

# THE RED FLAG

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FIVE CENTS

## Capitalist Misrule in India

By H. N. Hyndman, in "Justice" (London)

### Popular Ignorance of India.

Comparatively few Englishmen ever take the trouble to understand the position which we hold in India. Our people today take less interest in this great subject than they did twenty, thirty, forty, fifty years ago. There is, nowadays, little or no real public opinion on the question. The agitations of the past have died down, and the almost inconceivable blundering and horror of our misgovernment have been forgotten. It is high time that our entire policy should be taken in hand in earnest. We should all of us comprehend that not even the crimes of which Prussianized Germany has been guilty transcend in infamy the cold economic and social ruin which we ourselves—for the people of Great Britain are responsible—deliberately inflict upon the inhabitants of the vast Empire of Hindustan.

### The Population of India.

We dominate directly or indirectly in India more than one-fifth of the entire human race. There are no fewer than 315,000,000 of people under the British flag. That is to say nearly seven times the whole population of the United Kingdom, and more than all Europe put together, outside Russia. The Roman Empire, at the height of its power, never had under its rule one-half the number of this huge collection of human beings. China is the only country which ever exceeded our Indian Empire in population. Of the 315,000,000 thus under our control, 250,000,000 roughly are directly ruled by men of our race; 65,000,000 are in the semi-independent Indian States, over whom we exercise a light supervision. There are many races within our borders and several religions, of which the two most important are Brahmanism and Mohammedanism. But within the last forty years the conception of India as one great whole, possessed of a glorious civilized future, has grown up among our fellow-subjects from Bombay to Burmah and from the Himalayas to Cape Comorin. Even the huge mass of pauperized ryots who exist in the great peninsula, and form the overwhelming majority of the people, are beginning slowly to grasp the truth that the misery they suffer from and see now prevailing all round them can not endure for ever.

### Our Carpet-Bagger Tyranny.

There are only 200,000 Europeans and Eurasians in all Hindustan. Of these, ordinarily, 75,000 are British troops. 200,000 Europeans, all told, to 315,000,000 Indians! And these Europeans come from two little islands 6000 miles distant by sea, who rarely land in India before they are twenty-one years of age, have, to begin with, little real knowledge of Indian languages, habits and customs, and rarely or never settle in the country. Read what the late Meredith Townsend, a thorough-going Englishman, and in many ways an Imperialist, who knew India well, said about this: "Not only is there no white race in India, but only is there no white colony, but there is no

white man who purposes to remain. No ruler stays there to help, to criticise, or to educate his successor. No white soldier founds a family. No white man who makes a fortune builds a house, or buys an estate for his descendants. The very planter, the very foreman of works, departs before he is sixty, leaving no child, no house, no trace of himself behind. No white man takes root in India, and the number even of sojourners is among these masses imperceptible." Yet these waves of white carpet-baggers of an alien, and even a hostile, race, who pass, pass, pass and disappear, exercise a despotic authority over the mass of Indians far in excess of the power at the disposal of the Emperor Akber, the greatest monarch who ever ruled the East.

### Bleeding India To Death.

It is possible that a handful of civilized white men going to another great civilized nation might, by careful study of native institutions and customs, do some good. A few of the old East India Company's servants such as Sir William Sleeman, Sir Henry Lawrence, Mr. A. O. Hume, Sir William Wedderburn, Mr. James Geddes, Meadows Taylor, Osborn, Evans Bell and others before and after them, served the people of India well and knew that our domination was but a transient incident in the long, long history of India's greatness. But this is not the case now and never was the rule. Yet, even if Anglo-Indian administrators were perfect paragons in their way, nothing could possibly make up for the terrible economic drawbacks which go hand in hand with our alien system. This I have never ceased to point out for more than forty years. British India has become a very poor country indeed under our management, until today it is the most terrible pauper warren that has ever been seen on the planet. We drain out of British India each year an amount equal to considerably more than £30,000,000 without commercial return; or 50 per cent. more than the total land taxation of all our provinces. This from a country whose agricultural population is already so poor that its annual production does not exceed 15s. a head! No matter what benefits we might confer in other directions—and having studied the subject carefully for nearly fifty years, I can detect extremely few—this drain of produce from the poverty-stricken ryots is a crime of the first magnitude.

### Attempted Reform Abandoned.

In 1879, Lord Salisbury, Lord Iddesleigh, Lord Cranbrook, Lord Beaconsfield, Mr. Edward Stanhope and Sir Louis Malet saw the truth of that contention, and entered upon a policy which contemplated the gradual stanching of this bleeding of India, and introduced measures into the House of Commons leading in that direction. These men were all Conservatives except Sir Louis Malet, the Permanent Under-Secretary of State for India, who was an extreme Radical. When owing to a great political change the whole plan was aban-

doned and the old abuses were granted another long lease of life, Sir Louis Malet said to me in despair: "Our only hope now of justice to India, Mr. Hyndman, is a revolution in England." That is, at the present time, my conviction too. For, since then, we have extracted from by far the poorest population in the whole world the enormous sum of £1,200,000,000 without commercial return, and we have actually borrowed of poverty-stricken India £150,000,000 to help to finance our war against the Germanic Powers. Just think what that means.

### India's Services to England.

Now consider India's services to England during the war, in return for all the ruin we have wrought; not only economic ruin, though that is the most frightful of all, but ruin of her art, her industries, her great and ancient learning. If I had been an Indian, as I am an Englishman, I should have made use of the difficulties of the foreign despots and oppressors to demand justice and freedom before I raised a finger, in their defence. That at least, India contributed a million of men to the armies of Great Britain and the Commonwealths. How they fought we know. We have just given representatives of the Indian forces a splendid welcome in London to acclaim their valor and steadfastness.

### India's Reward.

The Sikhs, the inhabitants of Umritsar, Lahore, and the Punjab generally, reconquered India for us in 1857-58, when we had to face the National Indian Rising, which we call the Mutiny. But for their aid we should have been driven out of Hindustan sixty-one years ago. They have served finely, too, during the war. Splendid soldiers they are. But the people generally are quite unarmed. They could not get up an armed revolt if they wished to do so. Yet these peaceful, innocent people have been stirred up to general protest by public meetings in their cities. What have we done? We have hanged them right and left, we have sent many into penal servitude without trial, we have flogged others naked through the streets. Our own atrocities stand almost on a level with the outrages committed by Germany in Belgium, France and Poland. Worst of all, we bombed unarmed crowds from aeroplanes; and aeroplanes for punitive service are being rapidly constructed throughout India. Moreover, the law is being "strengthened" against public speech, freedom of the press and free association. And for this infamy we Englishmen at home are responsible. It is all committed in our name, and claimed to be carried out on our behalf.

### Montagu's Hypocritical Muddle.

Under such circumstances it is not worth while to criticize at any length Mr. Montagu's contemptible measure, which has already been read a second time in the House of Commons. It re-

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