connexion with Indian affairs, and he rather advanced that view to me. Well, I am not prepared to deny it, but I must say that I am inclined to think that my friend, who has been and is yet in the Covenanted Civil Service, rather looks with too much favour upon his colleagues in that service, for what did the deputation say to Lord Kimberley? They said, "Although this Bill will more especially affect the non-official Englishman, and in particular the poorer members of that class"—(I always observe that there is a great sympathy for the poorer members of a class on occasions like the present)—"the opposition to it is not less strong on the part of the great body of Anglo-Indian officials past and present." But I will not insist upon it that the members of the Covenanted Civil Service are at the bottom of this commotion. Some say that the non-official Englishmen in India have done much to promote it. They are like the 250 non-official gentlemen whom I mentioned as forming a portion of the deputation to Lord Kimberley. Then some say—and after all there is a great deal of reasonableness in this statement—that a great deal of the trouble has arisen from the conduct and agitation of the lawyers in Calcutta (hear, hear), and there are one or two facts which go rather to support that. We know that lawyers are everywhere very ingenious (laughter), and we know also that they are a class of persons who in most countries—and in this as much as in any other—have enjoyed more of the good and fat things connected with Government than have been enjoyed by any other class in the kingdom. (Hear, hear.) I am told that recently a judge in Bengal, a native lawyer of eminence, has been appointed *pro tempore*, in the absence of another judge, Chief Justice of Bengal, and that this is a very unpleasant pill for the English lawyers there, some one of whom, I suppose, hoped to have the office. They fear that this is a precedent which may be followed. Then I am told that a native member of the bar has recently been appointed standing counsel for the Government of India, and these two appointments and a suspicion that more may follow have disturbed the ordinarily tranquil minds of the members of the Calcutta Bar. (Laughter.) And on this basis, built up of this jealousy, men in India—these 700 here and a great many more in India—presume to tell us that to carry out the principles laid down in the Act of 1833

and in the promises of 1858 is to degrade Englishmen and to convulse India. I have known a great deal in this country of what is called setting class against class. I know no great measure of judicious reform which has not been charged with setting class against class; and now it is said that you will have a perpetual animosity between the English race in India and the subject race. My opinion is that every measure of justice and generosity which you introduce into India must break down the barriers of discontent and animosity, and must tend to the tranquillity and peace of that country. (Cheers.) But I am afraid that our friends the malcontents have other reasons for hostility to Lord Ripon and his policy. In a sentence or two I will mention two or three other things which Lord Ripon has done while he has been in India. He has freed the native press (cheers) from the shackles which the preceding Government had fixed upon it. Now I should think that it was of the first importance that the Indian Government should know what it is that Indian writers and the readers of Indian papers are thinking about the measures of the Government. They need not obey the intimations there received if they are satisfied that their policy is right; but I am quite sure that the governor of any country, whether he be the Czar of Russia, or the President of the United States, or the President of the French Republic, or the great Governor of the Empire of India, must be better, wiser, more competent to govern, if he knows the prevailing opinion, among all classes of the people, on the measures which he is intending to pass. (Hear, hear.) Then Lord Ripon has proposed a very moderate scheme for the purpose of extending municipal government to the great cities and towns of India. Does anybody believe that municipal government, if it be found to be good, as I believe it is, in every other nation and among every civilized and Christian people, would be a measure of mischief among the populations of India? What has it done in this country? Scarcely a better measure has passed for fifty years than the Municipal Reform Bill, which established governments throughout all the great towns and cities of the United Kingdom. (A voice—"Except London.") A gentleman says "except London." May I make one observation apart from the question we are discussing? If the people of the various great cities and towns in the United Kingdom had been as quiescent about it as London has been (hear, hear),

they would not have possessed the admirable municipal governments that they have now (hear, hear) ; and if the four millions of population of London even in a gentle manner were to raise their voice in favour of their being put on an equality with Liverpool, Manchester, Birmingham, Glasgow, Edinburgh, &c., there is no minister who would hesitate for a single session to confer upon them the freedom which they would desire. (Hear, hear.) One other point. Lord Ripon is very strongly in favour of primary education. I know from past experience that one of the chief difficulties—a difficulty which comes to many Governments, and to many private individuals—is a want of funds, but probably it would be possible so to economize in many departments of the Indian Government as to be able to afford a million or two a year for the purpose of giving primary education to the people of India. We voted three millions the other day for the comparatively small population of Great Britain and Ireland. There are two other questions ; one is the Bengal rent law which is now before the Indian Government. I read Mr. Ilbert's speech upon it the other day. The condition of Bengal in regard to land has been perhaps about as bad as the condition of Ireland three years ago, and the Bill which is proposed is, in my opinion, absolutely necessary in the circumstances, and although the zemindars and the landowners are greatly opposed to it, I believe that they will find hereafter that the acceptance of it is probably the very wisest thing they can contemplate in the circumstances in which they are placed. Then Lord Ripon is understood to be in favour of private enterprise in India, and it would be a blessed thing for that country if it were possible for rich natives, united, it may be, with persons of wealth in this country, to originate and carry forward many great works by private enterprise. I think that such a state of things would be much better than a state of things in which everything would be in the hands of the Government, and that it would be better that the people should be enabled to take part in measures which deeply interest and concern themselves. Looking myself at the policy which Lord Ripon has pursued, so far as I have been able to understand it from reading the papers here and many papers from India, I am bound to say that I believe it is a policy not based on suspicion or on ancient prejudices, or on a spirit of monopoly, but based on what is just and generous, and on broad views of statesmanship. (Cheers.) When the policy

of conquest in India is condemned, as I have condemned it, we are told that Providence has permitted, for some great design which we are not able to measure, this wonderful thing in the history of the globe, that the 200,000,000 of people in India should be made subject to the control of a Parliament representing 35,000,000 of persons in Great Britain and Ireland. I am not about to deny this. I know that it has been said by a high authority, speaking of the Supreme, that "even the wrath of men shall praise Him," and I believe it may be that the results which may follow the conquest of India and its government by this country may in some degree compensate for the crimes and sufferings which were committed or endured during the period of that conquest. But I should say that one thing is perfectly certain, namely, that India was not committed to our control to be held as a field for English ambition and for English greed. (Cheers.) Our fathers may have erred—in my opinion, they did greatly err—but their children may make some compensation to the countless millions now subject to their rule, by a policy of generosity and justice, a policy which, in my opinion, India and the world at large have a right to expect and to demand from a Christian people such as we profess to be. (Hear, hear.) I believe Lord Ripon desires to advance this policy and to maintain the principles laid down in the Act of 1833 and in the noble proclamation of the queen issued to the people of India in 1858; and I believe this meeting will sustain the Governor-General of India in the conscientious performance of the arduous duties of his high office. (Cheers.) I gather support and consolation from the answer which the Secretary of State for India gave the other day to the deputation. He told them that the Government had not the least idea of even suggesting to Lord Ripon the withdrawal of the Bill. (Cheers.) Our business here to-day is to support Lord Ripon in that policy (loud cheers), and to give by a united voice, as I hope we shall, our utmost aid to the Government existing in this country, under whom, of course, Lord Ripon is acting in India. He is the great Governor-General appointed by the queen. He knows what there is in that proclamation of the queen. I do not believe that Lord Ripon can—I hope there is no man that would—abandon the gracious and noble promises which the queen in that proclamation made to the populations of India. (Loud cheers.)



Mr. BRIGHT, having resumed his seat, rose again and said: You know I have told you that Lord Kimberley received a formidable deputation. I will introduce to you a deputation in no way so formidable—indeed not formidable in any sense except in that of a man who comes forward to tell the truth with his whole heart. I call upon Mr. Lalmohun Ghose, who has been deputed by his countrymen in Calcutta to lay some of their thoughts before you on this important question. (Cheers.)

#### SPEECH OF MR. LALMOHUN GHOSE.

MR. LALMOHUN GHOSE spoke as follows: Mr. Chairman, ladies and gentlemen,—If I did not know from past experience how ready an assemblage of English ladies and gentlemen always is to give a favourable and indulgent hearing to a stranger pleading the cause of his country, I should have despaired of being listened to by an audience still under the spell of the voice that is yet ringing in our ears. But under the circumstances I feel certain, ladies and gentlemen, that, however inadequate my power of expression may be, you will bear with me while I endeavour to explain as briefly as I can the views and sentiments which my countrymen have commissioned me to make known to you in reference to the questions which you are met together to discuss. (Hear, hear.) You are aware that the administration of Lord Ripon is looked upon with very different feelings by the natives of India on the one hand, and by the Anglo-Indian community on the other. The controversy has lasted in India upward of six months, and it has been carried on with unparalleled bitterness. Invective of the most envenomed character has been freely used, and I may say the vituperative resources of the English language have been well-nigh exhausted. In saying this, I do not wish to imply that the fault has been altogether on one side, or that the party that I represent has been perfectly immaculate. But I do say, without fear of contradiction, that, if we have said things which had better been left unsaid, the provocation has come entirely from the other side; and surely some allowance might be made for men who have spoken or written while smarting under insults of the grossest character wantonly heaped upon them. (Hear, hear.) I think you will also agree with me that it ill becomes those who have been the first to strike, to complain or to feel indignant if their blows have been occasionally returned, it may be with interest.

