

THE ROYAL TITLES BILL: PUBLIC OPINION  
IN THE UNITED KINGDOM, INDIA AND CANADA

by

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## **ABSTRACT**

In the eighteen forties the idea of a special title for India had been considered privately by Ellenborough and publicly by Disraeli. When in 1876 the Queen decided to assume the title "Empress", Disraeli used his parliamentary majority to secure the passage of the Bill. Although a new title for the Queen was considered necessary, the title "Empress" was unpopular in the United Kingdom but acceptable in Canada as the new title for India. In India opinion was hesitant at first but when it became evident that the title was not accompanied by any reforms there was protest against it among the intellectuals.

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## PREFACE

This thesis is an attempt to explain the origin of the Royal Titles Bill, the reason for its being introduced in 1876, and its effect on public opinion in the United Kingdom, India and Canada; the sections of the British empire which might conceivably aspire to imperial status. It should be of interest from three points of view, as a consideration of an aspect of Anglo-Indian relations, as an examination of the value and limitations of the use of symbols in the art of government, and as a study of public attitudes towards the British crown in an age of rising imperialism. Opinion in other parts of the empire would have been of interest, but it was necessary to limit this study, and the imperial title did not really create for smaller and unfederated colonies a special problem in their relationship with the crown.

While there is a valuable and increasing body of literature on the constitutional, economic and administrative history of India, there is no major study of the manner in which the British rule was presented to its Indian subjects and to the world. This thesis is an effort to supply a part of that deficiency, by offering a study of what was perhaps the most ambitious effort to impress Indian and world opinion with the permanence and magnificence of the British raj.

It is with deep respect that I record the debt I owe to Professor H. Senior, under whose guidance and supervision this thesis took

shape. His sympathetic encouragement and keen interest at every step in the progress of this work was of great inspiration and support to the writer. For helpful advice and valuable criticism, I am also indebted to Professor P.D. Marshall, Professor J.I. Cooper, and Professor M. Maxwell of the Department of History, and to Professor C.J. Adams of the Institute of Islamic Studies.

The scope of this thesis presented the writer with the obvious difficulty of procuring pertinent research material which also involved extensive travelling to various institutions and libraries in North America and England. In Montreal, the writer was much assisted by the kind and willing co-operation of the Redpath Library staff, and in particular by the inter-library loan department, where Mrs. J. Symansky was of invaluable help. Also, in Montreal, the writer wishes to acknowledge the co-operation of the library staffs at Sir George Williams University, the Fraser-Hickson Institute, the Bibliothèque de la Ville de Montréal, and the Bibliothèque Nationale du Québec.

The writer wishes to make special mention of his gratitude for the assistance provided by the Public Archives of Canada, Ottawa, and the Ontario Provincial Archives, Toronto. The Public Library, Toronto, The University of Toronto Library, the McMaster University Library, Hamilton, and the library of The Daily Spectator, Hamilton, also deserve his thanks.

The writer also made extensive use of material available at the



Library of Congress, Washington, D. C.; New York Public Library, Columbia University Library, and the South Asia Regional Studies Library at the University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia. To those who facilitated availability of relevant research material at these institutions, he wishes to offer his sincere appreciation.

Research necessity also took the writer to London, England, where he consulted necessary material at the Institute of Historical Research, University of London, the British Museum, the British Museum Newspaper Library, Colindale, and the Hughenden Manor Archives. Of those who assisted him at these establishments, the writer wishes to make a special acknowledgement of gratitude to Miss Taylor of the Institute and Mrs. Tempest at Hughenden Manor.

This thesis is the outcome of an opportunity made available to me by the External Aid Office, Government of Canada, under the Commonwealth Scholarship Scheme. For the financial assistance thereby received, I wish to express my highest gratitude. To Professor Robert Vogel, Chairman, Department of History, I have the pleasure of expressing my most sincere respects and appreciation for his assistance in aiding the continuation of this thesis at a time when it was most needed. I also wish to express my deep appreciation to Mrs. E. Senior for her kind hospitality during the long hours of discussion with Professor Senior.

For the arduous task of proofreading, I owe thanks to Miss F. Khan, Mr. Tariq Ahmad Ali and Mr. Manuel Prutschi; and

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To the Board of Governors and to the principals (Mr. M. L. Charlesworth, 1962-66, and Lt. Col. A.H. Ibrahim, 1966 - ) of Lawrence College, Ghora Gali, Pakistan, I am sincerely indebted for the study leave so generously granted.

Last, but not least, with all devotion and affection, I accredit the culmination of this effort to the inspiration and patience of my dear wife.

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## GLOSSARY

crore	ten million; one hundred lakhs.
darbar	hall of audience, court, a levée.
lakh	one hundred thousand.
mofussil	the country (as distinguished from the town, rural areas); the subordinate divisions of a district.
mufti	a jurisconsult who notifies the decision of the (islamic) law, in, or respecting, cases submitted to him.
munsif	a just judge; an arbitrator; (in India) a subordinate judge.
naib	deputy, lieutenant, viceroy.
nazr	an offering; a gift or present (from an inferior to a superior).
qazi	a (muslim) judge or magistrate (who passes sentence in all cases of law, religious, moral, civil, and criminal).
rais	chiefs.
shahzada	the prince-royal.
sunnud	any deed or grant, etc. from one in authority.
tamasha	entertainment, exhibition, show, spectacle, jest.
zamindar	landlord, landed proprietor.

## CHAPTER I

### GENESIS OF THE ROYAL TITLES BILL

Men are governed as much by symbols as by constitutions, particularly in a society which has been essentially traditional and in which the majority of the people were for centuries necessarily illiterate. The Royal Titles Bill, passed in 1876, was an attempt to relate British sovereignty to Indian tradition in a manner which would be comprehensible to the Indian people and acceptable to British public opinion. This Act marks the climax of a long search for a suitable means of presenting British power in India to its subjects and to the world, which began with the rise of British paramountcy and decline of the Mughal empire. As this quest for an appropriate symbol for governing India involved the historic attitude of the subcontinent towards monarchy, it is necessary to consider the development of the Indian concept of monarchy as a preliminary to consideration of the efforts to adopt this institution to the needs of British rule.

#### A. Hindu concept of kingship

It is generally agreed by scholars of ancient Indian studies that a state of anarchy preceded the emergence of an organised

society in India.<sup>1</sup> Hindu kings were popularly considered to be divinely appointed except where they were divinities in their own right.<sup>2</sup> With Kautilya, the author of Arthashastra, kings occupied the positions of gods.<sup>3</sup> Hindu scriptures attached great importance to the office of kingship and considered it a requisite to the enjoyment of fuller life in society.

One should first have the king, then wife and afterwards wealth, for if there was no king, how could one enjoy wife and wealth.<sup>4</sup>

Although germs of a republican system existed in the form of village panchayats (councils), the common and predominant pattern of government in the hindu period was that of monarchy.<sup>5</sup> Religion has always exercised a dominant influence in shaping the life in hindu society and its entire structure after the vedic period revolved round the caste system which largely determined political organisation in hindu India.<sup>6</sup> The strict adherence of hindu society to the institu-

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<sup>1</sup> C.H. Philips (ed.), Politics and Society in India. New York 1962. pp. 14-5; A.L. Basham, The Wonder That Was India. London 1954. p. 81.

