







# INDIAN STATES

BY

**KHASHERAO B. JADHAVA**

**M. R. A. C., F. C. S., M. R. A. S. E.,**

*Survey and Settlement Commissioner,*

**BARODA STATE,**

AND

**V. B. METTA**

**B. A. ( CANTAB ), BAR. AT LAW.**

*Author of 'National Education.'*

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TO  
**THE INDIAN PRINCES,**  
AND TO  
**ENGLISHMEN & INDIANS,**  
WHO TAKE REAL INTEREST IN THE  
**PROGRESS OF INDIA**  
AND  
**THE BRITISH EMPIRE.**



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## Errata.

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Page.	Line.	Incorrect.	Correct.
8	27	a	A
15	1	aesthetic	æsthetic
15	1	th	the
19	9	egoism	egotism
22	18	preject	project
28	14	doingt	doing
28	17	destroyed	destroyed.
28	27	laying	lying

## PREFACE.

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The contents of this brochure originally appeared in the columns of the "Bombay Chronicle," and therefore, it will be obvious to my readers, that they were written, to a great extent, for the reading public in what is called "British India." Most of them are written in a style which avoids petty details, and dwells on the larger aspects of the problem. But it is hoped, all the same, that there is something in them to interest the rulers and the subjects of the Indian States, and to make them think of the great possibilities that lie before them of their own development and salvation. The Rulers and the Ruled, they might bear in mind, are forces, which, like lovers, cannot live in the absence of each other, but which, by perfect union, can achieve miracles,—as Japan, the glorious island of the Far East has done.

There are many subjects, on which I have not been able to touch in these articles, But there is one of them, to which I shall make at least a passing reference here. It is the subject of giving separate representation to Indian Princes in India, as well as abroad. In these days, when British Government, both in England as well as in India, is expanding with the luminous spirit of generosity, is it too much to expect that Indian Princes will be restored to the dignity which their ancestors enjoyed in the eighteenth century ? They might be allowed now, to send

their ambassadors to the courts of other Indian Princes. It would be more generous still, if they were given the right of sending their ambassadors or ministers to the independent countries of Asia and Europe. And as Allies of His Majesty the King-Emperor, it is but natural that they should wish to be represented at St. James' also. Then again, for the improvement of the industries and commerce of their States, the Indian Princes might be looking forward with pleasure to the time, when they will be allowed to send consuls and vice-consuls to all parts of the world.

The Indian Government and the Indian Princes are Allies, and therefore they stand or fall together. How can the English ever hope to make India happy, if they neglect that large portion of its territory, which is under Indian Princes? Therefore, the Indian Government and the Indian Princes must help each other, in order to make India contented and progressive.

Although the subject is of the very greatest importance for the India of the future, very little has been written about it yet. Mr. Tupper's and Sir William Lee Warner's books are the only books written on it. But they are hardly worth referring to. They are written from a wholly unsympathetic, a pseudo-imperialistic point of view. Their authors are all the time thinking of Great Britain's good, and yet, they are so short-sighted, that they think that it can be achieved, in spite of the feelings and aspira-

tions of the Indian Princes. Fortunately, those days of rabid Jingoism when these books were written, are gone, and saner views about Indian Princes and their States prevail in the official circles.

In conclusion, I beg to thank Mr. Khasherao Jadhav of Baroda, the joint author of this brochure, for the help I have received from him,—especially, in preparing the articles on the Chamber of Princes, and the editor of the ‘Bombay Chronicle,’ for allowing me to publish these articles in a pamphlet form.

Bombay.

28-4-1920.

V. B. METTA.

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# Introductory.

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Now that we are awakening to a new life, to a world full of fresh dreams and many possibilities, now that we are forming ourselves into a *Nation*-in the sense in which Western political philosophy understands it, we must open our eyes wide, to see India *as a whole*. In former times, our outlook on our country was full and comprehensive. To the Indian of the Moghul times, the provinces of Bengal, Maharashtra, or Gujerat, were just as much a part of India as the Punjab or Rajputana. But from the last century, this large and natural vision of ours was almost destroyed, and we began to think unnaturally in terms of 'British' India,-and the "Native States." The inhabitants of the former have become almost unconscious of the existence of the latter; and if made conscious of their existence on some occasion, most of them contemptuously dismiss the subject, by saying, "O, bother the Indian princes! Their territories had better be confiscated by the British Government!" Now, is this attitude fair or rational? Is it *patriotism* to exaggerate the importance of some parts of India at the expense of the others?