But, then, it is one of the characteristics of the men who are agitating against Lord Ripon's policy to consider themselves privileged to strike with impunity. But be that as it may, I believe both parties are more or less tired of this bitter strife; at any rate, I can answer for my own countrymen that they, at all events, feel that their cause is too just and their position too strong to require the use of violent or immoderate language. (Hear, hear.) But while the contest is flagging in India, its echoes have begun to be heard in this country. As our chairman has already told you, the voice of our opponents has been recently heard within the walls of the India Office. Well, in thus appealing to the public opinion of this country, they have chosen a tribunal in whose sense of justice the Indian people have the most unbounded faith, and one that is not likely to do wrong at the bidding of an unscrupulous clique. But, in order that you might be able to form a correct judgment on the questions submitted to your decision, it is important that you should bear in mind that the policy pursued by the present viceroy is no reckless innovation of a visionary enthusiast—that it is no part of a revolutionary programme, but that it is the legitimate outcome of the gradual but honest fulfilment of the pledges that have been given from time to time to your Indian fellow-subjects by the Imperial Parliament and by our common sovereign. (Cheers.) As our chairman has already pointed out, it is exactly half a century since the principles on which India was to be governed were laid down in an Act of Parliament passed in 1833, at the time of the renewal of the charter of the East India Company. And I may remind you, ladies and gentlemen, that it was the same year when, by a curious coincidence, slavery was abolished in the British colonies—to-day, the 1st of August, being the fiftieth anniversary of that great event. (Applause.) Well, by the Act of 1833 it was declared that there was thenceforth to be no distinction between Englishmen and natives of India, that all subjects of the crown, whether of British, of Indian, or of mixed parentage, were to have equal rights, and were to be freely and impartially admitted to all offices the duties of which they might be qualified by their education, ability, and integrity, duly to discharge. Nor was this Act passed without considerable opposition and lengthened debate in both Houses of Parliament. Then, as now, the advocates of monopoly and privilege were banded together, and

every effort was made to warp the judgment and to blind the conscience of the English people by artful appeals to your pride of race, and by gloomy and alarming predictions of impending ruin, which are always repeated on such occasions, but which, happily for the cause of humanity and progress, are never realized. (Cheers.) Then, as now, it was said that the greatness of your country was indissolubly bound up with the privileges and immunities enjoyed by a handful of your countrymen who condescend to go out to India to make their fortunes, and who look upon that country and its vast population as having been created for their special benefit. Then, as now, you were told that any diminution of these privileges, or any recognition of the political rights of the natives of India, was fraught with the greatest danger to the stability of your Indian empire. But, to the lasting honour of this country, these unworthy counsels did not prevail. The Parliament of that day refused to believe that what was morally right could be politically wrong, that justice could ever be productive of evil, or that the greatness of England could require to be propped up and maintained by injustice and oppression. Then again, as if the language of that Act was not sufficiently clear, the Court of Directors wrote a remarkable despatch commenting upon it, and explaining that they conceived the Act to mean that "henceforth there was to be no governing caste in India." (Cheers.) I thank you, ladies and gentlemen, for thus endorsing the emphatic language in which the Court of Directors gave the pith and purport of the Act of 1833, which is regarded by the people of India as the first great charter of their political rights, but which is, at the same time, the eyesore of those whose monopoly it attacked and whose special privileges it threatened. No doubt it was a serious and unpalatable change for these men to be suddenly reduced from the position of so many irresponsible despots, enjoying a thousand immunities, practically subject to no laws whatever, and able to oppress and to domineer over the natives of the country at their own sweet will and pleasure; it was, no doubt, an unpleasant thing for such men to be suddenly shorn of all their privileges, and to be told that henceforth they must be content to be only as units in the citizenship of a great empire, where the same laws were to be equally administered to all, without distinction of colour or of creed. (Loud cheers.) But, sir, however distasteful this change might have been to those whose

consciences were blinded by selfish considerations, it was hailed by the natives of India as the inauguration of a new state of things, under which law and order were to be supreme, and liberty for all, and not licence for a few, was to be the guiding principle of the Government. You, sir, have also pointed out that the same principles were again affirmed by the royal proclamation of 1858, when her Majesty gave fresh pledges to her Indian subjects, promising them impartial justice, equal laws, and a fair share in the administration of their own country. You will perhaps allow me to read a sentence or two from one of the most interesting of historical documents—I allude to the memorandum written by the queen in her own hand for the guidance of the late Lord Derby, when engaged in drawing up the proclamation of which I am speaking. The memorandum ran as follows: "The Queen would be glad if Lord Derby would write it himself in his excellent language, bearing in mind that it is a female Sovereign who speaks to more than a hundred millions of Eastern people, on assuming the direct government over them, and, after a bloody war, giving them pledges which her future reign is to redeem, and explaining the principles of her government. Such a document should breathe the feelings of generosity, benevolence, and religious toleration, and point out the privileges which the Indians will receive in being placed on an equality with the subjects of the British Crown, and the prosperity following in the train of civilization." (Applause.) These noble sentiments of the queen were faithfully embodied by the minister in the proclamation of '58, and her Majesty's words went straight to the hearts of her Indian subjects, and did more than anything else to tranquillize their minds and to secure their loyalty after the terrible calamities that immediately preceded it. But, sir, the actual fulfilment of these promises has been to a large extent prevented by the strong and determined resistance of the Anglo-Indian community. (Hear, hear.) Whenever attempts have been made by successive Indian administrations to proceed on the lines of a just and liberal policy, they have invariably encountered the bitter and uncompromising hostility of a section of their own countrymen in India. You may form some idea of the difficulties that have to be overcome by a conscientious ruler anxious to do his duty towards the people of India, when even a statesman of such undoubted force of character and strength of mind as the late Lord

Lawrence was obliged to complain so strongly of the attitude of his countrymen as we find him doing in some of those private letters which have been lately published. Well, the consequence is that, although half a century has gone by since the Act of '38 was passed, we have still in India one law for the European and another for the native, and our criminal code is still full of invidious distinctions of race. Well, it is only one of these many distinctions—and probably the very smallest of them all—that is intended to be remedied by the Ilbert Bill about which so much fuss is made. (Hear, hear.) Of itself it is a small measure and scarcely worth fighting about. But then it is a step in the right direction, and an unmistakable indication of the desire of the Indian Government to carry out those principles of equality and justice that were promised so long ago. It is on this account that our opponents have determined to fight the old battle over again, while the people of India, well aware of the important principle involved, have come to regard this Bill as a sort of test question the fate of which is to decide whether the policy enunciated in 1833, and again solemnly affirmed in '58, is to be really acted upon, or whether it is to be practically reversed and repudiated. But before I make any further comments you will perhaps allow me to give you in one or two sentences a few more particulars regarding the general scope and history of this measure, so that you may judge for yourselves whether the British empire is likely to fall to pieces as soon as this poor little Bill is passed into law. Well, up to the year 1872 Europeans residing in India were altogether exempt from the jurisdiction of the local courts in the interior, and could only be tried in one or other of the High courts in the presidency towns. Now, if you remember the vast extent of the country, and that offences committed by Europeans could only be punished by a court sitting at a distance of hundreds or possibly a thousand miles, you will readily understand what this meant. It meant nothing less than a positive denial of justice. It was accordingly found necessary in 1872 to alter the law to the extent of investing the local courts with a limited jurisdiction over Europeans. But the powers thus conferred were extremely small. For instance, a magistrate who could pass a sentence of two years imprisonment on a native could inflict only three months' imprisonment on a European, while a district judge who was empowered to pass sentence of death upon a native could not

send a European offender to prison for more than twelve months. (Cries of "shame.") No doubt, gentlemen, it is a shame, as you say, that these distinctions of race should be recognized by the criminal law of the country, and it is only natural that we Indians should look forward to a time in the near future when all these invidious distinctions will be swept away. But to go back for a moment to the year 1872; I was about to tell you that at that time a new distinction was introduced which had hitherto been unknown. Up to that time all judicial officers, whether native or European, were exactly on the same footing. Whenever a person belonged to a particular grade of the service, and filled a particular office, he exercised, as a matter of course, all the powers and jurisdiction belonging to that office, without any reference to his own race or nationality. But in 1872 it was enacted by the code of Sir James Stephen, who has always been an advocate of race disabilities, that even the limited jurisdiction over Europeans which was then conferred upon the local courts should be exercised only by such judicial officers as were themselves Europeans. (Hear, hear.) Well, it is this last distinction, which only came into existence eleven years ago, that is intended to be removed by this Ilbert Bill. Even in 1872 it was opposed by a strong minority and was only carried by a majority of two. The minority was composed of such eminent men as Sir George Campbell, whom I am glad to see present here, and Sir Richard Temple, whom I am sure we should all have welcomed here on this occasion in spite of his recent conversion to Toryism. (Hear, hear, and laughter.) Well, ladies and gentlemen, you see now that this Bill is not such a very alarming measure after all. It leaves all the rest of the special laws in favour of Europeans entirely untouched. All that it seeks to do is to restore a few native judges and magistrates of the higher grade to that footing of equality with their European colleagues which they would have enjoyed but for the disqualification introduced in 1872. Our chairman has also drawn your attention to the fact that the men who are to be immediately affected by the proposed change in the law are at present not more than three or four in number, and that they have all been educated in this country, and have won their way into the service by open competition with English youths in London. I may also tell you that they have all had several years' judicial experience, during which they have given uniform satisfaction,

and some of them have even received the special thanks of the Government on trying occasions. Now I ask you if it is likely that such men will abuse the trust that is intended to be reposed in them. (Cheers.) Is it just or reasonable to assume that men who have spent several years of their early youth in England, who have experienced the hospitality of Englishmen, who have formed—as I doubt not, judging from my own experience—many lasting friendships in this country—is it fair to assume that such men will be swayed by race prejudices on the judicial bench? Or is it possible that being natives of the country they will not be able to weigh the evidence of their own countrymen, or to discriminate between truth and falsehood, at least as well as foreign judges and magistrates? No, ladies and gentlemen, look at the question from what point of view you will, it is impossible to discover any real foundation for the alarm that is pretended to be felt. (Loud applause.) The other day, at another meeting in support of Lord Ripon's policy, Sir John Phear, a distinguished judge of the Calcutta High Court, and late Chief Justice of Ceylon, after paying a high tribute to the judicial efficiency of native judges, emphatically declared that he had carefully read all the reported speeches against this measure, but, whether it was due to his own want of perception or not, he had utterly failed to see any justification for the excitement that prevails. Well, if there is no real objection to the Bill itself, then we are forced to go behind and to seek elsewhere for an explanation of the agitation that has been set on foot. The fact is, the opposition is not so much to the Ilbert Bill as it is to the general character of Lord Ripon's policy. The scheme of local self-government—to which reference has been made by the chairman, and which is, after all, nothing more than a development of what was proposed years ago by men like the late Lord Lawrence, and the conservative Lord Mayo—the repeal of the Press Act, the high appointments recently conferred upon some of my countrymen, and the preference for the elective system, which Lord Ripon has shown, not only in his resolution on local government, but also in the remarkable invitation that was lately given to some of the political associations in Bengal, asking them to choose their own representative for a vacant seat in the Legislative Council—all these things have indicated a determination to carry out the promises of the queen and Parliament, which has endeared the present viceroy