<sup>2</sup> Philips, op. cit. p. 15; A.S. Altekar, State and Government in Ancient India. Delhi 1958. pp. 89-95.

<sup>3</sup> Ibn Hasan, The Central Structure of the Mughal Empire. Oxford 1936. p. 59. Altekar, op. cit. p. 89.

<sup>4</sup> Santiparvan. LVII. 41. cit. I. Hasan. Ibid. p. 56.

<sup>5</sup> Beni Prasad, The Theory of Government in Ancient India. Allahabad 1917. p. 357. Philips, op. cit. p. 14, N.N. Law, Aspects of Ancient Indian Polity. Oxford 1921. p. 2.

<sup>6</sup> Percival Griffiths, Modern India. New York 1957. p. 31.

tion of caste eliminated the chances of development for any democratic system since the caste system denies the fundamental equality of all.

Moreover, monarchy was a political necessity as the common rivalries and feuds among the local chiefs and the frequent incursions from the northwest necessitated the establishment of strong kingdoms. Independent and ambitious rulers, motivated by greed and avarice and activated by a desire for pre-eminence among equals, launched into careers of conquest. The victorious chief was hailed as "Chakravartin"<sup>1</sup> and elaborate religious ceremonies like "Rajasuya" and "Asvamedha" were performed to celebrate the royal victories. The imperial titles and the religious ceremonies show that the idea of empire — a political institution superior to the kingdom, had existed in India since the vedic period, and during the historical period large empires emerged from time to time. This tendency towards more centralised governments and territorial empires grew considerably stronger by the sixth century B.C. and culminated with the Mauryan emperors who established the first Indian empire. However, after two centuries India was again submerged into chaos, which was followed by the further and more successful

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<sup>1</sup> Basham, op. cit. p. 83. Monier Williams explains "Chakravartin" as "a ruler, the wheels (cakra) of whose chariot roll everywhere without obstruction; emperor; sovereign of the world; ruler of a Cakra, i.e. country extending from sea to sea." cit. Law, op. cit. p. 16. Law also gives other imperial titles like Samraj, Adhiraja, Maharaja, Rajadhiraja, and Ekaraja. pp. 12-3.



imperial experiments of the Guptas.

The attributions of divinity in hindu kingship along with the elaborate ritual, cloaked the royal person in sanctity and strengthened the position of kingship, as the idea of universal monarchy became popular. Hindu sacred law had provided important checks on the absolute authority of the king but such limitations were not "formal".<sup>1</sup> A hindu king was, in theory at least, both master and a servant of the people and, after the emergence of universal empires, assumed absolute powers and became the source of all power in the state.

The Mauryan emperors had created a highly bureaucratic system of government. Through periodic tours of the empire and the large army of spies that they had maintained, they kept themselves well informed of the conditions and grievances of their subjects and also took remedial measures. The imperial Guptas established a vast empire and, besides military conquests, art and literature flourished under their imperial patronage. Their rule has often been called the golden age of hindu India. By the close of the fifth century A.D. the Gupta power declined and provincial governments under different dynasties assumed independence. Early in the seventh century again, Harsha, the last hindu emperor, created a vast empire but could not save India from sinking once again into the chaos of warring dynasties.

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<sup>1</sup> Charles Drekmeier, Kingship and Community in Early India. Stanford, California 1962. pp. 137-8.

## B. Emergence of muslim monarchy in India.

The advent of muslim rule in India left the existing political tradition intact, but infused it with new vigour and further advanced the process of unification. Although with the passage of time the interacting of the two civilizations helped produce new ideas and movements, which brought about a certain similarity of attitudes and practices, the new rulers interfered as little with the established pattern of society as they did with its political tradition. Styling themselves 'Sultan'<sup>1</sup> in the manner of Mahmud of Ghazna, these rulers extended their sway over a larger part of India making hindu rulers their feudatories.

Though foreign in origin and different in religion, the Delhi sultanate did not resemble the more theocratic muslim monarchies of North Africa and the Near East. It is true that a few of the Delhi sultans obtained formal recognition of their titles from the caliphs outside India but this was little more than a legal fiction. The sultans had maintained the secular nature of their empire in view of the large majority of non-muslims under their rule. Being conscious of the political and military dangers that their empire was beset with, both internally and externally, they could hardly afford

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<sup>1</sup> For details of its origin and other imperial titles see Sir T.E. Colebrooke's article entitled "On Imperial and Other Titles" in the Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society, ix. 1877, pp. 314-420.

to alienate their hindu subjects. Barani writes about sultan Alla-ud-Din that on becoming sultan he reached the conclusion that "polity and government are one thing and decrees of Islamic law are another. Royal commands belong to the Sultan, Islamic legal decrees rest upon the judgement of the Qazis and Muftis."<sup>1</sup>

As the fundamental structure and policies of the sultanate in India were not inspired or governed by the Quranic law and it did not function under the direction of muslim theologians, the personal faith of the rulers made little difference in their public policies. Otherwise the long duration of the muslim rule in India could not have been possible.<sup>2</sup> Moreover, the temporal authority of the caliphs at Baghdad was no more effective within their own territories.<sup>3</sup> The sultans ruled not as the upholders of a muslim ascendancy but in the manner of their predecessors following an indigenous imperial tradition.

Under Persian influences they accepted the concept of the divine right of kings, which received its full expression under Balban. As an advocate of Persian ideas, he modelled his court

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<sup>1</sup> H.M. Elliot and J. Dowson, History of India as Told By Its Own Historians. London 1867-1877. III. 183.

<sup>2</sup> M. Habib. The Medieval India Quarterly. Vol. III. cit. Tara Chand. History of Freedom Movement In India. Delhi 1961. 1. 128.

<sup>3</sup> S.M. Ikram, Muslim Civilization in India. New York 1964. p. 88.

after the Persian style, assumed the extra title of Zillullah (Shadow of God) and introduced Persian manners and court ceremonials. Such a concept, because of its similarity to that of the hindu rulers of the past,<sup>1</sup> fitted well into the Indian tradition. The sultans had adapted themselves to the conditions of the Indian society and their policies to the political needs and stability of their empire. It was no mean achievement on their part to have saved India from mongol invasions.<sup>2</sup> The vastness of their empire, its political situation and the fact that the sultans did not share the religion of the majority of their subjects, made a highly centralised and despotic government all but inevitable. Such despotic powers could only be exercised effectively by vigorous and strong rulers, and it is not surprising that the glories of the Delhi sultanate were the achievements of sultans like Iltutmush, Balban and Alla-ud-Din.