The Indian States are a part and parcel of the sacred soil of India. Their minds are formed by the confluence of the same forces, which formed those of what is now called "British India." Their memo-

ries glow with the same chivalry, romance, and poetry of the past as ours do. They aspire after the same finite and infinite goals as we do. We must remember, that amongst them, are to be found the descendants of Rana Pertap and Shivaji, that the blood of our great Mahomedan kings of the past is flowing in their veins. It was on their soil that many of our talented thinkers, poets, and artists met, expounded their thoughts, sang their songs, and were encouraged to express the divine sense of form and colour that was within them. Do we, of these gross, commercial times, remember the lesson taught by our ancestors? Where, in what large town of British India, is the bard encouraged to cultivate his art,—an art which teaches history in such a manner as to make patriotism a thing of living flame and fire? In what part of British India to-day, are we honouring and rewarding artists, as they used to be honoured and rewarded by our kings of old?

It must be admitted that the Indian States have degenerated very much at present. The forces of life have become so stagnant within them, that no new creations, no new ideals are born from them, which irradiate and fertilise the rest of India. The corpses of the old ideals apparently seem to be lying there, and obstructing their path to new ventures and a fair future. This is so, because they have not yet adapted themselves to new circumstances and hopes, because they have not yet been thrilled by the breath of the enlivening Time-Spirit. However, there is nothing like unmixed regret in this life. In their very back

wardness there lie the germs of a lofty hope. In their conservatism will be found those very forces which will restore the much-shaken mental equilibrium of British India. If they have not gained much from the new spirit yet, they have at least retained their essential "Indianity." We, in British India, have unfortunately lost our sense of the past, and are flying about like feathers hither and thither, incapable of distinguishing between the momentary and the Eternal Idea. If they have not moved with the Time-Spirit, they have also not become its slave to the same extent as we have become. And it is, therefore, by the union of the new spirit which is directing us, and the old spirit which they have preserved, that we shall create a great future for India.

The problem with which we are now concerned, is how to make the Indian States happier and healthier. We shall discuss here, what measures the British Government, the present Sovereign or rather the Super-Sovereign Power in India (since many of our Princes are "Sovereigns") might adopt, in order to make the Indian Princes more self-respecting. They are labouring under many disabilities, which, if removed, would make them capable of doing much good to their country. We shall also discuss what steps they themselves should take, if they wish to improve their States, and be respected by their own people as well as by other Indians-and by the rest of the world also. A sovereign, by true liberalism, high statesmanship, and broad vision can achieve wonders. Less than sixty

years ago Japan was in a feudal state. But with profound wisdom, helped by the advice of great ministers, its Emperor transformed it into a Modern State in less than half a century. It was looked down upon as a contemptible little island in the Mid-Victorian period ; but it is now respected as a First Class Power, whose friendship is sought by all the other Great Powers of the world and whose enmity not one of them would like to provoke. What was this magical transformation—almost reminiscent of the Arabian Nights due to ? It was due to a judicious mixture of the Old and the New, to the active and ardent co-operation of the Sovereign and the People in the work of uplifting their country. And if this was possible for one Oriental ruler to do, why should it not be possible for other Oriental rulers—the Indian Princes,—to do also ?

How few are the people in British India, or elsewhere, who know clearly the disadvantages under which the Indian States are placed,—and yet, they all unite in condemning them. If the Indian Princes are not up-to-date, if they are not responsive to the touch of the Zeit-Geist, is it wholly and solely their fault ? Why did India produce rulers like Rama and Vikram, Akbar and Shah Jehan in old times, and why is she not capable of producing such men now ? Surely, there must be something rotten in the state of India, to make her so barren, so unfertile in truly great men and women.

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## THE DISABILITIES OF INDIAN PRINCES.

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There are many causes which have contributed to bring about the tragical decay of Indian Princes in recent times. Among them, the first and foremost is the British Government's policy of interference. The Government of India treats them most often as children, or fools, and interferes in all—even the pettiest affairs of their States. The inevitable result of such behaviour is—that they become callous and indifferent to their own duties. How the “Subsidiary Alliance System” sucks up like a vampire, the life-blood of Indian Princes, destroys their vitality, their capacity for hope and for earnest work, was noticed by Mr. Henry Russel, the British Resident at Hyderabad, many, many years ago, when he wrote the following words: “Every faculty that is valuable to a State, every organ that contributes to its wholesome existence, seems to decay under our alliance.”

Another thing which this “Subsidiary Alliance” has done, is to make the ruler irresponsible to his people, and thus to kill the spirit of co-operation that existed between the rulers and the ruled in old times. And as the rulers do not consider themselves at all responsible to their subjects now, their subjects *en revanche*, have withdrawn even their moral support to the actions of their rulers. Thus a gulf is created between them, which is the source of much dissatisfaction and immorality.