to the people of India, but has also raised up against him a host of enemies among a section of his own countrymen who, if they had the power, would tear up the queen's proclamation and burn the Act of '88. (Cheers.) Well, no one knows better than our chairman, and those who co-operated with him in the great agitation against the Corn Laws—no one knows better than you, sir, that there is no surer way of making enemies than by attacking a powerful monopoly. In this instance the hostility has been all the more bitter because of the contrast between the administration of Lord Ripon and that of his immediate predecessor, who was well described by Lord Hartington, a few years ago, as being everything that an Indian viceroy ought not to be. Well, the discontented persons to whom I have referred were lying by for a suitable opportunity when they might hope to enlist the passions and prejudices of the Anglo-Indian community against Lord Ripon's Government, and they felt that such an opportunity presented itself when Mr. Ilbert's Bill was introduced into the Legislative Council towards the beginning of this year—although it is a remarkable and significant fact that when the measure was first announced as being in contemplation, two years ago, it excited no opposition and no alarm whatever. The present attitude of the Anglo-Indian community was not assumed till after the discontented persons of whom I have spoken put their heads together, and till after inflammatory articles had appeared in some of the most scurrilous Anglo-Indian journals, and violent speeches had been made by Calcutta lawyers and others, containing some of the most infamous attacks that have ever been made against the natives of India. But, sir, I am glad to think the question seems now likely to be discussed in this country on its own merits. The people of India have no apprehensions as to the result. The policy of Lord Ripon is no new departure. He is only carrying out the principles which have been laid down by Parliament, and which were steadily kept in view by such eminent statesmen as Lord Canning and the late Lord Lawrence. Several years ago, when Lord Ripon was Secretary of State for India, he said, writing to Lord Lawrence: "I hope that you saw enough of me when we were together at the India Office to know that I feel a great interest in Indian questions, and in the welfare of the population for whose good government and responsibility we are responsible. And I can assure you that it is an immense satisfaction



to me to know that the principles on which I should desire to see the administration of India conducted, are those by which you, as Governor-General, are constantly guided." (Cheers.) And yet because Lord Ripon has honestly endeavoured to follow in the footsteps of that great statesman, and to fulfil the promises of the sovereign whom he represents, his administration has been denounced in unmeasured language, while no epithets have been deemed too coarse and no language too foul to be applied to the natives of India. (Hear, hear.) Sir, I will not dwell upon this last and, to us, most painful feature of the Anglo-Indian agitation. I will only say this, that if such a course is persisted in, it cannot but be productive of the most disastrous consequences, and it is certainly in direct opposition to the advice that has been repeatedly given by some of the wisest statesmen that have ever held the reins of government in India. The late Lord Lawrence, at a farewell dinner given to him in Calcutta in 1869, addressed his countrymen in these words: "And now I avail myself of this opportunity to entreat my countrymen in India of all classes to do their utmost in cultivating friendly and cordial relations with the people among whom they dwell. The latter will well repay our sympathy and goodwill. Without the aid of the people we could never have weathered the storm of 1857. However great, however heroic the exertions of our own countrymen in evil days, they were overmatched in the struggle, and never could have maintained themselves against the overwhelming odds to which they were opposed, had they not been zealously aided by the efforts of loyal natives." (Applause.) Well, these words of wisdom have been utterly disregarded on the present occasion. But the mischief that has been done may not yet be irreparable. I have little doubt that the jealousies and antipathies of race which have been so recklessly stirred up by our opponents, but the responsibility of which they are now seeking to fasten upon Lord Ripon—I doubt not these angry feelings will soon subside and be forgotten. Englishmen and natives of India have lived on terms of friendship in the past, and there is no reason why they should not continue to do so in the future. But whether this is to be so or not must depend in a great measure on the degree of support which a just and enlightened administration like that of Lord Ripon might receive at the hands of his countrymen here. Our chairman

has said that he would like to ask the formidable 'deputation that recently waited upon Lord Kimberley whether they would care to face the perils that would be likely to arise if their counsels were followed. I will venture to add that if you wish to create another Ireland in the East, where you would have to deal with the disaffection not of 8,000,000, but of 250,000,000, then you have only to listen to those who have already shouted themselves hoarse in India, and who are now attempting to thrust their baneful counsels on her Majesty's Government and the English nation. (Hear, hear.) It is for you to say whether you will continue to maintain a just and generous policy, calculated to conciliate the feelings and to enhance the loyalty of the natives of India, or whether you, the people of England, will suffer the sceptre to pass away from your hands to those of an unscrupulous and clamorous clique who desire to perpetuate injustice and oppression, but who nevertheless look to you in the long-run to defend and to protect them with your blood and your treasure, when long-continued wrong and injustice have produced their natural consequences, and have brought about, it may be, some direful calamity. We have no representative institutions in India, and our voice cannot be heard in your own national councils, but we have the satisfaction of knowing that our cause has found powerful champions among some of the greatest of your countrymen, and none more eloquent or more truly noble-hearted than he who, through nearly half a century of public life, has been as a beacon to England and to the civilized world, and who has done us the honour of presiding here on this occasion. (Loud cheers.) We have also abundant faith in the justice of the English nation, and we cannot believe that you will now turn your back upon your principles, or that you will shrink from giving your hearty support to the viceroy, who, amidst difficulties of no ordinary character, is endeavouring to give effect to the will of Parliament and to redeem the plight word of the queen. (Enthusiastic applause.)

SPEECH OF THE RIGHT HONOURABLE W. E. FORSTER, M.P.

MR. FORSTER, M.P., who on coming forward to propose the first resolution was received with loud cheers, said: Ladies and gentlemen,—The resolution which I have been asked to propose is this:—

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ministration of the Marquis of Ripon, Viceroy of India, and its belief that his policy is calculated to promote the welfare of all classes of her Majesty's Indian subjects."

After the two speeches you have heard, but few words are wanted from me. But you will allow me, I doubt not, very briefly to state why I feel it my duty to take part in this meeting. I am prepared to admit that there ought to be good reasons for discussing questions of Indian administration upon English platforms. These questions are at once difficult and important; they involve principles upon which depends the happiness of so many millions, and yet they almost all of them require for fitting treatment so much knowledge of detail that it might well be said that if Parliamentary assemblies are fit for anything—if there is a subject which ought to be discussed by the House of Commons with fairness and moderation, and on which both sides ought to be heard, it would be such questions as we have to consider to-day. But what is our position? The opponents of Lord Ripon's policy have not shown any anxiety to have a debate on the subject in the House of Commons. They have left the matter to Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett (laughter), and although I am told he has a motion down for Friday evening, even he has not found it easy to frame the words of the resolution he intends to propose. (Renewed laughter.) But while there has been no anxiety to bring this question forward where both sides could be heard, there has been the most determined, energetic, and persistent effort to appeal to public opinion to condemn the policy of Lord Ripon; and, as one of those who approve of that policy, I would say that, after all, for good or for ill, England governs India, and that, as the public opinion of England governs the Parliament of England, it is our duty to take care that not one side only shall be presented to the public. (Cheers.) You have heard the other side to-day. I am not now alluding so much to the speech of Mr. Bright, whose eloquence and whose knowledge of India you have long known, as to another speech, and I wish, if we had a debate in the House of Commons, that this representative of the people of India that we have just heard, Mr. Ghose (loud cheers), could there plead their cause. (Hear, hear.) I am not sure but that some English constituency may think it an honour and a privilege to send to the House of Commons an Indian champion of his native fellow-subjects. (Hear, hear.) But, at any rate, there are

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members of the House of Commons here to-day, and the public, I trust, will have a careful report of this meeting, and will find that there are two sides to this question. I agree with Mr. Bright that the most striking feature of this agitation is its exaggeration (hear, hear)—the insufficiency of the measures which are denounced, even from the point of view of those who denounce them, to produce the effects attributed to them. Take this question of local self-government; and I am not sure it is not the more important measure of the two (hear, hear)—I am not sure that the opposition to the Ilbert Bill is not very much on account of the opposition to the Local Self-Government Bill. It is a most interesting and informing fact which Mr. Ghose tells us, that the outcry against the Ilbert Bill was so little until this measure of local self-government appeared. This measure has been decried and denounced as the abdication of the English rule, as the destruction of all government in India, and yet, when we come to examine it, it is solely and simply an attempt to develop those municipal institutions which successive governors and statesmen of India have declared to be a most hopeful fact. I might support this by many quotations, but I will only give one from the words of a man who was perhaps the greatest of Indian viceroys, as well as one of the greatest Englishmen that ever lived. I mean Lord Lawrence. He was certainly not weak or wanting in firmness; and what did he say about Indian municipal institutions? "Great benefits are to be expected from the establishment of a system of municipal administration in India. Neither the central nor the local governments are capable of providing either the funds or the executive agency for improvements in the various cities and towns of India which are demanded by the rapid development of the wealth of the country. The people of India are quite capable of administering their own affairs. The municipal feeling is so deeply rooted in them that the village communities are each like little republics; and holding the position we do in India, every feeling of duty and policy would induce us to leave as much as possible of the business of the country to be done by the people." (Cheers.) This was no hasty remark in conversation, or even in a private letter; it is an extract from a resolution passed by Lord Lawrence's Government on the 31st of August, 1864, and signed by him. There was a debate in the House of Lords in which both sides were heard on the question. Lord Lytton

then attacked Lord Ripon's policy in a speech of remarkable ability, and everything that could be said against it was said by him. But there were answers given by members of the Government under whom Lord Ripon is acting—by Lord Kimberley, Lord Northbrook, and the Lord Chancellor; and this much at least appeared to be clear before the close of that debate, that this question which was first spoken of as the beginning of the destruction of the Government of India was narrowed down to a question of mere detail—a very important detail, I admit, but a mere detail—namely, whether the English district official should or should not preside over these municipalities. Lord Ripon thinks that as a rule these municipalities would be better guided and controlled from without than from within, and that advantages would be gained if the English officials were not responsible for the decision of the councils, and if the members of the councils would realize their responsibility. But Lord Ripon has said repeatedly that he applies no hard and fast rule to these municipalities; that he does not intend to treat all districts alike; that he will take into consideration the position of each district; that he will consider the differences between rural communities and towns, and that there may be at present, and may continue to be, many cases in which it is desirable that the English district official should be a member of the council. And yet there are Anglo-Indians still saying that this measure means revolution! Now, I need not say much about the Ilbert Bill. We might suppose, if it should pass, that what with false accusations and prejudiced and partial judges the life and liberty of no Englishman would be safe. The queen's proclamation has been read to you. It says nothing of colour, nothing of race, nothing of creed. The three conditions which it lays down are education, ability, and integrity. As regards the first, you all know that natives of India do often obtain an education here at great cost and with great trouble, and they have shown at examinations that they have benefited by that education. Then they have shown themselves qualified as good judges over Europeans as well as natives. In Calcutta, for example, they have tried and judged Englishmen and other Europeans, and judged them well, and now, because it is proposed to extend this system to the provinces, and under certain very limited conditions to allow a very small number of native judges to exercise in the country jurisdiction similar to that