Further, in order to make their rule acceptable to the vast majority of their non-muslim subjects, the sultans had to use moderation in their policies. Except in a few instances where personal ambitions and pursuits of pleasure marked the imperial policies, the rule of the Delhi sultanate in general was a benevolent despotism. The large deeds of charity, numerous hospitals, caravan-serais, state kitchens for the poor, measures against

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<sup>1</sup> S.M. Jaffer, Some Cultural Aspects of Muslim Rule in India. Peshawar 1950. p. 6.

<sup>2</sup> P. Spear, India. A Modern History. Ann Arbor, The University of Michigan Press 1961. p. 108.

famine and instructions to the government officials at all levels regarding their public dealings show the deep interest which sultans had for their subjects. Alla-ud-Din's famous remarks to his Qazi testify such an attitude. He said:

Whatever I consider to be in the interest of government, and find to be the requirement of the time I order. I do not know what the Exalted God will do to me on the Day of Resurrection.<sup>1</sup>

Non-muslims were free to worship publicly in their own way. No illegal demands were made on their hindu subjects and as long as they did not conspire against the state they had nothing to fear. The dynastic changes during this period left the structure of society intact as they never touched the main streams of the social life of the people.<sup>2</sup> Hindus were employed in state services, some rising to be provincial governors<sup>3</sup> and hindu chiefs were virtually independent in their states if they accepted the suzerainty of the sultan and paid their tribute regularly. Perhaps the best evidence of their tolerance can be found in the hindu revival often referred to as the Bhakti movement. Nor did sultans impose their own culture

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<sup>1</sup> cit. Tara Chand, op. cit. p. 128.

<sup>2</sup> I. H. Qureshi, The Administration of the Delhi Sultanate. Delhi 1944. p. 218; also Spear, op. cit. p. 107.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. pp. 223-4.

on the non-muslim subjects but encouraged their own scholars to study and translate Sanskrit works into Persian. Economically the hindu subjects were better off under the sultanate than they were under hindu feudatories.<sup>1</sup> However enlightened some of the sultans and their policies were, it will perhaps be fair to say that the sultanate had not succeeded in creating a unity of feeling among all their subjects. They raised the status of monarchy in India but not the sanctity of the royal office, and the vast majority of the people did not regard the sultan as their sovereign.<sup>2</sup>

### C. The Mughals

It was under the Mughal empire, which emerged from two centuries of chaos following the decline of the sultanate, that the Indian imperial tradition found its fullest expression. Founded by Babur, the illustrious descendant of Amir Taimur and Changez Khan, the Mughal empire reached its greatest heights under his successors. Six of its early rulers who ever held sceptre are among the most gifted of any land.

With the advent of the Mughals the imperial title also under-

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid. p. 225.

<sup>2</sup> I . Hasan. op. cit. pp. 49-50.

went a change as Babur assumed the title 'Padishah' in place of 'Sultan'. The Mughals brought with them a new concept of kingship largely influenced by Iranian tradition. They did not recognize the authority of the muslim caliph as superior<sup>1</sup> to their own and refused him even the nominal allegiance shown by some of their predecessors. Coming from central Asia, Babur was influenced by the imperial tradition of both Iran and the Mongols, which were to be blended with the local tradition as it had evolved over the centuries.<sup>2</sup> The new concept was fully defined by Akbar's minister, Abul Fazl, who wrote:

Royalty is a light emanating from God and a ray from the Sun . . . modern language calls this light farr-i-izidi (the divine light) and the tongue of antiquity called it Kiyan Khawarah (the sublime halo). It is communicated by God to Kings without the intermediate assistance of anyone, and man in the presence of it bends the forehead of praise towards the ground of submission.<sup>3</sup>

The divine element in the Mughal concept was similar to that of the hindus and clearly not islamic. It was only under the later Abbasides that the assumption of high sounding religious titles<sup>4</sup> like "vice-regent of God" and the "Shadow of God on earth" was started

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<sup>1</sup> R.P. Tripathi, Some Aspects of Muslim Administration in India Allahabad 1959. p. 113.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. p. 145; also J.N. Sarkar, Mughal Administration. Patna 1920. p. 4.

<sup>3</sup> Ain-i-Akbari, cit. I. Hasan, op. cit. p. 59.

<sup>4</sup> S.A.Q. Hussaini, Administration Under the Mughals. Dacca 1952. pp. 28-9.

in order to compensate for their declining temporal power. Most of the Mughal emperors too used "Shadow of God on earth" with their title, but the concept of Mughal kingship and the muslim caliphate were fundamentally different. The caliphate was, in theory, based on the will of the muslim people, while the Mughal kingship was autocratic.<sup>1</sup> Mughals did not try to enforce islamic laws in India, however much of their personal conduct was guided according to islamic principles. They were essentially sovereigns of India and not mere rulers of their muslim subjects, and the policy of toleration started by Akbar was the keynote of their political system in India. Akbar, a keen student of Indian history and tradition, was largely influenced by the old hindu ideas, and regarded the royal power as a trust to be exercised in the interest and welfare of the people. Abul Fazl wrote:

Rule and power, sword and conquest are for shepherding and doing the work of watch and ward, and not for gathering treasures of gold and silver or decorating the throne and diadem.<sup>2</sup>

Mughal emperors, during the two centuries of their rule in India, sought to follow these ideals,<sup>3</sup> and their paternal attitude towards all their subjects was popular among both hindus and muslims. A Mughal emperor was the fountain of all honours, the source

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<sup>1</sup> Tripathi, op. cit. p. 139.

<sup>2</sup> Akbar Nama cit I. Hasan, op. cit. p. 58.

<sup>3</sup> S.R. Sharma, Mughal Government and Administration. Bombay 1951. pp. 36-7.



of all administrative power, and the supreme dispenser of justice in the country. The personality of the emperor was an important factor for the success of such a system and it is fair to say that, after Akbar, no emperor of Delhi ever occupied the imperial throne who was not the ablest among the contenders for succession. The existing conditions in India, at the advent of their rule, being far from satisfactory, demanded a strong hand to create order out of the prevailing chaos. Despotism was dictated by political and geographical forces and the necessity for this type of authority was generally understood by the rulers and the ruled.<sup>1</sup> The Mughals created a degree of political unity unknown to previous generations and it is evident that this could not be achieved through force alone. Indeed admiration and respect for their rule depended on their ability to reconcile the difference among the different religious groups subject to their rule. Abul Fazl wrote:

Kingship is a gift of God . . . . And on coming to exalted dignity if he do not inaugurate universal peace (toleration) and if he do not regard all conditions of humanity, and all sects of religion with the single eye of favour — and not bemoan some and bestemother others — he will not become fit for the exalted dignity.<sup>2</sup>

Through political unity they brought peace and by introducing common political and cultural institutions created a certain unity of

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<sup>1</sup> I. Hasan, op. cit. p. 43.