The kind of education or--miseducation, which the Indian Princes receive nowadays, is responsible for their disorientation, or distortion. In the colleges where they are sent, what do they learn? Are they taught there the history of their country, or family, from the proper point of view? Do they even learn the Indian languages—including their own mother-tongues properly there? Alas, no! In fact, they really learn nothing there, which would teach them the sense of duty or beauty in life. They only aspire to become intellectual and moral *Eurasians* of the lowest order, and thereby lose their true individualities. For, it is a fact, that our Indian Princes are losing all individuality, by imitating the objectionable sort of Anglo Indian bureaucrats with whom they not seldom come in contact in life.

One wishes and hopes that the Government of India will change with the spirit of the times. Now that the spirit of life is changing, now that vaster horizons are opening up before the minds of men, now that the Indian Princes have amply, nobly, and right royally—and loyally performed their duties during the Great War towards the King-Emperor, the Indian Government should treat them with less mistrust and suspicion than before, and allow them to work out their own salvation without let, or hindrance, or interference of any sort.

It has been stated above, that the education of the Indian Princes at present is pitifully poor. With

proper education,—what an amount of good they can do to their States ! They should learn at least two modern Indian languages, and one classical Oriental language—either Sanskrit, or Arabic, or Persian. They should have a good knowledge of Oriental Political Science,—by studying Kautilya, Sukra, and other noted writers of India, China and the Islamic countries. They must have some acquaintance with Oriental philosophy, art and literature, so that they might gather round them, and encourage men of creative genius or talents, as their ancestors used to do. Side by side with these studies, they should learn something of the best that the West has produced. Elements of Natural Science and Political Economy must be compulsorily taught to them. They should be trained to approach Western art, literature and philosophy from *the Oriental point of view*,—which, it must be added, by no means signifies an attitude of hostile criticism. What they should learn and remember is—the psychological inevitability of all the artistic, literary, and thought-forms, which they find around them in this country. Once they grasp these truths, they will know what changes they can introduce in their States with success, and what they should avoid introducing. True education is an eye opener. It gives a correct and comparative view of everything in life. And so is not a country or a State accursed, if its ruler is mentally blind, and does everything out of a love of novelty or notoriety ?

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## THE STATUS OF INDIAN PRINCES.

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In these days of democracy, when agitation is the only way, by which men can get more rights, the Indian Princes find themselves in a hopeless plight. When the people of British India were dissatisfied with their Government, they agitated and agitated, uttered many critical words, many bitter and biting words, many futile words, year after year against it, with the result, that they are now in sight of the golden portals of "Home Rule." But what could the Indian Princes do? They could not agitate individually, because it was not compatible with their dignity. They could not agitate in a body, because many of them were ignorant and inarticulate from the new point of view, and there was no *esprit de corps* among them. They also did not agitate, because they relied on England to do her duty,—that is, to observe the spirit of the terms of the Treaties concluded with them. And now, at an hour when men all over the world are intoxicated with golden visions, when men are singing of "freedom", "self-determination", and such other exalted themes, when men are feeling that:—

"Tyrants and slaves are like shadows of night,

In the dawn of the morning light."

What do they see ?—A dazzlingly beautiful Tomorrow ?—A resplendent renaissance of their former glories ?—a lark soaring skywards with the ecstasy of

melodious expectations within its heart?—No!—They see woe, dark, abysmal woe before them. The pit of further degradation (The Chamber of Princes) stares them in the face with its baleful eyes!—And they hear the owl proclaiming the watch from beneath Afrasiyab's vaulted dome!

Of the way in which Indian Princes have been continuously humiliated since the second half of the last century, we shall give only one example. When the present King-Emperor held a levée at Delhi, it was actually proposed that the Indian Princes should merely bow to him, and pass on. Was not this an affront to their dignity, especially when they were "Allies" of His Majesty, and when the levée was held, with the sole object of bringing together the King-Emperor and his Indian Allies? But the tragedy was averted. If the proverbial worm turns, why should not the descendants of Kings sometimes protest against such treatment? They protested, and the Political Department dropped its irritating, impolitic proposal. But it cannot be said that the Government of India has yet altogether stopped from being petty in its dealings with Indian Princes. It is still thinking of the number of steps that a Viceroy or a Governor should or should not take, to meet an important Indian Prince. Before humiliating the Indian rulers, it might try to remember the position that India occupied in the ancient and mediaeval world, the influence of her civilization on both the Eastern and the Western world. It is fortunate, that although the

name of this country has been lowered in England by certain kinds of Anglo Indians, missionaries and politicians, it is still respected in other countries. When the Gaekwar of Baroda went to Japan about a decade ago, the Emperor of Japan not only got up from his throne,—but went half way down the hall to receive him. Now, if the rulers of other nations treat the Princes of India with such distinction, may we not expect the same *courtoisie royale* to be extended to them by the King's representative in India? The eighteenth century is dead, and with it the necessity for the British Government to formulate the political law of the country in such a way, as to make itself felt as the Suzerain Power. These are no longer times of territorial consolidation for it, but of grace, and generosity, and nobility.