which they can already exercise in the presidential cities, the advice is seriously given that Englishmen should leave India unless the Viceroy be recalled and disgraced. (Laughter.) It is instructive to look back and to see that this strong Anglo-Indian feeling, which can only be accounted for by race prejudices, was as strongly shown some years ago, when the following glaring injustice was removed. It was the case that Europeans could not be tried in the same courts in which natives were tried. The Act remedying that was denounced as the Black Act, and I believe that on the first occasion when a man was punished under that Act there was a renewal of the outcry. There is a short leader in our great paper this morning—in the *Times*—which hints that some gentleman who may take part in this meeting ought to answer the opinion of the Judges of the High Court of Calcutta, which is published in that newspaper. Well, the opinion is three columns long, and I think that it could hardly be expected that a layman should give an immediate reply to a statement coming from so many lawyers of high position. (Laughter.) But I am inclined to believe, with Mr. Ghose, that some moderation is beginning to be shown in India itself, because those who express the opinion to which I have referred, though they may be opposed to the Ilbert Bill, by no means take up the same ground which was taken up a little while ago. This document is a careful statement, which will doubtless be listened to by Lord Ripon and the Government, saying that there are some further conditions which ought to be imposed, and some modifications that might be made. But there is no attempt to assert, as has been asserted here and in India, that the principle of this Bill is wrong. There is no attempt to state, —what I have seen stated over and over again—that it is the inalienable privilege of every Englishman to be under an administration of justice differing from that set apart for the natives. (Hear, hear.) There is no attempt to assert that principle; but there is, on the contrary, an admission that the denial of that principle has not had a bad effect in some cases. Looking at the exaggerations on this subject, I would ask why these glaring inconsistencies between facts and fears? Why this inconsistency between what we now hear and past professions? There is need of explanation, and I am sorry to say that I believe the explanation to be this, that great principles are at stake even in this measure; that there is a reaction



against the glorious proclamation of the queen ; that there is a belief, and an attempt to realize the belief, that India should be governed by a European governing class, as Mr. Ghose said, but as I would say by an English governing caste. (Hear, hear.) Well, I believe that an attempt to realize that idea would be fraught with peril ; and I would call upon those who hold it to remember one or two facts. They must not forget that this governing caste must be supported by an army in which a very large majority do not belong to that governing caste, but are Hindoos. They must not forget two other facts—that Western civilization and English principles of government, if they mean anything, mean the abolition of all caste ; and they must not forget that our justification for being in India is not merely that we give to the Hindoos law and order, but that we aim at raising them in the standard of civilization. This is not only the justification of our rule in so far as we strive to do it, but it is to a certain extent, whether we will it or not, the necessity of our rule, and a necessity with which even the opponents of Lord Ripon's policy will have to deal. We cannot help, by our very contact with the natives of India, imbuing them, or, if you prefer the term, infecting them, with Western modes of thought, Western aspirations, and Western ideas ; nor while we are doing that can we help weakening the old bonds of society ; and herein lies the danger as well as the hope of the future of India. England has placed India in the path of progress, but there is no denying that it is a path beset with danger. Doubtless there is a very difficult task imposed upon Lord Ripon and upon all Indian viceroys, and, indeed, upon the English Parliament, and the people of England. (Hear, hear.) England's government of India must be firm and strong. A weak government would be the greatest curse which we could inflict upon the inhabitants of India. But our government must be just as well as firm. We must not forget or fear our own principles. (Cheers.) Lord Ripon does not fear those principles through which Englishmen have become a mighty nation, as, for example, the principle of equal justice in the administration of law. Therefore I call upon you to support him against this outcry, which is equal to violence, and equal, I believe, in unfairness and unreason, to that with which Lord Canning was assailed when he strove, and I am thankful to say with great success, to prevent justice from being replaced by revenge. (Loud cheers.)

SPEECH OF SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL, K.C.S.I., M.P.

SIR G. CAMPBELL said: I am very glad to have an opportunity of seconding this motion, if it is only to impress on you that—as I and many others present here to-day and outside the doors, unable to get in, show—Anglo-Indian opinion is not all against Lord Ripon's policy (cheers). You have listened to most admirable and weighty speeches of great orators and statesmen, in almost all of which I quite agree, but if I were to take exception to anything it would be to some expressions which might seem to assume that this is a question between the Europeans and the natives in India. It is true that many of the European residents in India, and even some of the civil servants of the crown—more, perhaps, those retired in this country than those working in India—have been carried away by a noisy and unscrupulous agitation, but I believe that the great mass of the civil servants and many others have resisted that current of opinion. I have not a word to say for the lawyers who have taken so active a part in getting up the cry, there are present some lawyers who may speak for themselves; but I would pray even our chairman not to be too hard on the Civil Service. (Laughter and cheers.) The Civil Service have always been the friends and protectors, not the oppressors, of the natives—that is the tradition of the service, and I hope they will never depart from it. (Hear, hear.) It seems to me that the questions raised by Lord Ripon's policy are not questions between black and white, but questions between the many and the few. I was not enthusiastic about Lord Ripon at the time of his appointment, but I have carefully marked his career, and have come to entertain the highest opinion of his character and conduct. (Loud applause.) It seems to me that he is, above all things, an *honest* man—and political honesty is not so common a virtue. He is a man of courage, and of thoroughness. The object to which he devotes himself is the welfare of the mass of the people, the greatest happiness of the greatest number. He is one of nature's own Liberals, in the true and highest sense—not in a party sense—in the sense in which the late Lord Mayo, though a Conservative in English politics, was a true and real Liberal in action. (Hear, hear.) I believe it is true, as the resolution affirms, that Lord Ripon's policy is for the good of all classes; but those who act for the benefit of the community

at large, bring down on themselves the cries and the abuse of the selfish oligarchists who are affected by their measures. I do then most heartily support this resolution, not so much in regard to particular measures as with regard to the general policy and conduct of Lord Ripon. I shall not say much of the particular measures to which allusion has been made. The smallest of them is that which has caused most outcry, what is called the Ilbert Bill. The eloquent native speaker whom you have heard has given you a good account of the circumstances which gave rise to that measure. But one thing he omitted to mention. True it is that previous to 1833 Europeans in India were wholly exempt from the jurisdiction of the local courts. But they were also subject to very severe restrictions in regard to holding land and otherwise, and there was one very effective safeguard against misconduct on their part, viz. that they were liable to be put on board ship, and deported at the will of the East India Company. Whatever the faults of that company it always was the friend and protector of its native subjects, and Europeans who oppressed them were summarily deported. (Hear, hear.) Well, in 1833 Parliament removed the restrictions against Europeans in India, and abolished arbitrary deportations; but then it made it a condition, repeatedly expressed in strong language, that they should be subjected to the laws and tribunals of the country, and that the natives should be protected from oppression, not by deportation, but by equal laws. From that time to this a succession of distinguished legislators, from Macaulay downwards, have been striving to give effect to this pledge of Parliament, and they have done a good deal, bit by bit, though there has, time after time, been a cry as if the world was coming to an end, because so much was done. The pledge has not been wholly fulfilled yet, and I do, not know that the time has come when it can be carried out in full, but this Ilbert Bill is another small instalment in that direction, and that is all. (Hear, hear.) It might have been a perfectly fair subject of discussion whether, looking to the various measures on hand, it was or was not desirable to make this just and necessary reform at this particular moment; but I have no hesitation whatever in pledging myself, by all my knowledge and experience, that all the cries about driving away capital and probable outrages on Europeans, and all the rest of it, are the merest, and purest fictions got up for purposes of

agitation. (Loud applause.) That agitation is most mischievous and harmful. The Government cannot and will not yield to it. I trust they will never think of doing so, but will firmly support Lord Ripon and his Government. Another measure of Lord Ripon's is the scheme of local government. Lord Lawrence has been quoted on that subject. It is certainly the case that in no country in the world are local self-governing institutions more ancient, and nowhere were they more effective than when we arrived in India. The country has been truly described as a congeries of little republics. Local Government thus is but a cherishing and reviving of a very old system. Lord Ripon has only laid down the general principle, and the details which are criticized are the work of the local governments. My idea is that we must proceed from below upwards, grouping together for some purposes the indigenous village communities, and gradually coming to larger areas of self-government. (Cheers.) Perhaps the most important measure of all is the great Tenant-Right Bill, which is now before the Indian Legislative Council. Lord Ripon recognizes that in India the great mass of the people are cultivators of the soil, that their well-being is above all other objects, and that small cultivators so situated cannot be well placed without a good system of tenant-right. The questions raised are precisely those with which we have lately been familiar in Irish Land Bills, and the reclamations of the Indian landlords are precisely those to which we have been accustomed in the mouths of Irish landlords. But there is this great difference, that whereas in Ireland the former law had taken away all rights of the cultivators, and what has now been done for them is in some sort a revocation of an unjust law, in India, on the contrary, the laws of Lord Cornwallis' time declared and maintained the rights of the ryots in the strongest terms, and the present measures are only designed to restore and ensure those legal rights which had been sapped and undermined by time and tyranny. Altogether, I am confident that in these and other ways Lord Ripon is doing a great and good work, and I heartily ask you to support this resolution. (Loud cheers.)

When the resolution was put, a gentleman in the body of the room insisted on his right to move an amendment, and for a time there was some confusion.

Mr. BRIGHT said that with the programme which had been

committed to his hands he intended to proceed, but he would not object if the gentleman who wished to move the amendment would be content to do so without making a speech.

Mr. HYNDMAN, the gentleman in question, then moved the following amendment:—

“That this meeting, while cordially supporting the policy of Lord Ripon in giving greater authority to duly qualified native officials, as well as in checking the greed and cruelty of the native landlords of Bengal, deeply regrets that the Government and the House of Commons should have destroyed all confidence in English justice, or in the consistency of English statesmen, by refusing to support the vehement protests of Lord Ripon and his Council against charging a considerable portion of the cost of our bondholders' war of conquest in Egypt upon the revenues of India.”

The amendment, having been seconded, was put to the meeting, and almost unanimously rejected.

The resolution was then carried unanimously, with cheers.