<sup>2</sup> Akbar Nama, cit. Tara Chand. op. cit. i. 129.

feeling among their subjects. These common institutions, titles and the court etiquettes were not confined to the Mughal empire alone but were largely imitated by the independent hindu states as well. All these led the people of India for the first time to realise the imperial grandeur of their sovereign domain.<sup>1</sup> The Mughals transformed the feudal state based on personal loyalty into a bureaucratic empire governed by laws, regulations and codes.<sup>2</sup> They combined awe and admiration for their rule among their subjects and thus raised the institution of monarchy and brought new meaning to the imperial tradition in India.<sup>3</sup> Luke Scrafton, the East India Company's president in Bengal in 1758, observed that until the invasion of Nadir Shah in 1739 "there was scarce a better administration in the world. The manufacturers, commerce, and agriculture flourished exceedingly; and none felt the hand of the oppression but those who were dangerous by their wealth and power."<sup>4</sup>

Mughals, from the beginning, were highly conscious of the difficulties that lay ahead. The Rajput chiefs, originally their arch enemies, were brought closer and became the strength of the Mughal power, and matrimonial alliances created greater understanding<sup>5</sup> which helped the non-muslim subjects identify themselves

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<sup>1</sup> Sarkar, op. cit. p. 66.

<sup>2</sup> Spear, op. cit. p. 133.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. p. 146.

<sup>4</sup> Luke Scrafton, Reflections on the Government of Indostan. London 1770. p. 213.

<sup>5</sup> Spear, op. cit. p. 132.

with the imperial power. Non-muslims occupied high offices and generally enjoyed "higher status" under the Mughal administration than Indians enjoyed under the British.<sup>1</sup> Even during the time of Aurangzeb, Mughal religious policy never exceeded the bounds normally imposed by the church establishments in the west<sup>2</sup> — and in India under their rule there was no counterpart of the revocation of the Edict of Nantes or of the excesses of the protestant ascendancy in Ireland. In fact under Aurangzeb there were more hindus holding higher positions than there were under Akbar.<sup>3</sup> The successors of Babur were largely products of the Indian soil and its traditions, directly "acting upon the people and reacted upon by them".<sup>4</sup>

Moreover, the glories of the Mughals were not confined to political and military affairs. With the Mughals began a new era of cultural achievements as art, painting, architecture and literature reached new heights under their patronage. Works of history, biography and poetry compiled under them are regarded as classics in the Indo-Persian literature which was further enriched by Persian translations of Sanskrit works. The Mughal empire in this respect

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<sup>1</sup> S.R. Sharma, The Religious Policy of the Mughal Emperors. London 1940. p. 101.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. p. 195.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. p. 111. There were 14 hindu mansabdars under Akbar as compared to 148 under Aurangzeb. Also S.M. Ikram, op.cit. p. 199.

<sup>4</sup> Col. G.B. Malleson, Native States of India. London 1875. p. 5.

can be favourably compared to the Bourbon monarchy in France.<sup>1</sup> Mughal emperors were either scholars of repute themselves or patrons of high scholarship. In 1641 Father Manrique estimated that there were 24,000 volumes in the Agra library. The long period of peace and prosperity under the Mughals was conducive to literary activity and their cultural achievements contributed to political stability. They gave new confidence to their subjects, produced greater political unity among the people and above all enhanced the prestige of the imperial house and brought it closer to the people. Muslims and non-muslims alike prided themselves in the Mughal emperor as "our Sovereign".<sup>2</sup>

The Mughals had no false notions of prestige, believing in authority based on universal affection and support. Seeking to achieve that ideal, they maintained a direct contact with their subjects in all parts of their empire by means of imperial reporters, directly responsible to the crown, who provided an effective check on the provincial authorities. Moreover, emperors arranged periodic tours of the empire which not only checked the independence and possible oppression by the governors but also brought the emperors in direct touch with their subjects. Their hunting expedi-

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<sup>1</sup> Ikram, op. cit. p. 238.

<sup>2</sup> M. L. Roy Choudhry, The State and Religion in Mughal India. Calcutta 1951. p. 333.

tions and visits to summer resorts were not merely pleasure trips but several other useful purposes were served as well.<sup>1</sup> The royal travels were always very elaborate and the entire court used to move with the emperor. Thus these occasions further provided the people with opportunities to see their sovereign in his imperial glory and splendour, as on such occasions durbars were held with the same care and decorum as in the imperial capital.<sup>2</sup> Their easy accessibility for their subjects was noted by foreign visitors to the imperial court.<sup>3</sup> Akbar had introduced the institution of Jharoka Darshan "to give the public" in the words of Abul Fazl, "a chance to appear before the King, and have free access to him without any obstacle or interference."<sup>4</sup> It was a shrewd move on Akbar's part and displays his thorough understanding of the popular mind. By such daily public appearances before vast multitudes, the Mughals made the people aware of the personality of the ruler and in so doing captured the imagination of the vast section of the people.<sup>5</sup> Diwan-i-Khas-o-Am, the popular court open to the public, in which the Mughal emperor heard petitions and transacted other state business, was also used

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<sup>1</sup> K.C. Mazumdar, Imperial Agra of the Mughals. Agra 1946. p. 30.

<sup>2</sup> Spear, op. cit. p. 147.

<sup>3</sup> I. Hasan, op. cit. p. 89.

<sup>4</sup> cit. Ibid. p. 68.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid. p. 87.

to the same end. These measures raised the institution of monarchy<sup>1</sup> in popular esteem and made Mughal emperors the supreme head, symbol and expression of the state.

#### D. British opinion and the later Mughals

The death of Aurangzeb was followed by political intrigues among the leading nobles as weak and incompetent rulers followed each other in quick succession on the throne of Delhi. Outlying provinces were neglected among plots and counterplots for political supremacy at the centre. Taking advantage of the prevailing instability the provincial governors became independent although long continuing to show nominal respect for the Mughal emperor. The Marathas, who had revolted against the Mughal authority under Aurangzeb, exploited the new situation and extended their power as far as Delhi by 1737, thus undermining the structure which received its death blow in 1739 with the invasion of Nadir Shah.

In this period of rapid decline, however, the magic of the Mughal name was still strong and was regarded as "almost sacred"<sup>2</sup> everywhere in the country. By the middle of the eighteenth century

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<sup>1</sup> Tripathi, op. cit. p. 144.

<sup>2</sup> H.G. Rawlinson, India. A Short Cultural History. London 1952. p. 354.

hereditary viceroalties had been established in almost all the major provinces of the Mughal empire outside Delhi. But the newly emerging powers invariably sought recognition of their authority from the Mughal emperor.<sup>1</sup> Every new chief tried to give a colour of legality to his newly acquired possession through a title from the Mughal authority. The Marathas, extending their influence further by 1758 to the Indus in the north and nearly to the extremity of the peninsula in the south, were posing a serious threat to the tottering fabric of the Mughal empire. Their dreams of paramountcy were, however, frustrated in 1761 when Ahmad Shah Abdali attacked from across the Indian borders and defeated them at Panipat.