The Princes are the "Allies" of the King—Emperor, and therefore, they should be treated as such. They should be given seats on the right and left of the King Emperor, and not in the far distance behind him. When Timur, the lord of half the world, and the shaker of the other half, once held a court at Samarcand, the Kings of the various countries under him were invited there.—And how were they then treated by him? Were they thrust into the background? No! They were given the pleasure and the privilege of sitting near him and around him—to look like the luminous satellites of a more luminous planet! Did his descendants, the Great Moghuls, treat the Indian Kings under them in a small way? Did they reduce their armies, deprive them of their legitimate titles, or power, or

degrade their status ? Of course not ! For, they had neither fear nor jealousy of any of them. Great Britain to-day is stronger than any Indian Prince or all of them put together. And so supreme grace, and a perfect appreciation and comprehension of their feelings and desires are the qualities which the Indian rulers expect from the Suzerain Power.

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## THE POLICY OF INDIAN PRINCES.

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The conservatism of Indian Princes, for which they are condemned so much, by so many people, is not a quality which the student of history can altogether or always run down. For conservatism is an instinct, which unites the past and the present. It is a chain, which, if snapped, would create mental and spiritual chaos or confusion in society. Traditions should therefore be gradually modified, and not destroyed all at once. The ruler of a province or a country, has therefore to be very careful in his policy of governing his people. He must realize that no true or great progress is possible, unless he keeps up in his people the sense of continuity with the past. To govern effectively, he must touch their reason, their emotions and their imaginations. Of these,—the emotions and the imaginations, are to a great extent moulded by the past, and therefore, they can be touched only by the symbolic revivals of that past. The Roman Caesars kept up the festive processions, the gladiatorial fights, and the circuses of the olden times in order to keep their people pleased. The great French Emperor revived the memories of the days of the Roman Caesars, and of Charlemagne, by means of triumphal arches, friendship with the Roman Pontiff, old titles, etc., in order to make his people conscious of their greatness. Therefore, it is not a bad thing that the Indian Princes have kept up the custom of holding Indian types of darbars, where

gorgeous dresses, scents, and flowers, all combine to inspire the sense of romance and respect in us. It is a public good, that they are employing a great many dancing-girls, jesters, bards, and musicians in their service, for, they are thereby helping to keep alive the traditional culture of India. Their love of keeping wrestlers, elephants, and horses, their love of sport and hunting, tends to encourage in their subjects, the love of physical exercise. So long as they preserve the beauty of the past, we cannot find fault with them. It is only the vices of old times that should be buried by them as early as possible.

We are often told that these are the days of the "Renaissance" in India. If that is really so, the Indian Princes ought to do a great deal of creative and constructive patriotic work of a lasting nature. They should fuse the beauty of the past and the present in such a way, that a new orientation might be given to their people, so that, they might see before them a vista of endless new hopes and joyous possibilities. Let them keep chairs of Indian and Oriental philosophy in their colleges, which the Universities of British India have not yet done. Let them patronize Indian Painting, of either the old or the new Indian school. We want them to encourage Indian sculptors to execute imaginative pieces of sculpture,--and not mere portrait-busts. Let them have bands and orchestras executing Indian music, which has a message and meaning for their people,--and not Western music, which does not melt the hearts of

either men or beasts in their States. Let them build State Theatres, and encourage the evolution of a new style of Indian drama and acting. Let them give encouragement to Indian architects in building palaces, whose decorative and constructive principles are born from the very soul of India,—and not palaces in the French and the Italian Renaissance styles, which cannot possibly move their people's imaginations. Let them plant gardens of the Moghul type, whose symbolism is intuitively understood by those who live near them. Is there not a beauty of the very finest type, of the most exalted and the most lyrical nature around them and behind them in the past, that they should want to imitate the forms of a beauty foreign to them, and to their people? Do they want the Parthenon or the Taj, the *been* or the piano, the Shalimar Bagh or the Hyde Park, to revive the glory of India? Let them realize clearly, if they want to be successful rulers, and to be loved by their people, that the English skies and the English fogs are just as much out of place here, as a Gothic cathedral, a German band, and a Greek statue.