#### SPEECH OF MR. W. CHICHELE PLOWDEN.

Mr. W. CHICHELE PLOWDEN, *Census Commissioner for India*, and late extra member of the Viceroy's Legislative Council, said: It is a great gratification to me to take part in this meeting, and to be allowed to propose the resolution which I am about to read to you. The resolution is,—

“That this meeting expresses its entire approval of the two measures by which Lord Ripon proposes to raise the higher class of native magistrates to a position of equality with their European colleagues, and to extend the principles of municipal government to populations whose loyalty and intelligence fit them to enjoy the privilege.”

In the remarks I am about to offer to your consideration, I shall not ask your attention to the general question of Lord Ripon's policy in India. You have already heard much from the speakers who have preceded me upon this subject; and if on entering this room any of you felt any hesitation—though I should think this is not likely to have been the case—as to what judgment you ought to form in regard to Lord Ripon's Indian policy, I am sure that hesitation has now disappeared, if it existed, and any doubts you may have entertained have been removed from your minds. As to my own opinion in regard to Lord Ripon's Indian policy, I can give it you in a very few words: I know it to be just; I know it also to be honest and

earnest ; I believe it to be sound and thoroughly practical, and that if consistently pursued it will be full of promise both for India and for England. (Cheers.) In fact I may go very much further than that ; for I am convinced that it is the only policy by which we can hope safely to govern India. It is most desirable, in fact it is essential, that we should unite with ourselves in the administration of India, so far as it is possible to do so, our native fellow-subjects, who are so deeply interested in the good administration of that country. This, in fact, has been the aim and the end of Lord Ripon's policy, which we ask you to support, and which our opponents tell you is a policy that should be condemned. When I left India last November I had the honour of a seat in the Viceroy's Legislative Council ; and I was a member of that Council when the Local Self-Government Bills, as they are called, were first introduced. I was also one of the Select Committee to whom the first of those Local Self-Government Bills, that for the Central Provinces, was referred for opinion and report. When the Select Committee brought up in council its report upon this particular measure, I took the opportunity to declare what my views were on the subject ; and I cannot do better than read to you, if you will allow me, the words which I then used. For I am not prepared to alter in any way what I then said, and I do not think that I can put my views before you in a shorter or better form than I then put them before the Legislative Council. This is what I said : " I am not one of those who take what I believe I may fairly call the desponding views which characterize the opponents of local self-government in the shape in which such self-government has been advised by this Government. It is now more than thirty years since I first entered the service to which I have the honour to belong. The greater part of that time has been passed in the discharge of duties appertaining to district and divisional administrative offices, which, I venture to say, bring the official who discharges them properly into very intimate acquaintance with the people amongst whom he labours. One of the matters which has been most forcibly brought home to me in the course of these years has been our singular failure to use the material we have ready to our hand amongst our native fellow-subjects for the better administration of the country. The remedy for this is at our own doors. We must give to the people themselves a share in their own administration. I do

not mean merely by adding to the ranks of our paid officials, and making these additions from the natives of the country. I yield to no man in advocating the employment of natives in our administrative and other offices. But there is a limit to the money we can afford to pay for administration as for other purposes; and this limit has, I believe, been already reached. It is for unpaid assistance in our local administration that I specially look to our native fellow-subjects for really useful, practical help. I believe, my lord, that promise full of hope for the improved administration of this country is held out to us if we really adopt the principle which is at the bottom of the policy of local self-government. I mean if we not only really take the people of this country into our Councils, but if we associate them with us in no niggardly spirit, where circumstances permit us to do so, in the administration of their own local affairs. I am free to admit that I do not share the opinion of those who think such a policy, properly and carefully enforced, is full of danger to the welfare of this country; my only fear goes in a very different direction. I am apprehensive that on the very first introduction of the scheme we may deal with it too timidly, and by so doing deal a blow to its success which may be full of evil consequences; and I think it is in this quarter that the present measure is likely to err." (Loud cheers.) Now, gentlemen, these are the sentiments that I expressed in November last in the Council Chamber at Simla, and I adhere to every word of them at present. But I want now to ask your attention to the measure which has caused so much hostility, and which we know familiarly as Mr. Herbert's Bill. You have heard this afternoon from Mr. Lalmohun Ghose, who has addressed you so ably and so effectually, what is the actual scope of this Bill; and I do not think it is necessary for me to explain its terms at any great length. But you will understand that its sole object is to place on the same footing as their English brother members of the Covenanted Civil Service in India, in regard to the administration of criminal justice to the European British subjects, those native gentlemen who have entered the Covenanted Civil Service. They are very few in number. I believe they do not exceed nine at the outside at the present time, and I rather fancy they are even less than that in number. I believe and hope that, with one or two modifications, Lord Ripon will be able to pass this measure. (Cheers.)

Well, now, we have heard from the opponents of this Bill, who appear to me extremely wild in their statements and in their views in regard to its possible effects, that there are two great objections to it. In the first place, they say that if this Bill is passed, and if these nine gentlemen are under its provisions allowed to exercise powers in magisterial cases over European British subjects, that we shall lose our prestige in India. Well, I, as a civilian who have long been employed in India, and who may have to go back again to India, should be extremely sorry, in common with all other civilians and all Britons connected with India, if this anticipated result was likely to follow from the passing of this measure. But I myself cannot see how it is possible that our prestige in India should be injured by our doing that which is just, and doing it in a courageous manner. On the contrary, it appears to me that instead of our prestige being diminished, it is likely to be increased by such an act. (Hear, hear.) Then there is a second objection; and I must say if that objection was really founded in truth, I should be very loath to have any part in passing this Bill. It is said that the first result which will follow when we give to these native gentlemen the same position that their brother officers who are Europeans have in the Civil Service, so far as their power to try Europeans is concerned, will be this: We shall have a large number of false and improper charges brought against Europeans, and these charges will be tried in the courts of these native gentlemen. Well, if that was the case, as I have already mentioned, I should be extremely sorry to have anything to do with the passing of a Bill which would produce such results. (Hear, hear.) But I do not in the least think that such results can follow, and I am fortified in this opinion by a fact which has possibly not been before the opponents of this Bill, though they ought to have had the fact before them. For the last six months I have unfortunately had to devote the whole of my time to groping amongst the figures collected at the Indian Census of 1881—a task which, I am happy to say, is nearly completed; but I find in these figures that out of the Europeans who reside in India there is a considerable portion who are not British Europeans, but foreign Europeans, that is to say, of other countries than Britain. The Census shows that out of the 150,000 Europeans residing in India, in which number you must remember that the entire British army is included, mustering



about 60,000, there are quite 5000, and rather more, who are foreigners in our sense of the word. There are 1508 Germans, 1018 French, 180 Belgians, 126 Danes, 195 Greeks, 788 Italians, 204 Russians, 358 Norwegians, 837 Swedish, and so on: Now you must understand that the privilege which is accorded to the European British subject, as he is called, of being tried by a European magistrate, is not a privilege which is accorded to these foreign Europeans; and every one of these 5000 men if they commit a crime—(I do not suppose they do commit crimes more frequently than my own fellow British subjects do)—has to be tried by a native magistrate. Now I should like to know if anybody has ever heard this outcry raised in regard to the trials of these foreign Europeans. (Hear, hear.) I am sure I never have. I do not know of any false charges having been brought against them, or that they have been ill-used in any way in the manner anticipated by the opponents of this Bill; and I cannot conceive why it should be supposed that a different set of consequences should follow when a British subject is tried by a native magistrate than when a Frenchman, or a German, or a Prussian, or a Dane, or a Norwegian is tried by a native magistrate. Well, gentlemen, I do not wish at this hour of the afternoon to detain you with any further remarks. I am quite satisfied that what you have heard already from the speakers who have preceded me will set your minds at rest in regard to the questions that are involved in the resolutions before you, and that you will give a hearty support to Lord Ripon's policy. (Loud applause).

#### Speech of Dr. MARKBY.

DR. MARKBY, late Judge of the High Court at Calcutta, said: In seconding this resolution it will not be necessary for me to detain you at any length, especially as I intend to confine my observations to that part of it which relates to the jurisdiction of native magistrates and judges. This part of the question lies in a very narrow compass, and, to a great extent, the efforts on the other side have been directed to an attempt to divert the public attention from that which is the real issue. (Hear, hear.) The real issue is whether the native officers, upon whom Lord Ripon proposes to confer additional powers, are fit to be entrusted with them. If they are, then to delay the measure under consideration is to act in

opposition to the queen's proclamation, to the reiterated directions of Parliament, and to the declared policy of every Secretary of State, and of every Governor-General since the year 1826. (Cheers.) If they are not, then not even the fulfilment of a previous provision is a sufficient justification of Lord Ripon's proposal. (Hear, hear.) Therefore, the question of fitness is the only one which I intend to argue. Now, so far as the question of fitness resolves itself into a question of integrity and intellectual capacity, the evidence is all in favour of the natives. It has been for years under the consideration of the high courts how the administration of justice in India can be improved, and over and over again the High Court of Calcutta has urged the Government to place larger powers in the hands of native judges, as one mode of effecting an improvement. This strong testimony in favour of natives has never, as far as I am aware, been contradicted or withdrawn. It is immaterial whether, in making this recommendation, the judges of the high court were considering civil or criminal jurisdiction, because integrity and intellectual capacity are as much required for the exercise of the one as the other. I would also refer to the opinion of a very distinguished official, who occupied the very same position as that now occupied by Mr. Ilbert. Sir James Stephen, whilst in India, had under his consideration the general administration of justice, and he discussed the subject in a very able minute published in 1872, which is well worthy of the perusal of those interested in this subject. In this minute Sir James Stephen makes recommendations by the side of which the proposals of Lord Ripon sink into insignificance. (Hear, hear.) Being at that time a member of the Government, and responsible for the peace and prosperity of the country, he recommended that "all district and sessions judgeships, as well as the high court judgeships, should be thrown open, and that the abler natives should be appointed to them largely." Sir James Stephen goes on to say that he believes that it would be possible thus to make the judicial service "a bond of union" between natives and ourselves. Nor does he stop here. Besides recommending that the highest judicial appointments should be "largely" filled by natives, he also recommends that the wide powers of appeal which now prevail in India should be largely curtailed. I am not aware that Sir James Stephen, since he left India, has seen any reason to

