

impressive consensus of expert opinion, and without necessarily admitting that it should have been conclusive, it must be acknowledged that the leaders of the modern Reform Party in India have every right to make it a prominent point in their case. Further, at home the proposed change was earnestly supported by Sir John Lawrence, and in July 1862 the Secretary of State, Sir Charles Wood, made the momentous announcement to the Indian government that the Cabinet had resolved to sanction a permanent settlement of the land revenues in all the provinces of British India. This decision was reaffirmed five years later by another Secretary of State, Sir Stafford Northcote, who declared that the government was prepared to make some sacrifice in regard to revenue 'in consideration of the great importance of connecting the interest of the proprietors of the land with the stability of the British Government'. A lengthy correspondence ensued but nothing was ever done, and the proposal was practically shelved—a result said to have been largely due to Lord Mayo's opposition to the policy. In 1883 the resolution was definitely and formally abandoned.

To complete the history of this proposal of 1862 we have had to overpass for the moment our chronological limits and must now retrace our steps. Lord Canning, whose health had completely broken down owing to his immense exertions in the Mutiny and grief at the death of his wife, resigned office in 1862. He returned to England to die there three months later. His fame stands now far above detraction. In purely intellectual qualities other rulers of British India have surpassed him. He made a few mistakes. In the supreme crisis of India's fate he showed some diffidence and hesitation, but by level-headed coolness, by unremitting toil, and by a splendid tenacity he won his way through to victory. He had literally worked himself to death. In his absorbing devotion to his task, he denied himself both