I have already said before, that true progress is impossible for India, without learning many things of political and social institutions, of theoretical and applied science, of industry and commerce, from the West. What I have said here, is only for emphasising the fact, that conservatism is not an unqualified evil, that it is often a source of beauty, a source of inspiration to a people,—especially in matters spiritual;

aesthetic, and ethical. But if the keeping up of many of the old customs is good, the Indian rulers should see that they treat all their officers alike. To treat different people differently, is the cause of much annoyance and injustice. For example, if they force some of their officers to take off their boots before entering their presence, and allow others to keep them on, they cause much discontent. So too, there is no justification for them, to give chairs to their European officers in a *darbar*, and make Indians sit cross-legged on the floor. They should try to bear in mind the fact, that there are many Indians to-day, who are brought up *à l'euro péenne*, and to whom European manners and ways of living are as natural as they are to Europeans themselves,—and who are, therefore, bound to resent being treated differently from European officers in their States. It is bad enough for these Indians to be treated insultingly by some of the undesirable kinds of Anglo-Indian bureaucrats, but it is worse to be treated in the same way by their own countrymen! They should also pay the same salaries to their Indian as to their European officers, provided they are both equally efficient in their work. It is by showing respect to their officers and people, that Indian Princes will succeed in improving the tone of the service and the society in their States.

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## THEIR FUTURE PROGRESS.

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No perfect evolution is possible, unless there is harmony in the *external* as well as the *internal* conditions of an organism. Therefore, no Indian Prince can say with justice, 'I cannot improve, unless the British Government treats me better.' He must try to do all he can for the progress of his State. He must take a genuine paternal interest in his people. The king in ancient India, was the head of the Body Public, and if the head did not perform its functions properly, or abused its powers, it was lopped off. Manu, and other old Indian writers talk of deposing or killing a bad king, with the same conviction, or sense of justification, as the Chinese Mencius or some of the Modern Europeans writers do. It is totally wrong to think, as many Europeans still do, that the Ancient Indians were 'slaves', and were ruled by wilful despots. They had parliaments, republics, and public assemblies in India over two thousand years ago, to prove the fathomless futility and the utter absurdity of such thinking.

The king, the Ancient Indians laid down, should govern with the help of an Executive Council, which is like unto his fingers. This Council was to be composed of the wisest and the most experienced men of his State, so that, the king found it very difficult to differ from them. Then again, each department of the State had its own head, who was given the fullest

opportunity of showing his administrative talents. It was on very rare occasions, indeed, that the King ever upset or mutilated any of his ministers' plans. And it is worth remembering, that it was by the observance of these kinds of ideals, that our old kings created, or gathered round them great men. The Abu Fazls and the Todar Mulls, of whom any country in the world would be proud, flourished under these circumstances, and gave their best to their country.

But have we retained the spirit of those older times? Do our Princes encourage the administrative talents of their officers? Do they take the same interest in the welfare of their subjects, as Rama, or Asoka or Akbar did? No !—They are either lethargic and indifferent to their duties, or interfere so much in the details of administration, that efficiency and continuity of policy are destroyed. By confusing his own orbit with the orbits of his officers, the present-day Indian Prince brings about instability or even chaos in the administration of his State. The pernicious egoism of the ruler most often transforms his officers into his playthings. The officers, not sure of the stability of their service in the State, or the continuity of their educational, or revenue, or judicial policy then become careless and irresponsible,—and from this carelessness and irresponsibility of theirs, there springs up in them a love of bribery and corruption, a love of tyrannizing over their subordinates. One hardly ever hears the true *vox populi* in these

States to-day, because their citizens are so afraid of their Princes and their officers, that they dare not express their true opinions freely even to their own neighbours ! A free Press is still undreamt of there, because the Princes have made up their minds never to hear the true wishes of their people. For the same reason, a free platform is unknown in them. The administration of justice is so corrupt in many of the States, that many criminals escape punishment, either on account of a note of recommendation from a higher officer to the judge or the magistrate who is trying the case, or by means of a *douceur* ! Education is in a deplorably backward condition, because the Educational Departments of these States are inexpressibly inefficient, and are given a lower place than all the other departments. The teachers and professors of the schools and colleges, are so little respected there, that even the police sepoy, getting a salary of Rs. 12 per month, does not salaam them when they are passing by ! What is the use of a Prince giving libraries, museums, and art-galleries to his State, if he cannot give sufficient respect to his educational officers,—and who, consequently, feel no desire to educate the people to appreciate his gifts properly ?