change his opinions (laughter and 'cheers'); and I think you will accept the action which he then took as a strong testimony in favour of natives. And there is really nothing to put against it. This evidence is, as far as I am aware, wholly uncontradicted. It may, therefore, be fairly said that the question of integrity and the question of intellectual capacity have been finally settled in favour of natives. Then what is there left? As far as I can discover, only this. It is said that the natives of India, however intelligent and honest they may be, may still be deficient in sympathy with the feelings and habits of Europeans, and therefore not fit to exercise criminal jurisdiction over them. If this were true it would be a ground for hesitation. But is it true? Here again all our experience is the other way. (Cheers.) There are many civil cases which, except in the forms of procedure, are very like criminal ones—cases of fraud and cases of libel, for example. Over such cases natives have exercised jurisdiction for fifty years, whether the parties were or were not Europeans, and yet we have never heard a word of complaint. Then again, in the high courts for nearly twenty years native judges have sat in appeal in criminal cases to which Europeans were parties. Here they have actually exercised criminal jurisdiction over Europeans, and again without a word of complaint. (Hear, hear.) Lastly, I think for about ten years they have, as magistrates in the presidency towns, exercised almost daily criminal jurisdiction over Europeans of the very kind which it is now proposed to confer upon them in the provinces. And here also the result has been perfectly satisfactory. It was my duty, during twelve years, to watch closely the administration of justice in Bengal, and I frequently sat with native colleagues. During all this time I cannot recollect a single instance in which the feelings or prejudices of the native judge presented the slightest impediment to the impartial and effectual administration of justice. (Cheers.) To say that any such impediment would arise now is, as it seems to me, pure speculation, and contradicted by all our previous experience. Something of the kind might have been said fifty years ago. But the class of natives who would receive increased powers under Mr. Ilbert's Bill is a totally different class from any which existed in years gone by. It is a class which we have created by means of the education which we have given in the Indian universities,

which, to our lasting honour, we founded in the year 1857, in the very height of the Mutiny; which have proved the greatest blessing to India; and of which wise policy Lord Ripon is endeavouring to reap the fruit. On this point\* there is a striking passage in the *minute* of Sir James Stephen, to which I have already referred. "Nearly everything (he says) which can be asserted about Indian affairs is disputed, but I have never met any one who denied that the difference between native pleaders and judges regularly educated, and their predecessors, who had received no education at all, is hardly capable of exaggeration." But I should like, upon this point, to cite an example of which you have yourselves some experience. I should like to cite my friend, who is sitting beside me, Mr. Lal Mohun Ghose, and I should like to ask whether he is deficient in sympathy with European feelings. (Applause.) Those who heard his speech to-day will, I think, scarcely say so. And I shall be doing him no injustice if I say that he is by no means a solitary specimen. There are, to my own knowledge, hundreds in India as good as he, as able and as willing to serve the Government of the queen in any capacity to which they may be appointed. It is this laudable ambition which Lord Ripon is endeavouring to satisfy. It is this bond of union between the two countries which he is endeavouring to create, and it is this policy which I ask you now to support. (Loud cheers.)

The chairman explained that, if time had permitted, Mr. R. Cust, late member of the Legislative Council of the Viceroy, would have spoken in support of the resolution.

The motion was unanimously agreed to.

#### SPEECH OF SIR WILFRID LAWSON, BART., M.P.

Sir W. LAWSON spoke as follows: Ladies and gentlemen,—The only claim which I have on your attention for a moment or two lies in the fact that I have the honour to be the chairman of the committee which took the responsibility of calling together this meeting. (Cheers.) I have two votes of thanks to propose. The first is a vote of thanks to you (laughter) for having attended in the numbers in which you have attended, and assisted at a meeting which, I think, without exaggeration, we may say will do something—perhaps not much—but something, to encourage Lord Ripon in his noble policy

and to give hope to our fellow-countrymen in India. (Cheers.) In the next place I have to ask you to give a hearty vote of thanks to our chairman. (Loud applause.) When we decided to have this meeting, it was necessary to look out for a chairman, and we thought that if we were to search all England we could not find a better chairman than Mr. Bright. (Cheers.) You know, as well as I do, that the one great object of Mr. Bright's life has been to show to his fellow-countrymen the beauty and the glory of political justice. (Hear, hear.) I believe that, as time goes on, in coming generations, when the great principles of liberty, equality, and fraternity shall sway the minds of men far more than they do at present, nay, as long as time itself shall last, the name of John Bright will be held in honoured and in grateful recollection. (Great applause.)

#### SPEECH OF MR. JOHN ANNAN BRYCE.

MR. JOHN ANNAN BRYCE, in seconding the resolution, said Having had a good many years' experience in India—and not as an official—I can assure our chairman that those who have the progress of that country at heart are deeply sensible of the debt which she owes him, a debt immensely increased by the eloquent appeal he has made on her behalf to-day. Every one knows how consistently and powerfully Mr. Bright has preached the duties of England towards her subject races, especially as regards the promotion of their moral and social progress. Now, against this bill of Mr. Ilbert's which we have been discussing to-day the cry has been raised that it will be disastrous to the material progress of and there has been much loud talk about the withdrawal of European capital from the country. This I believe to be the purest moonshine. (Hear, hear.) Mr. Bright and Mr. Cobden (cheers) have taught us that moral and material progress go hand in hand, and on this ground alone I refuse to attach any weight to these vapourings. And further, as a member of a firm which is among the largest employers of European labour, and has a very large capital invested in remote districts of India—to a great extent altogether outside British territory, which makes the case all the stronger—I think I can claim to speak with some authority on this point, and I can assure you of my strong belief that this threat of the withdrawal of capital will turn out to be as idle a threat as it proved fifty years ago, when the so-called Black Act was passed.

(Cheers.) You have doubtless been astonished not only at these wild threats, but at the general violence with which the bill has been attacked, and some of the speakers to-day have been puzzled to account for it. The truth is that this Bill has been the occasion rather than the cause of the tumult. The hostility of its official opponents has been really far more excited by the local government scheme, which some of them dread as an administrative evil, and which others fancy may affect their dignity and influence; while its non-official adversaries look on this Bill only as a link in a scheme for diminishing the privileges of the dominant race, and it is a fact, incredible as it may seem to you, that a large proportion both of officials and non-officials maintain that India should be held by the sword for the benefit of the English. (Hear, hear.) Now it is quite true that this Bill is only one link, but its enemies forget that the end of the chain was forged in a past generation. It is impossible to deny responsibilities and careers to those in whom we have been developing the capacity and ambition for them, and it would surely be disgraceful for England, whose glory it has been to teach the lesson of self-government to the modern world, to refuse to teach that lesson to the greatest of her possessions. (Loud applause.)

Mr. BRIGHT, in returning thanks, said: I feel it very difficult to say a word in answer to that vote or to the kind words which have been uttered by the two gentlemen who have moved and seconded the resolution you have just carried. I may say, however, that I am greatly obliged to the magnificent audience we have had, observing from first to last the remarkable, I would say, the intense interest with which they have listened to the speeches of the gentlemen whom I as chairman have been permitted to introduce to them. I cannot but believe that the effect of this meeting will be considerable in this country, and perhaps even more considerable in India, when the report of it reaches that country. (Hear, hear.) I am one of those who believe that in the main India will be governed in India; at the same time I am certain that there may be cases, and I think this is one, in which some great principle or principles are at stake, when it may be of immense advantage to call in what I may call the independent and impartial judgment of the English people to determine the question at issue. Now that we have had laid before the country, by the meeting held some time ago, and by

the meeting held to-day, all that can be honestly said on both sides of the question, I am content to leave it to the judgment of the English people. I believe that that judgment, whether expressed by the ministers of the crown, by a vote of Parliament, or by any meetings which may be held in the country, will be in favour of the just, the generous, and the wise policy which has distinguished the Government of Lord Ripon in India. (Cheers.) I feel it a special honour and privilege to be permitted to preside at this meeting. I have had for thirty years a strong interest in the welfare of that country. I have always felt that in the history of the last century, the history connected with India, there was much for us to regret. I have always believed that there is a retribution upon nations as well as upon individuals for the errors or the crimes which they may have committed. But I think that it is possible for a nation in one generation to do evil, perhaps unknowingly, and in the succeeding generation to make compensation by doing good. (Hear, hear.) I am of this second generation, and I shall have children to be of the generation to come. I am anxious that, whatever we have done that is evil in the past, we may redeem it by attempting to do good now and in the future, and that that which many of us believe to have been a great calamity—namely, the wars that have taken place in India under English rule—may be passed over by the historian, and that he may say that England having conquered the country knew how to govern it by a policy just and generous to its people. (Cheers.)

The meeting then broke up.

#### LETTERS OF SYMPATHY.

THE following letter from Sir Charles Wingfield, K.C.S.I., formerly Chief Commissioner of Oude, has been received by the Hon. Secretary of the Committee of Arrangements:—

“ 66, Portland Place, W.

“ July 31st, 1883.

“ DEAR MR. CHESON,—As I may not be able to attend the meeting to be held to-morrow in support of Lord Ripon's policy, I wish to state that the object has my full sympathy.

“ As to the measure known as Mr. Ilbert's Bill, I fail to perceive how it can be regarded as at variance with established principles of Indian administration. To me it seems but another

step towards carrying out the provisions of the Act of William IV., which declare that Englishmen in India shall be subject to the regulations and acts of the Indian Government.

"To contend that natives of India, who are considered qualified to hold the office of sessions judge or magistrate of a district, shall not exercise the same jurisdiction over offenders of English birth as is possessed by English officials filling the same situations, is, in my view, to establish distinction of race in its most offensive form, besides being opposed to the spirit of her Majesty's proclamation of 1858, on assuming the direct government of India.

"I am, &c.,  
(Signed) "C. WINGFIELD."

Mr. Thomas Hughes, Q.C., wrote as follows:—

"Chester, July 17th, 1883.

"DEAR MR. CHESON,—I see you are Secretary to an English Committee to support the Government policy on the question raised by the Ilbert Bill in India, and that the Committee propose to call a public meeting at Willis's Rooms. I enclose a cheque for two guineas towards expenses, and call on me again if necessary.

"It will never do to allow the Queen's and England's plighted word to break down on this the first occasion when the test has come. Here are just two natives who, in equal competition with Englishmen, have won the posts of District Judges, and we are going to forbid their trying any white scamp, though in every case said scamp will have the right of appeal to a white court. I never thought to live to fight the old battle of twenty years ago over again, but we seem to be in for it. Do you remember Lowell's famous lines of that date, in his famous appeal to the English nation (Jonathan to John)?—

"The South say, black men down, John,  
And all men up, say we,  
White, yellow, black, and brown, John,  
Now which is your idee?"

"You may count on anything I can do in the good cause.

"Ever yours,

(Signed) "THOMAS HUGHES."



The following letter is from Mr. H. St. George Tucker :—

“ Worthing, 31st July, 1888.