Meanwhile foreign influence had been gaining in the peninsula and by the Battle of Plassey (1757) the East India Company, which had been continuously playing kingmaker, had become the king itself. Shortly after at Buxer, Shah Alam, the fugitive Mughal emperor, was defeated by the British and came under their protection. When his pleas for British help to regain the imperial throne remained unheeded, he sought help from the Marathas, and with their support he returned to Delhi in December 1771. The Marathas, though they had the real power and the Mughal emperor was no more than a puppet in their hands, maintained the legal fiction of the Mughal rule. It is not surprising that this combination of the Maratha

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid; also Ikram, op. cit. p. 261.

power and Mughal prestige was disturbing to the English, who were aware of the Mughal influence. Warren Hastings remarked:

The empire of the Mughals might be dead, the King of Delhi might be no more than the puppet, but — he was still the symbol of imperium, and that symbol, like its analogous symbol of the western empire at Rome, was still of value to any power aspiring to universal dominion. The heirs of Akbar still held in their palsied hands a "sovereignty universally acknowledged though the substance of it no longer exists" — they are still in the minds of countless millions the legitimate rulers of India.<sup>1</sup>

It was with the purpose of preserving this respect for the imperial house of Delhi that led some Indian and extra-Indian powers to plan a united front "to strengthen the position of the Mughal emperor"<sup>2</sup>, but which was frustrated and defeated by Lord Wellesley. The English counter-measures culminated in 1803 when Lord Lake captured Delhi. And thus the Mughal emperor, who, under Scindhia, "though a pensioner and sightless was still considered the fountain of honour throughout India, equally by the Hindus and Muslims, and a patent of nobility under whose seal was as

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<sup>1</sup> A.M. Davies, Warren Hastings. London 1935. pp. 400-1. Another contemporary, General Count De Boigne, a French general in the service of the Marathas during this period, wrote that "the respect of the race of Timur reigned so strongly that, although the whole of India had withdrawn itself from the Imperial authority, not a prince within its borders claimed sovereign rights; Scindhia shared the feeling, and Shah Alam was always seated on the Mughal throne, while all was done in his name." cit. H.G. Keene, Hindustan Under Free Lances. 1770-1820. London 1907. p. 44.

<sup>2</sup> S.M. Ikram, History of Muslim Civilization in India and Pakistan. Lahore, 1962. p. 366.



highly prized in remotest province of the Deccan as had been in the days of Aurangzeb"<sup>1</sup> passed finally under British protection. The imperial glory of the Mughals was lying in the dust. But even "with every extreme appearance of the misery"<sup>2</sup> in which Lord Lake found Shah Alam, Lord Wellesley "was happy to undertake protection of the Mughal and never considered supplanting it."<sup>3</sup> Lord Wellesley, though convinced of the British paramountcy, found it convenient to assure Shah Alam of "every demonstration of Respect"<sup>4</sup> on the part of the British government. He understood that the poverty and misery of the Mughal did not change the fact that the person and the institution was still honoured by the populace as in the days of Aurangzeb and that effective government of India could only be carried out in the name of the Mughals. Arthur Wellesley, the future duke of Wellington, later wrote:

Notwithstanding His Majesty's total deprivation of real power, almost every state and every class of people continue to acknowledge his nominal sovereignty. The current coin of every established power is struck in the name of Shah Alam. Princes and persons of the highest rank and family still bear the titles and display the insignia of rank which they or

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<sup>1</sup> J.C. Marshman, History of India. London 1867. II. 87.

<sup>2</sup> cit. Douglas Dewar and H.L. Garrett, "'Political Theory of the Indian Mutiny' — A Reply", Royal Historical Society, Transactions, Fourth Series, 1924, VII, p. 133.

<sup>3</sup> J.W. Kaye, A History of the Sepoy War in India. London 1870. II. 3.

<sup>4</sup> Wellesley to Shah Alam. July 27, 1803. cit. P. Spear, Twilight of the Mughals. Cambridge University Press. 1951. p. 35.

their ancestors derived from the throne of Delhi under the acknowledged authority of Shah Alam, and His Majesty is still considered to be the only fountain of similar honours.<sup>1</sup>

Though completely shorn of any real power, Shah Alam conferred a very lofty title<sup>2</sup> on Lord Lake and the latter's appreciation of the honour can be judged from the manner in which he addressed the Mughal emperor:

I am cordially disposed to render your Majesty every demonstration of my loyalty (Spear's italics) and attachment and I consider it to be a distinguished honour, as it is a peculiar privilege, to execute your Majesty's commands.<sup>3</sup>

Yet the usefulness of keeping the symbol of nominal authority was gradually losing its charm for the English as they consolidated their power. The imperial façade, undoubtedly useful in the past, was increasingly criticized as anachronistic, particularly by the East India Company officials, who, under the influence of utilitarianism, began to doubt the value of pageantry without power. Charles Metcalfe, as a young officer attached to the British mission in the Mughal court, although willing to pay respect to the Mughal emperor "due to his situation", was against pursuing a policy which

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<sup>1</sup> M. Martin (ed.) Wellesley's Dispatches, cit. Rawlinson. op. cit. p. 354.

<sup>2</sup> The title read: "Samsam-ad-dawla, Asghar-ul-Mulk, Khan Dowran Khan, General Lake Bahadur, futteh Jung: The sword of the state, the hero of the land, the lord of the age, and the victorious in war."

<sup>3</sup> Spear, op. cit. p. 35.

might give false hopes to the Mughal emperor. He wrote:

It destroys entirely the dignity which ought to be attached to him who represents the British Government, and who in reality is to govern at Delhi; and it raises . . . ideas of imperial power and sway which ought to be put to sleep for ever.<sup>1</sup>

The philosophical radical, James Mill, believed in an "arbitrary" and on the spot government for India whose interests were "identified with the interest of the country."<sup>2</sup> He wrote:

Instead of sending out a Governor-General to be recalled in a few years, why should we not constitute one of our Royal family Emperor of Hindustan, with hereditary succession?<sup>3</sup>

One Francis Armstrong, writing in 1812 under the pseudonym "Fingal", suggested placing "a British Prince upon the throne of Aurangzeb." This, the writer believed, "would unquestionably be altogether, one of the most popular measures that ever any king, regent or minister brought forward, in any kingdom upon earth."<sup>4</sup> He added:

. . . and by placing the dynasty of Brunswick upon the throne of India, a race of princes would arise in the East, who would look upon Britain as their parent stock; and this country, as a favoured nation

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<sup>1</sup> cit. Kaye, op. cit. p. 7.