‘ All this chaos, disorganization, and anarchy, all this misuse of golden opportunities, is the result of the circumstances in which we are placed,’—say some of the Princes. But they must remember that even if the British Government is gracious enough to remove their disabilities, it depends upon them. and

upon them alone, to make their States live and flower proudly. They must wake up, kick off the bad influences from their palaces, State-services, and traditions, and set about the task of reconstruction in earnest with the help of really able and independent men. Their pride should not now consist in being Princes only, but in being the rulers of brilliant, genuinely progressive States. They must drop their petty egoism, which delights in the pursuit of frivolous pleasures, —and take to that higher form of egoism, which flourishes on the desire of doing great things for a State. What a wonderful future there is before them, if they only open their eyes to see it? What marvellous and enduring results there would be, if there was a passionately perfect fusion of their mediaeval chivalry, pomp, picturesqueness, love of poetry, art, and tradition, with the spirit of order, method, precision, law, justice, and science?

Many things will have to be done by Indian Princes, which cannot be all mentioned here, in order to improve or reform their States. Therefore, the following points only are submitted for their consideration:—(1) They should interfere as little as possible with the work of the heads of the various departments of their States; ( 2 ) Undue favouritism, which is the child of whims and not of reason, should not be shown by them towards anybody,—as it is likely to have a demoralising effect on their people; (3) They should see that their officers and their people meet together on terms of equality on certain

occasions every year; ( 4 ) They should give opportunities to the people, to air their grievances freely against both laws and men. This can be done by Representative Assemblies of the people,--which should not be accountable to the Executive Council, but to the Prince directly. By making the officers and the people act as mutual checks upon each other, a great many abuses at present prevalent in their States will disappear. (5) They should import the most highly educated men, and then organize the most efficient Educational Departments in their States. They should pay the teachers and professors handsomely, give them opportunities for materializing their ideals, and give them a high status among the other officers of their States. They should bear in mind, in this connection, the fact, that the late Emperor of Japan, Mitsu Hito, gave unequalled encouragement to New Learning in his Empire at the time of the Restoration.

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## CHAMBER OF PRINCES ( I ).

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It has now been proposed to establish " A Chamber of Princes," or rather make the one that was born a little while ago, permanent. This is perhaps looked upon as a step in the right direction by many people in British India. They think that it will help the Indian Princes to co-operate with the British Government in the work of administering the country. They will, therefore, be surprised to learn that there are many Indian Princes, who look upon it with total disapproval and wholesome fear, born of their sense of the past. They feel, that it will be nothing more than a talking-shop, where these Princes or Chiefs, who are yearning to hear the melody of their own voices, will speak with proper intonation or gesture, but from which nothing substantial, nothing good ever will result. The Nizam of Hyderabad, whom all the Indian Mahomedans respect, does not seem to approve of it. Other enlightened Princes, like the Gaekwar of Baroda, and the Holkar of Indore are not apparently in its favour. The Maharaja of Mysore, so much respected in Southern India, is also said to be opposed to it. Though certain first class Princes, like the Scindia are in favour of it *at present*, are we quite sure that they will continue to be so when it is a few years older ? And who are the Princes who are in favour of it ?— It will be found that they are mostly those, who

wish to have the pleasure of sitting together with their direct Suzerains as equals there, and thereby improve their station and position.

The idea of securing the co-operation of Indian Princes is not a new thing in the history of British India. It was first thought of in 1877, when the Queen of England formally assumed the title of "The Empress of India." An Imperial Privy Council composed of Indian Princes, was then brought into being, to advise the Government of India. But Lord Lytton demolished the new structure, on finding out that it served no useful purpose. Lord Curzon thought of doing something of a similar nature, but his project was never materialized. Then Lord Minto projected an "Imperial Advisory Council," where the ruling Chiefs and the territorial magnates of India were to sit together, and debate and deliberate with futile flashes and feverish flippancy. This project also died a premature death, because, it was found that it would be no use to try to bring together men, who had nothing in common between them—even in the domain of ignorance,—for, the ruling Chiefs had no knowledge of British India, and the territorial magnates were absolutely out of touch with the people. After that was born the proposal of an "Imperial Council," which was to be composed of a limited number of Princes, for advising the Government of India on questions of an Imperial nature. But the Indian Princes, with their peculiar instincts and traditions, disliked the idea of collective consultation. They informed the Government of India that the idea was

not workable, because "free discussion" was only possible among equals, and also because, there were questions of precedence amongst themselves, which would take time to be solved. They also mentioned the fact, that such meetings would cause a great deal of inconvenience to them—the worry of travel and useless expenditure, and also interrupt the work of administration in their own States. So, the proposal was dropped. Then came the Great War, and with it a revolution of ideas in the minds of men. Projects which were not even conceived of before, were suddenly given birth to in the world. It was at this time, that the Conference of Indian Princes took place in 1916. This Conference, it is believed in many quarters, was the result of the suggestion of some Princes, who wanted to safeguard their own rights and interests, in view of the political reforms which were contemplated for India then.