“ DEAR SIR,—I regret that I am unable to attend the meeting to be held to-morrow at Willis's Rooms, in support of the policy of Lord Ripon in India. I cordially approve of the gradual extension of local self-government, and also of the progressive removal of invidious race distinctions, and I consider that it is only by a steady adherence to principles of abstract justice that we can hope to give permanence to our rule in India.

“ I am, &c.,

(Signed) “ H. P. ST. G. TUCKER.”

Letters of sympathy were also received from Lord Lawrence, Sir Henry Davies, K.C.S.I., late Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjaub, Sir William Wedderburn, Bart., and other gentlemen.

## APPENDIX.

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### PROFESSOR MAX MÜLLER'S LETTER TO THE *TIMES*.

SIR,—I cannot claim the honourable title of "Anglo-Indian," and it is by a mere accident that my name has been added to the "First List of Anglo-Indians who have communicated their names to the British India Committee of supporters of Lord Ripon's policy," published in the *Times* of August 4. Whether I agree with or differ from Lord Ripon's policy, my opinion must stand entirely on its own merits, and cannot derive any additional weight from long titles or still longer arrays of final initials. Anglo-Indians possess, no doubt, great advantages in forming an opinion of Lord Ripon's policy, and more particularly of the opportuneness of his much-discussed Criminal Procedure Bill, and it is not surprising, therefore, that both parties, those who are adverse and those who are favourable to Lord Ripon, should have published their rolls of Anglo-Indian supporters. So far as the number of names and the strings of titles before and initials after their names are concerned, Lord Ripon's opponents decidedly carry the day, and I do not wonder that they should look upon the advertisement of "the 450 gentlemen who had the honour to be employed in the service of the Queen in the Indian Empire, and of the 250 otherwise connected with India," as crushing all argument by sheer weight.

Not being an Anglo-Indian myself, in the usual sense of the word, but a mere spectator, I may, perhaps, be allowed to remark that as the Criminal Procedure Bill is supposed to interfere with some cherished privileges of those who have the honour to be employed in the service of the Empress of India, and of those who are otherwise connected with that country, even a more formidable array of Anglo-Indian remonstrants, nay, even a unanimous condemnation of Lord Ripon's policy by all Anglo-Indians, official or otherwise, would hardly be more surprising than a petition against Municipal Reform, signed by all who have the honour to be Aldermen of London, or who are other-

wise connected with the Mansion House. What has been surprising to me is that so many eminent members of the Indian civil and military services, Governors, Judges, Commanders-in-Chief, members of Council, nay, even a director of the old East India Company, should have had the courage to step forward to support Lord Ripon's policy, and to advocate the surrender of a privilege which in former times they themselves may have valued quite as much as their opponents.

During the many years which I have devoted to a study of India, its literature, religion, and history, both ancient and modern, it has been my good fortune to have been brought into contact with a large number of Anglo-Indians, and I have often had to acknowledge my indebtedness for valuable information received from them. The names of Sir William Jones, Colebrooke, Prinsep, Wilson, Munro, Elphinstone, Sleeman, not to mention those of living friends, occur again and again in the notes attached to the pages of my books. These men, however, and many more of equal eminence, seldom, if ever, appeal to their residence in India as a title to infallibility, while there is a certain class of Anglo-Indians who write and speak on Indian subjects like so many Popes. If you differ from them, they seem to have but one answer to all facts and to all arguments—namely, "I have been in India; I have spent twenty-five years among the natives—it is all wrong, I know it is wrong, and you would not say so if you had been in India." It makes little difference to these invincibles that where they say "Black," others who have spent quite as many years in India as they have say "White." It only makes them more emphatic, and those who may happen to listen naturally think it rather impertinent that one who had never been in India should venture to know more of the customs, the prejudices, the laws, and literature of that country than one who has ruined his liver and lost his temper by twenty-five years' residence in Calcutta. I have not as yet been driven by my Anglo-Indian friends to such a pitch of despair as others, who have openly declared that no one who has been in India is fit to write a history of India. But I may just point out that residence in India has its dangers as well as its advantages. First of all, India is large, and even twenty-five years of residence in Calcutta, Bombay, or Madras, would hardly justify even the most intelligent of civil servants in beginning a single section with "the people of India," &c.

Secondly, the environment in most places where Anglo-Indians gather their experience is English rather than Indian, or, if Indian, decidedly in a metamorphic state through contact with English society. Thirdly, an observer may be too near as well as too far, and nothing, as we know, is so difficult as for a soldier to describe the battle in which he has fought himself, or for a Bismarck to write the history of his time.

It is the privilege as well as the duty of the scholar and the historian to stand aloof, to choose his own point of observation, always to look at both sides of a question, and never to forget the old principle of *Audiat et altera pars*. Surely, if scholars and historians who have never been in Greece or Russia are allowed to write the history of the Peloponnesian or the Crimean war, to examine witnesses, to weigh evidence, to judge of the character of statesmen and generals—in fact, to pronounce the final verdict of history on a Pericles or on a Napoleon III., it can hardly be so very presumptuous for a man who has never been in India, but who has carefully studied all the evidence, from whatever quarter it may come, to write a history of ancient Sanskrit literature, or to pronounce an opinion on Lord Lawrence's or Lord Lytton's government. Let us by all means listen most respectfully to all that Anglo-Indians have to tell us, but let us claim our right to listen, not to one only, but to all of them, and to weigh those who say "Black" against those who say "White." Anglo-Indians would be the very last to wish to be treated simply as *οἱ πολλοί*, as a mob and a multitude, to be numbered only, and not to be weighed. As Anglo-Indians differ from each other, we may surely venture to say that they are not all infallible, and unless it is the first contact with the soil of Calcutta that makes us invincible and infallible, it is difficult to see why Lord Kimberley's appointment as Secretary of State for India should seem to a certain class of Anglo-Indians so imprudent, while Lord Lytton's selection as Viceroy of India was from the first day hailed by the same class as a proof of sagacious statesmanship.

Fortunately, this controversy on Mr. Ilbert's bill has been removed at last from the lower atmosphere of political partian-ship, of mere assertion and contradiction, to the higher and more serene atmosphere of judicial argument. It seems to be agreed on all sides that "the opinion of the Judges of the High Court of Calcutta on the Indian Criminal Procedure Bill," contains all

that can be brought forward against that Bill, 'stated in a judicial, clear, and easily intelligible form. We must not suppose that, in giving this opinion, or, as they say, in expressing their views, the judges imagined they were laying down the law or delivering a judgment. Though judges, they for once acted as pleaders, being quite aware that the final decision rested, not with them, but with higher authorities.

Now, after reading that opinion as carefully as it deserves to be read, I cannot say that it materially alters the aspect of the case. It contains hardly anything that had not been said before in the newspapers, but it has the great advantage of saying everything in good order, and without any profusion of rhetorical dust.

Judges are generally very polite to each other, and as English judges always profess great respect for their Indian and colonial brothers, the Indian judges too do not like to say in so many words that they look upon their brothers among the native judges as inferior to themselves, either in learning or in character. They think they are quite fit to perform their judicial functions, as they do at present, in all the Presidency towns, whether the accused be Indian or European, but they hold that in the country, or in the Mofussil, as they prefer to call it, it would be better to keep up the old distinction, and, at all events for the present, not to allow European criminals to be brought before native judges. Even this distinction, they admit, may have to be given up in time, when what they call Lord Lytton's policy will have been carried out more fully. All they claim in favour of themselves is that English judges possess that fortitude and independence which is required to run counter to the prevailing sentiments of the society in which they live, though even in this respect some famous trials nearer home have been quoted to show that no judges are entirely free from human frailty.

We must now examine the opinion of the judges of the High Court of Calcutta, paragraph by paragraph, passing over those only in which the same arguments are simply iterated, without receiving thereby any additional force.

The first paragraphs, 1 to 7, give a lucid statement of what the criminal procedure has been in the past, and the changes which the new Bill would introduce. In this there is nothing that calls for remark.

In paragraphs 8 to 10 the judges dwell on certain imperfec-

tions in the present administration of the law in India, and chiefly on the dangers arising from the fact that in India the same person is often invested with inquisitorial, magisterial, and judicial powers. These dangers being the same for a native appearing before a European judge, as for a European appearing before a native judge, it is desirable, no doubt, that a remedy should be found, but surely not for the protection of the interests of one party only.

Paragraph 11 repeats what had been said before, viz., that, in former times, European criminals had enjoyed certain privileges over native criminals.

Paragraph 12 shows that the higher qualifications which will in future be required in justices of the peace will exclude many Europeans who formerly held that office. Surely this is no hardship to prisoners, whether European or native.

Paragraph 13 enters on the important question of opportunity. Here Lord Ripon has a decided advantage. He says:—

“Though there is, at the present moment no irresistible necessity for introducing this measure, as Lord Lytton’s system develops, an irresistible difficulty will arise. When you have one-sixth of the Civil Service composed of natives, it will be impossible to maintain the present restriction. Therefore, what we had to consider was, is it better to wait until this necessity becomes overwhelming and irresistible, or is it better to introduce the system now? I confess it appears to me that it is far wiser, and far more in the true and substantial interests of those over whom this jurisdiction is exercised, that it should be introduced now, when the persons who could obtain these powers are very limited in number; when the circumstances under which they enter the Civil Service insure their ability and character; and when all their proceedings can be carefully watched. Being few in number, it will be easier now than afterwards for the attention of local governments and the public to be directed to their proceedings, and, being the men they are, it seems to me that they would be likely to set a good example and give a good tone to those who come after. I hold it, therefore, to be wiser to introduce the measure now, gradually, cautiously, and tentatively, than to wait till the change is forced on us by necessity, and the powers, which are now to be given only to a few men, have to be given suddenly to a very much larger number of native civil

servants. This is the ground upon which I thought that the time had come when this change could best be made."

The judges do not controvert any one of these truly statesmanlike arguments. What they say amounts to a mere assertion that it is better to put off the evil day, that is, to wait till there is an ugly rush, or till, as they fondly hope, the demand for any judicial reform will have ceased altogether. They hope in fact that Lord Lytton's policy will never be carried out, that the natives will never form one-sixth of the Civil Service, but that they will prove to be "a small and dwindling class." If that should be so, surely no harm will have been done. But if it should be otherwise, is not the policy recommended by the judges very much like that of the German Government before 1848? When, before that date, the people petitioned, from year to year to be allowed to smoke in the streets, the statesmen of the time imagined that it was wise not to make any concessions till there should be a stronger demand. In case of a real disturbance they thought that the concession of the liberty to smoke in the streets would act like oil on troubled waters. But 1848 came, and then the people took the liberty, not only to light their cigars in the streets, but to fire cannons.