<sup>2</sup> Edinburgh Review. April 1810. V. xvi. pp. 155-6; also cit. Beckles Wilson. Ledger and Sword. London 1903. ii. 424.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> "Fingal". A pamphlet entitled "Truth". London 1812. pp. 86-7.

would enjoy every advantage resulting from a fair free trade, without the expense and risk of defending such distant possessions.<sup>1</sup>

The British authorities were, however, cautious in dealing with the Mughal emperor. As late as 1829 when the British resident at Delhi made representations to the English government against the humiliating ceremonies which implied superiority of the Mughal over the Company, he was not only relieved of the control of the affairs of the royal palace but from the residency too.<sup>2</sup> Yet the desire to assert the British paramountcy in name as well as practice was becoming more and more pronounced. Metcalfe, in 1832, wrote to the governor-general "I have renounced my former allegiance to the House of Timur."<sup>3</sup> British governors-general, after Lord Hastings, refused to acknowledge the Mughal emperor as their superior and stopped presenting the Nazr although their subordinates maintained the practice till 1842-43, when Lord Ellenborough's secretaries made the last Nazrs.<sup>4</sup> Lord Ellenborough was indignant as the act "made Queen Victoria, in Eastern estimation at least, hold her Indian possessions as a mere feudatory and vassal of the Imperial house of Delhi."<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid. p. 87.

<sup>2</sup> Spear, op. cit. pp. 52-3, 56-7 and 77-8.

<sup>3</sup> C.T. Metcalfe to Bentinck, April 18, 1832. cit. Spear. op. cit. p. 51.

<sup>4</sup> Kaye, op. cit. ii, Appendix. pp. 661-3.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid. ii. p. 662.

With Ellenborough the change in the British attitude towards the Mughal emperor was complete. He not only believed in the British paramountcy but wanted it to be formally recognised in India. Explaining his views as to the future relation between the British power and the native states in 1843, he wrote:

It matters not whether our position as the paramount and controlling Power has been forced upon us by circumstances, or has been the settled object of our arms and policy. We, of the present day, must maintain what we find established; for to recede from that position once acquired would be to draw upon ourselves the hostility of many States, and to shake the confidence of all in the continuance of our military preponderance, by which alone all we have won, and can be preserved.<sup>1</sup>

At the same time he wrote to Peel:

Everything tends to consolidate the Empire, and to give an imperial character to our position. The name alone will be wanting. But my opinion remains unaltered, that the name is the keystone of the arch.<sup>2</sup>

A few months later, inviting his brother-in-law, Lord Hardinge, to join him as the Commander-in-Chief in India, Ellenborough expressed his imperial ideas more clearly. He wrote:

Does not this excite your ambition? It would be an operation of two years, which would require the most dextrous political management as well as military, but which well managed should give us the Punjab, Cashmere, and Peshawur, that is,

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<sup>1</sup> cit. Sir Algernon Law, India Under Lord Ellenborough. London 1926. pp. 92-3; also A.H. Imlah, Lord Ellenborough. Harvard Historical Studies. V. XLIII. Harvard University Press 1939. p. 157.

<sup>2</sup> C.S. Parker, Sir Robert Peel. London 1891-99. V. iii. 16. cit. Imlah, op. cit. p. 164.

everything within the mountains; and it should be terminated, in order to secure the whole, by the assumption of the Imperial title by the Queen. Without that there is nothing secure. We must give a national position to the Chiefs of India, who will all be ennobled in their own opinion by becoming the Feudatories of the Empire. There would then be something intelligible in our position here. As it is all is confusion.<sup>1</sup>

Ellenborough did not believe in maintaining the name of the Mughal emperor once the British supremacy had been fully established. He was the first British official of his rank and position in India to have asserted the need of an imperial title for the British sovereign. In a letter to Lord Wellesley, Ellenborough wrote:

I entertain the desire rather than the immediate design of inducing the Delhi family to leave the Palace there, and ultimately to depose the Imperial title, with a view to placing it by voluntary offer of the princes and chiefs of India upon the head of the Queen. The Palace at Delhi I would make at once a fortress and a Palace. It would be the residence of the Governor-General when in the upper provinces.

He added:

It appears to me to be necessary to look forward a title, and to consider under what system of government we can best preserve the empire we have won. My impression is that it is expedient to give to these princes a natural relation to the head of the government. They are at present in a false position constantly filling them with alarm.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid. pp. 29-30. cit. Imlah, op. cit. p. 164.

<sup>2</sup> cit. H.M. Durand. Life of Sir Henry Durand. London 1883. i. 84.

Ellenborough had misunderstood the Indian sentiment for the Mughals and underestimated the hold which their name and image still had on the Indian people. Although only the pageantry remained of the Mughal power, the absence of power had not weakened the place of the Mughal emperor in the affection of the people. It continued as a symbol of the past greatness of the Indian state and was venerated as a living tradition. As late as the first decade of the twentieth century in the interior of the country, public announcements were prefaced with the cry, "the world belongs to God, the country to the Padishah and administration to the Company Bahadur."<sup>1</sup>

Yet Ellenborough, who had been urging the transfer of Indian administration since he first became the president of the Board of Control (1828-30), remained convinced of the desirability of some imperial title for the British sovereign regarding India and wrote to the Queen:

Lord Ellenborough cannot but feel that the anomalous and unintelligible position of the local government of India excites great practical difficulties in our relations with native chiefs, who in an empire like ours have no natural place, and must be continually apprehensive of some design to invade their rights and to appropriate their territories. All these difficulties would be removed were your Majesty to become the nominal head of the empire. The princes and chiefs of India would be proud of their position as the feudatories of an empress; and some judicious measures calculated to gratify the feelings of a sensitive race, as well

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<sup>1</sup> Pakistan Historical Board, A History of the Freedom Movement. Karachi 1955. i. 33.

as to inspire just confidence in the intentions of their sovereign, would make the hereditary leaders of this great people cordially co-operate with the British Government in measures for the improvement of their subjects and of their dominions.<sup>1</sup>

Although there were obviously other influences such as Disraeli's Tancred, it is probable, as Sir Algernon Law suggests<sup>2</sup>, that Queen Victoria was influenced by rereading this letter in 1873 when Lord Colchester requested her permission to publish Lord Ellenborough's correspondence with her.

While Ellenborough was cherishing an imperial title for the Queen in India, a young politician was emerging in England who would become executor of his imperial designs. Ironically, Disraeli's first participation in Indian affairs in the House of Commons was as a critic of the expansionist and aggressive policy of Ellenborough. In a strong attack on the government policy in the Afghan war he called it "impolitic and unjust".<sup>3</sup> His speech, in the words of his biographer, displayed "knowledge and grasp" of the Indian situation.<sup>4</sup> Again, in 1846 when Lord Russell proposed to abolish the duties on sugar which had largely protected the grow-

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<sup>1</sup> Lord Ellenborough to Queen Victoria, January 18, 1843. cit. Lord Colchester (ed.), History of the Indian Administration of Lord Ellenborough. London 1874. pp. 64-5; also Imlah. op. cit. p. 170.

<sup>2</sup> Sir Algernon Law, op. cit. p. 59.

<sup>3</sup> Hansard. (Third ser.) LXVII. 172.