The proposed Chamber, as has already been said, does not commend itself to many of the Princes, especially to the greater ones. It does not suit their dignity to have the affairs of their own States discussed in public. They do not see its utility, especially when they can approach the Viceroy or the Secretary of State individually,—a right which they have naturally no desire to forego, in order merely to satisfy the aspirations of the smaller Princes,—many of whom, it may be added, are, or were until quite recently, their feudatories. Can you blame them for this desire of theirs to maintain

whatever little dignity is left to them? Were not some of them addressed as "Your Royal Highness" and "Your Majesty", by the British Officers in the eighteenth century?—thus placing them on the same level as many of the German Princes of the pre-war period. The Nizam of Hyderabad is the "Faithful Ally" of the King Emperor. The Gaekwar of Baroda is also an "Ally,"—for, without his active help, the British Power would not have been finally established in the Bombay Presidency. There are many of these greater Princes, who, it must be confessed, see in this proposed "Chamber," a means by which their Sovereign rights might be jeopardised, an instrument by which they might be degraded further. Are they not a little justified in being cautious, especially when we take into consideration the fact, that the history of their immediate predecessors is not such as to hearten them, to make them expect nothing but goodness and fairness from the British Government? How the British Government treated the Indian Princes in former times, will be seen from the following paragraph selected from the "Private Journal" of Lord Hastings:

"In our Treaties with them, we recognised them as independent Sovereigns. Then we send a Resident to their Courts. Instead of acting in the character of an Ambassador he assumes the function of a director, interferes in all their private concerns, countenances refractory subjects against them; and makes the most

ostentatious exhibitions of the exercise of the authority. To secure to himself the support of our Government, he urges some interest, which under the colour thrown upon it by him, is strenuously taken up by our Council, and the Government identifies itself with the Resident-not only on the single point, but on the whole tenor of his conduct. In nothing do we violate the feelings of the Native Princes, so much as in the decision which we claim the privilege of pronouncing with regard to the successions to the Musnad."

Since then, though Queen Victoria gave a solemn pledge to them to observe scrupulously all the treaties and engagements made with them by the East India Company, the policy of the British Government in India has not unfortunately been always fair to them. Though the policy of annexation has not continued, there has been, during the last sixty years, an interpretation of words in the treaties concluded with them, which was not justified on either historical or moral grounds.

Now that a "New Era" has dawned upon the world,-an Era of hope and generosity and the spirit of co-operation, why should Great Britain not give heart and hope to Indian Princes? They helped her, true to their promise as Allies during the Sepoys' Mutiny of 1857. And during the War, which is just over, although they were not bound to help her anywhere outside India, according to the terms of

their various treaties with her, they put themselves, their men, and their money freely at her disposal. Are they not therefore justified in expecting some favours from her, by which they might at least regain the dignity, which their ancestors enjoyed in the eighteenth century?

Before proceeding with the establishment of the Chamber of Princes, it is, therefore, to be hoped the British Government will consider the following points:-

(1) The larger and more progressive States will not wield their legitimate influence in the Assembly.

(2) The biggest or the most advanced States get the same representation as the smallest or the most backward ones.

(3) All the ruling Princes may not be able to visit Delhi, for attending its meetings.

(4) Their position as "Sovereign Princes," places them at a disadvantage for the discussion of political questions.

(5) There will not be sufficient questions of general interest for discussion every year for the States and British Government.

(6) The delicate question of whom to admit in the Chamber or not, will cause many heart-burnings among the Princes.

(7) A Chamber which many Princes do not want, or will not attend, will not be *representative* in the true sense of the word.

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## CHAMBER OF PRINCES ( II ).

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The present Scheme of the Chamber of Princes, though worked out very carefully and with great conscientiousness, is not quite fair to either the "Direct Treaty States" or to the "Sovereign States,"—whose interests are undeniably greater than those of the Minor States. If all the States, whether big or small, are given one vote each, as it is proposed to do, the smaller ones will swamp the bigger ones. The Chamber of Princes cannot resemble a municipality,—for, its members will be admittedly of a different social, political, and historical standing. It cannot be like the "Genro" ( the Japanese " Council of Elders, " ) or the British House of Lords either. It must be something new, something unique, something with which history has not yet been concerned,—a creation, which will prove, perhaps more than anything else, the political genius of England.