Paragraph 17 is more important. In it the judges discuss the claims of the statutory civilians -i.e., civilians who have been appointed by the Government in India without examination in England. With regard to them there may be difference of opinion, and Lord Kimberley probably referred to them when he hinted that certain local difficulties would form a subject for consideration. The difficulty is very much the same as in England. Gentlemen may, on the ground of birth and social position, have great claims to a nomination as justices of the peace, who might yet be conspicuously deficient in many of the qualifications which are admittedly essential in a judge. It would surely be easy for the judges of the High Court of Calcutta to suggest some additional qualifications in persons eligible as justices of the peace, only they should not complain if the same restrictions excluded some European planters as well as some native *Rajahs*.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> In addition to the observations of Professor Max Müller on this point, it is important to note that Mr. Ilbert's Bill does not propose to confer the jurisdiction in question upon any native judicial officers, whether members of the covenanted service or statutory civilians, until after they have had several years'

Paragraphs 18 and 19 dwell simply on the existence of apprehensions, without a word whether they are groundless or no; while paragraph 20 gives us once more a repetition and summing up of what had been said before.

In paragraph 21 the judges take higher ground, and assert that they have never heard any complaints from natives on the administration of justice. Still they are too much Englishmen, besides being judges, not to hint that "possibly under certain conditions the right of *Habeas Corpus*, now exclusively enjoyed by Europeans, might be extended to natives in the Mofussil." All honour to the Judges of the High Court of Calcutta!

Paragraph 22 states once more that no complaints were made and no changes suggested till Sir A. Eden's communication of the 20th March, 1882, enclosing Mr. Gupta's letter of the 30th January, 1882. That is, perhaps, not quite correct historically; but if it were, it would only prove that every reform must have a beginning.

Paragraph 23 quotes the personal opinion of a lieutenant-governor.

Paragraph 24 repeats the same opinion.

Paragraph 25 is in strange contradiction with paragraph 31. In that paragraph the Mofussil is represented as beyond the reach of public opinion, while here the rapid development of railway and telegraphic communication is insisted on, as allowing European criminals to be easily forwarded to the nearest tribunal, where they might be tried by a European judge. Nay, forgetting that they had never heard complaints on the administration of justice in India, the judges are now carried away so far in extolling the advantages of railways and telegraphs, that they admit that formerly, before the days of railways and telegraphs, "justice could not be done between Europeans and others, either in civil or criminal cases, so long as a European could be brought before no native judge and before no tribunal nearer than the Presidency town. Such a state of the law," they add, "was in judicial experience, and the local government has satisfied itself in each case that the particular officer is in every respect fit to be entrusted with these powers. The judges have entirely ignored the fact that the Bill is only an *enabling or permissive law*. It simply declares that when particular officers have proved their capacity and integrity to the satisfaction of the local government, and have been considered fit to be appointed to certain high offices, they shall not be prevented, merely by reason of their nationality, from exercising the jurisdiction ordinarily attaching to such offices.



many cases tantamount to a denial of justice, and in criminal matters it practically, in all but very serious cases, secured impunity to the favoured class." If, however, it is now so much easier to forward European criminals to the Presidency towns or a nearer tribunal, the judges omit to answer the most important question—namely, who is to bear the expense?

We have touched already on paragraphs 26 and 27. The English judges do not like to accuse their dark brothers of partiality or dishonesty, but they hint, nevertheless, at the possibility of such things. This is hardly fair, and it is certainly not judicial. If they can prove the charge, or the innuendo, the whole case falls, if not, they should remember that the natives might retahate and say, "What has been, might be again," and that the time when the most distinguished civilians received presents is still within the recollection of some of the supporters of Lord Ripon's policy.

Paragraph 28 is very weak. To say that the Criminal Procedure Bill was introduced simply and solely to remove an anomaly, is to build up a man of straw in order to knock him down. And the *argumentum ad hominem* that the Europeans have a right to certain privileges, because in questions regarding succession, inheritance, marriage or caste, or religious usage or institution, the Hindus and Mohammedans are judged according to their own law, can hardly be meant in earnest. The two things have nothing whatever in common, and no one knows this better than the judges themselves.<sup>2</sup>

If in paragraphs 29 and 30 the judges declare that they cannot see that to pronounce a native judge unfit to administer the law, when the accused is a European, is invidious, or humiliating, or insulting, I can only quote the remark of a native, that it is not the fault of the post if the blind man cannot see it.

In paragraph 31 the judges make very light work of the argument used against them—namely, that the principle of allowing native judges to try European criminals has long been conceded in all Presidency towns, and that no suspicion has ever been breathed against the uprightness of the native judges in

<sup>2</sup> It should also be borne in mind that, so far as the administration of criminal justice is concerned, no native of India, whether a nobleman or a lady of rank usually living in seclusion, possesses any privilege or exemption whatever. Every native of India, without distinction of rank or sex, is equally liable to be compelled to appear before a criminal court whenever his or her attendance may be required either as a witness or as a defendant.

trying either European or native culprits. They think that these judges behave well because they are watched, but they forget that this may be said of any man who behaves well. Besides, they have themselves admitted that, owing to railways, telegraphs, and newspapers, the Mofussil is no longer beyond the reach of public opinion. Let one European be wronged by a native judge, and depend upon it, his screams will soon be heard, not only in Calcutta, but in London. The judges would not be judges if they did not finish up with the bugbear of precedent. If you do this, you will soon have to do a great deal more! I cannot answer this argument better than in Mr. Bright's words, that if what you do now is good, the more you do of it the better. And I may add, in conclusion, that in Ceylon, which is really a part of India, though governed by the Colonial office, all that it is now proposed to concede to the natives on the mainland has long been conceded to the natives of the island, and, as Lord Kimberley and other Colonial Secretaries will be ready to admit, without any complaint from European settlers.

The high authority attaching to an opinion expressed by the Judges of the High Court of Calcutta rendered it imperative to examine it, and reply to it, paragraph by paragraph, or, at least, argument by argument. All I venture to hope is that I may have convinced some who are interested in this question, whether in India or in Europe, that, as usual, there are two sides to it, and that the arguments are not entirely on one. Perhaps the judges themselves would admit this, if they were called upon to hear both sides and to decide as judges, instead of pleading as counsel.

But I go a step further. Even admitting, for argument's sake, that the law was all on one side, and that judges could see no justification whatever for the Criminal Procedure Bill, would it not be a case of *summum jus, summa injuria*, if at the present moment this Bill were to be dropped? With all respect for the law and its able representatives, a good lawyer, or even a learned judge, is not always a good statesman, or a successful minister. Nor can India be governed like England. England governs itself, and if a mistake has been made, by one party or another, it can be corrected, with or without a change of ministry. But India is governed by England, and its government is very much like the treatment of a patient. Statesmanship, under such conditions, has many points in common with medicine. However

much political and medical science may be studied theoretically, they are both in the end experimental sciences. Calm observation and experience may do much, but there always remains a large margin of unknown conditions for which both the doctor and the statesman must be prepared. A wise doctor never prophesies, nor a wise statesman either. They do their best and watch the results. But there are two lessons which statesmen may learn from doctors. The first is not to shake the faith of their patient by changing a prescription, without the most urgent necessity. The second, not to quarrel in the presence of their patient. This is a rule most conscientiously observed by medical men. A consulting physician, even when he differs from the treatment adopted by his colleague, will never before the patient call his medical attendant a fool and a charlatan, but communicate his own misgivings privately to him, and suggest whatever he considers best for the patient. Something of the same kind formed formerly a tacit understanding between politicians in their treatment of India, and without it the fear expressed by John Stuart Mill, that India would be lost if it became subject to Parliamentary government, will seem to many to have been more reasonable than it did at the time when the Government of India was transferred from the East India Company to a Secretary of State for India in Council.

It is easy to say that this Bill is the work of political doctrinaires and of sentimental philanthropists, and that the people of India do not care about it. "The people of India" is a very vague expression. It is quite possible that, out of the famous 250 millions, not one million has ever heard Mr. Ilbert's name. It is quite possible that those whom this Bill most concerns, the lowest classes, who are most likely to contribute the largest number of prisoners, whether native or European, never heard Lord Ripon's name. But, if that be so, the same gentlemen who use this argument, should, at all events, hesitate before, in the same breath, they ascribe outrages committed by the lowest classes to political sympathy with Lord Ripon and Mr. Ilbert. In all this, however, it seems too easily to be forgotten that what is called public opinion is a thing very difficult to measure or to count. The millions of India may care very little whether the five or six gentlemen who alone are at present in question should have jurisdiction over Europeans, except in the Presidency towns. But if these five gentlemen are told in so many words that,

though they possess every qualification, intellectual and moral, for the discharge of judicial functions in towns, they cannot for one moment be trusted over the way, that is neither more nor less than an international insult. In all countries, and not the least in India, people are proud of their judges, and very sensitive as to their honour. Even in England it is easy to observe that while much may be said in society about ministers, members of Parliament, and even bishops, judges still enjoy a certain immunity from jests and jeers. Only the other day an eminent judge, while defining the limits of blasphemy tolerable according to the law of England, remarked to the plaintiff that it was intolerable that he (the judge) should have to listen to any reflections on a brother judge.

I do not believe, as some have said, that the withdrawal of Mr. Ilbert's Bill would lead to a rebellion, but I do believe that this unmerited slight offered to some of their best men would leave a soreness in the minds of a very large number of the most loyal subjects of the Empress of India. I have nothing to say in reply to that brutal logic which maintains that India was conquered by "blood and iron," and must be ruled by "blood and iron." They are brave words, and no more. There are other words, however, which I may be allowed to quote in conclusion—really brave words, because they have been followed by brave deeds, and will be followed, I trust, by still braver deeds—the words uttered by her Majesty the Queen when advised by one of the most Conservative of English statesmen, the late Lord Derby—

"And it is our further will that, so far as may be, our subjects of whatever race or creed be freely and impartially admitted to office in our service, the duties of which they may be qualified by their education, ability, and integrity to discharge. We hold ourselves bound to the natives of our Indian territories by the same obligations of duty which bind us to all our other subjects, and these obligations, by the blessing of Almighty God, we shall faithfully and conscientiously fulfil."

F. MAX MÜLLER.

Oxford, August 5th, 1883.