<sup>4</sup> W.F. Monypenny and G.E. Buckle, The Life of Benjamin Disraeli, New York 1929. i. 531. Hereafter referred to as Monypenny and Buckle.



ing industry in India, Disraeli opposed the government vehemently.<sup>1</sup> The speech was remarkably Disraelian in his approach to the Indian problems. To him England was not an insular country, but essentially a world power and an inheritor of world-culture. In this imperial design the Indian empire had a particular place and fascination for Disraeli. In 1847, in his novel Tancred, he distinctly expressed this idea when he made 'Fakredeen'<sup>2</sup> say to the young English duke:

Go back to England and arrange this . . . Let the Queen of England collect a great fleet, let her stow away all her treasure, bullion, gold plate, and precious arms; be accompanied by all her court and chief people, and transfer the seat of her Empire from London to Delhi. There she will find an immense empire ready made, a first rate army, and a large revenue . . . we will acknowledge the Empress of India as our Suzerain . . .<sup>3</sup>

Remote as it may seem, this expression reflected a vision, rooted in Disraeli's imagination, which manifested itself in many of his imperial policies in the seventies. It is no coincidence that the man who wrote this in 1847, twenty-nine years later, made Queen Victoria 'Empress of India' as his faith in "Imperium et Libertas" expressed in 1851 had not changed in 1879.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Hansard. (Third Ser.) LXXXVIII, 151-2.

<sup>2</sup> It is interesting to know that a Mughal prince of the same name was the heir apparent of the last Mughal emperor, Bahadur Shah. The prince died in 1856. Spear, op. cit. p. 58.

<sup>3</sup> Disraeli, Tancred. London 1847. p. 263.

<sup>4</sup> Edinburgh Review. 1882. vol. CLV. 557-8. "'The land of England', so he said in 1851, 'has achieved the union of those two qualities for combining which a Roman emperor was deified, Imperium et Libertas.' 'One of the greatest of Romans', he repeated in 1879, 'when asked what were his politics, replied, "Imperium et Libertas." That would not make a bad programme for a British Minister.'"

In 1853 when the charter of the East India Company, "a mere shadow of its former self",<sup>1</sup> came before parliament for renewal, the issue caused lengthy discussions both inside and outside parliament. It was widely demanded that the administration of India be entrusted to the crown. George Campbell, in a very comprehensive scheme to reorganize the entire system of government in India, emphasized the assumption of some imperial title by the Queen. He wrote:

We have succeeded to the Mogul, as the Mogul succeeded to the Turk, and we have lately attained such complete dominion in India as Aurangzeb at the very culminating point of Mogul power never possessed. But we have never claimed the Imperial rank; we have been content to appear as an upstart race, commencing by trade and ending by a strong but unlegitimatised dominion. We have dealt as on equal terms with the inferior feudatories of the Moguls, and they now yield us obedience, but no reverence. Yet we too have a Sovereign of greater power and more ancient prescription than the Great Mogul, and as much revered by her subjects. Why then have we not put our own idol in the place of the Mogul, and made the subjects of Her Majesty's subjects bow down and render allegiance to her? Why have we not installed her as Empress of the Indies, and the legitimate fountain of power and honour? We did not do so at first, nor could we have conveniently done so, but it is both proper and convenient that we should now do so.<sup>2</sup>

Disraeli was on the select committee appointed to enquire into the renewal of the Company's charter. J.C. Marshman stated before

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<sup>1</sup> Wilson, op. cit. ii. 399.

<sup>2</sup> George Campbell, India As It May Be. London 1853. pp. 62-3.

the committee that "If the name of the Crown were brought forward more prominently, it would certainly be highly advantageous."<sup>1</sup> J. Sullivan considered the idea of the Queen's assumption of a title for India and power of constituting one of her sons her hereditary viceroy "a very happy one." He added:

I think it would give a root and prestige to the government of India which it has not now. The government is now considered to be the government of a stranger . . . . The establishment of sovereign authority by the Queen assuming some particular title, or appointing one of the royal family hereditary viceroy, would be thoroughly understood by the people. They have a clear notion of what hereditary monarchy is, and they would be very much attached to it, and if the Queen were to intimate to the native princes that she had assumed the management of her own territories it would have a most happy effect upon their own allegiance, and wean them from the lingering attachment, which both Hindoos and Mohamedans still retain, to the government of the Mogul Emperors.<sup>2</sup>

These discussions had convinced Disraeli that "the time had come for more direct assumption of authority by the Crown and Parliament."<sup>3</sup> Disraeli's support for Bright against any hasty legislation<sup>4</sup> and his endorsement of the subsequent amendment proposed by Stanley<sup>5</sup> at Disraeli's own request,<sup>6</sup> brought strong criti-

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<sup>1</sup> Parliamentary Papers. 1852-53. Vol. XXVIII. p. 82.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. pp. 114-5.

<sup>3</sup> Monypenny and Buckle. i. 1326.

<sup>4</sup> Hansard (Third Ser.) CXXV. 66-8.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid. CXXVIII. 630.

<sup>6</sup> Disraeli to Lord Henry Lennox, November 7, 1857. cit. Monypenny and Buckle. i. 1501.

cism from his own party and the charge of an "understanding" and "combination" with the Manchester group.<sup>1</sup> In his speech on Stanley's amendment he particularly emphasized the need for centralizing the government responsibility in India. He declared:

Misgovernment — chronic misgovernment — cannot exist, in my opinion, unless the general scheme of administration has in it something essentially defective . . . I find that that government is cumbrous — that it is divided — that it is tardy, and deficient in that clear and complete responsibility which is the sole and essential source of all efficient governments.<sup>2</sup>

He was among a small group of members in parliament who took serious interest in Indian affairs and supported Indian as against the commercial and political interests. Neither the grumbling of his party nor written protest from Lord Derby prevented him from stating that the time had come for the English nation to realize the nature and extent of its responsibility in India.

The popular indifference towards India and its problems was rudely shaken in 1857 when the news of the 'Indian revolt' reached England. The inadequacy of the system provided by the Act of 1853, as had been pointed out by Disraeli, was generally recognised and strong popular demands for a direct control by the crown through parliament were voiced. Disraeli's attitude towards the Indian revolt shows an interesting and a realistic understanding of

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<sup>1</sup> Lord Derby to Disraeli, June 20, 1853. cit. Ibid. i. 1327.

<sup>2</sup> Hansard (Third Ser.), CXXVIII, 1042.

the problem. He was the first in parliament to have seriously questioned the credibility of the official claims that the revolt was not a serious one and was nothing more than a military rising. He observed:

Everything, however, is possible; every disaster is practicable, if there be an inefficient or negligent Government. It is to prevent such evils that I think the House of Commons is performing its highest duty, if it takes the earliest opportunity after the intelligence has arrived — intelligence which has produced great alarm in the capital of Her Majesty's empire — of inviting Her Majesty's Ministers frankly to express to Parliament what, in their opinion, is the cause of the great calamity that has occurred — and, above all, what are the means which they intend to take — and at once to take — in order to encounter the peril before us, and to prevent the evil consequences which may be apprehended.<sup>1</sup>

The Times, sharing the official optimism and ridiculing<sup>2</sup> those who saw the situation 'perilous' in the East, wrote:

Now that we have conquered India from the Indus to the frontiers of Siam it is our interest to establish in it a homogeneity which it has never before possessed . . . why, for instance, should there be a Mogul at Delhi, whose very existence, as we see in the present case, preserves the memory of what we should endeavour to obliterate? We would even hope that the death of Nizam may be the occasion of the Deccan being brought more completely under British sovereignty. We cannot now refuse our part or change our destiny. To retain power in India, we must sweep away every political establishment and every social usage which may prevent our influence from being universal and complete.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Hansard (Third Ser.), CXLVI. 540.