The number of States in India is estimated to be about six hundred. They are of varying sizes; some of them cover an area of over eighty thousand square miles, whilst others cover hardly a dozen square miles of territory. In point of population and revenue also, there are considerable differences between them. And then, their connection with the British Government is of a very varying nature too. Under these circumstances, it is obviously unfair to call all of them together. It is hardly just to give one vote to a small

State, which has almost always been obscure in the country, and to a large State which was very powerful when the British first made alliance with it,—or to a State, which is famous in the history and song of the country. Why not, therefore, divide the States according to their historical connection with the British Government? For, it was this historical connection, which brought in the difference between the “Direct Treaty States” and the “Sovereign States.” Then again, where the States are smaller, and are scattered all over a Province, but at the same time are of great importance,—they might be grouped together according to the Provinces in which they are situated. By doing this, real representation will be secured for all of them, and at the same time, the danger of the small States swamping the big ones will be destroyed.

The two most powerful peoples during the infancy of the British rule in India were, the Mahrattas and the Mahomedans. Next to them in importance, come the Rajputs, with their big territorial interests and great historical traditions. In this Rajput-group, all the Rajput States, wherever situated,—whether in Rajputana, Central India, or Behar and Orissa, might be included. If, however, the Rajput States of Rajputana do not wish to claim kinship with those laying outside the boundaries of their soil, then, those others might be formed into another group, and be given a separate representation. The third division might be composed of (a) The Sikh and Jat

States; ( b ) The Eastern States; ( c ) The Southern States; ( d ) The Central Provinces States; and ( e ) The Behar and Orissa States.

The representation for these various groups might be as follows :

Groups.	Votes.
(1) The Rajputs	1
(2) The Mahomedans	1
(3) The Mahrattas	1
(4) The Sikhs and Jats	1
(5) The South Indian States	1
(6) The East Indian States	1
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The giving of one vote to each of these groups, will not only bring the biggest Princes in the Chamber, but the Government will be enabled to secure thereby the collective opinion of all the Princes and Chiefs. And it might be noted, that by this procedure, *no one group will be able to dominate the situation.* If, however, the Government do not approve of such a small number of voters as six, it might raise the number to twenty, by allotting the votes in the following manner :--

Groups.	Votes.
(1) The Rajputs	8
(2) The Mahomedans	4
(3) The Mahrattas	3
(4) The Sikhs and Jats	1
(5) The South Indian States	2
(6) The East Indian States	2

**This number will give a chance to all the ablest and the most prominent personalities of a group to express their views, and yet, it will not be too large—like 110, which is the number of representatives the Government of India have in view. And as this number is not very large, there will be no need of forming Sub-Committees, as there will be, if the present Government Scheme is materialized.**

It would be interesting to remember, in connection with the subject of the number of princely representatives, that in Lord Lytton's time, it was only eight Princes who were taken up for "The Imperial Privy Council." Lord Lytton, it may be noted here, did not want Minor or Petty Chiefs to be represented at all. But now, all those who get a salute of 9 guns and above, are to be taken into the Chamber, and in some cases, the gun-salutes will be specially bestowed upon Chiefs, so that, they might be enabled to sit in the proposed Chamber. Is this levelling down justifiable? Will it appeal to those Princes, who claim to be "Allies" of the King Emperor?

Each of these groups should be allowed, it is suggested, to carry out its work freely and independently, that is, without official interference or guidance. It must fix its centre of work, and have a paid ministerial establishment. The Mahratta Princes, for example, might establish a central office at Bombay, and the meetings of their group might be held either at Bombay, or at the capitals of the various members in rotation.

There will be many advantages in the Scheme which has been suggested above, for the consideration of the Government of India. Of them, some are mentioned below :—

( 1 ) It reduces the number of representatives, and consequently does away with the necessity of having Sub-Committees as real working bodies.

( 2 ) It removes the necessity of enhancing the powers of some Princes, or increasing their gun-salutes, which measures, it might be frankly admitted, are bound to cause heart-burning in some quarters.

( 3 ) It does away with the possibility of racial cliques, or of any particular interest dominating the others.

( 4 ) It makes it possible to include *in a general way* all the 600 States, provided, of course, that none of them is a subordinate of another.

(5) No swamping will be possible.

(6) It will remove racial, historical, and traditional distinctions between the Princes. The spokesmen of the different groups will be brought together, and will learn to sink their differences, when they realize—as they are bound to sooner or later, that their goal is identical.

The Political Officers appointed for each State, or a group of States, might also be made Honorary

members of this Chamber, who are, however, not to have any votes. It is hoped, among other things, that by having these neutral members, many advantages will accrue.

Finally, it might be mentioned that this new body might be styled, "The Councillors of the Imperial Throne in India," rather than "The Chamber of Princes,"—in order to keep up the dignity of the Indian Princes in their own eyes, as well as in the eyes of the world.

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