<sup>2</sup> The Times, June 30, 1857.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. June 29, 1857.

The name of the imperial Mughal was still so strong in Indian minds that the Indian soldiers proclaimed the titular and aged Bahadur Shah as the emperor of Hindustan. Almost all the rebel leaders declared their support for the Mughal ruler and as his naibs (deputies) acknowledged him their overlord. They unfurled the Mughal standard, issued coins in his name and even dated their proclamations according to the muslim calendar.<sup>1</sup> Disraeli's fears were soon confirmed as more information poured in from India. Calling it a "national revolt" he warned:

You ought at once, whether you receive news of success or of defeat, to tell the people of India that the relations between them and their real ruler and Sovereign Queen Victoria shall be drawn nearer. You must act upon the opinion of India on that subject immediately; and you can only act upon the opinion of Eastern nations through their imagination . . . You ought to issue a Royal Proclamation to the people of India, declaring that the Queen of England is not a Sovereign who will countenance the violation of treaties — that the Queen of England is not a Sovereign who will disturb the settlement of property — that the Queen of England is a Sovereign who will respect their laws, their usages, their customs, and, above all, their religion. Do this, and do this not in a corner, but in a mode and manner which will attract universal attention and excite the general hope of Hindostan, and you will do as much as all your fleets and armies can achieve.<sup>2</sup>

The speech is noteworthy for Disraeli's understanding of the Indian mind and sentiment. It was not intended "to overthrow a

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<sup>1</sup> S.D. Malik, unpublished thesis entitled "Mutiny, Revolution or Muslim Rebellion? British Public reactions towards the Indian crisis of 1857." McGill 1966. pp. 173-5.

<sup>2</sup> Hansard (Third Ser.), CXLVII. 479.

ministry but to save an empire."<sup>1</sup> It was meant to arouse national feeling to the real gravity of the Indian situation. It was his courage of conviction that even in the face of popular cries for vengeance all around him<sup>2</sup> he could stay above emotionalism. He was not affected by popular hysteria masquerading under the name of morality and protested against "meeting atrocities by atrocities".<sup>3</sup>

The Indian revolt had created serious doubts about the existing system of government for India. Disraeli blamed the policies of the home government for trouble in India and would not allow it to "make the Company a scapegoat."<sup>4</sup> At the opening of parliament, he believed, a general attack should be directed, not against the Company, but at the government.<sup>5</sup> The Palmerston administration introduced an India Bill stipulating the transfer of Indian government to the crown. Defending the new measure, Lord Palmerston declared:

Now, I believe there can be no doubt that, so far as the impression on the minds of the people of India is concerned, the name of the Sovereign of a great empire like this must be far more respected, far more calculated to produce moral and political impressions, than the name of a Company of merchants, however respectable and able they may be. We have to deal, in that country, with Princes, some

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid.

<sup>2</sup> Disraeli to Mrs. Brydges Williams, September 23, 1857. cit. Monypenny and Buckle. i. 1497.

<sup>3</sup> Speech at Newport Pagnell, September 30, 1857. The Times, October 1, 1857.

<sup>4</sup> Disraeli to Lord Henry Lennox, November 7, 1857. cit. Monypenny and Buckle. i. 1501.

<sup>5</sup> Disraeli to Lord Derby, November 18, 1857. cit. Ibid. i. 1502-04.

ruling independently and some in a state of modified dependence upon us, and with feudal chiefs proud of their position, cherishing traditionary recollections of a wide empire, and of great Sovereigns to whom their ancestors owed allegiance.<sup>1</sup>

About the same time Brigadier General John Jacob, with long service in India, opposed maintaining the descendants of the Mughals in Delhi and suggested in October 1857 that the Queen of England should formally assume the title of "Empress of India".<sup>2</sup> The India Bill, as introduced by the Palmerston government, failed to satisfy Disraeli. To him it was in India and not in England, as the proposed Bill provided, that the change was needed. He said:

... it is a wise policy to establish the name of the Queen in India, but if you want to establish the name of the Queen in India — if you want to transfer thither the authority of the natural functions of the Sovereign — it is in India you must commence the change. It is in India those changes must be effected that are necessary for the good government of India. And the alterations you must make in England are but the consequences of the revolution, I will call it, that must be made in India.<sup>3</sup>

Before the proposed Bill could proceed any further there came a change in government as a result of the unexpected defeat of the Palmerston government in early 1858 on the 'Conspiracy to Murder Bill'. This brought Lord Derby to the head of the new Conservative administration with Disraeli as Chancellor of the Exchequer and

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<sup>1</sup> Hansard (Third Ser.), CXLVIII. 1283.

<sup>2</sup> Captain Lewis Pelly (ed.), Views and Opinions of Brigadier General John Jacob. London 1858. p. 431.

<sup>3</sup> Hansard (Third Ser.), CXLVIII. 1706.



leader of the House. Soon a new India Bill, providing for a secretary of state to be assisted by a council, was introduced by the new government. General emphasis, as the constitution of the proposed council<sup>1</sup> would show, was on the Indian experience that its members were required to have. Disraeli particularly emphasised acquaintance with and regard for "the feelings of the native Princes".<sup>2</sup> The Bill, after long discussions, was finally passed in August 1858, and administration of India formally passed from the East India Company to the crown.

The interest and pains with which Disraeli defended and successfully carried the new Bill through parliament had led many to consider him the "favourite"<sup>3</sup> for the new viceroyalty in India. These long and exhaustive discussions on India further strengthened Disraeli's earlier views on the need to associate the name of the Queen with India and he wrote to the Queen:

It is, the Chancellor of the Exchequer really thinks, a wise and well-digested measure, ripe with the experience of the last five months of discussion; but it is only the ante-chamber of an imperial palace, and your Majesty would do well to deign to consider the steps which are now necessary to influence the opinions and affect the imagination of the Indian popula-

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid. CXLIX. 822-6.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. 282.

<sup>3</sup> Delane to W.H. Russell, 1858, cit. J.B. Atkins, The Life of Sir William Howard Russell. London, 1911. i. 342.

tions. The name of your Majesty ought to be impressed upon their native life. Royal Proclamations, Courts of Appeal in their own land, and other institutions, forms, and ceremonies, will tend to this great result.<sup>1</sup>

The need to give some imperial title to the Queen in India was generally felt and even seriously discussed both by the Liberals under Palmerston and the Conservatives under Lord Derby.<sup>2</sup> Disraeli had himself in 1858 "frequently discussed"<sup>3</sup> the subject with Lord Derby and Lord Ellenborough. The question was raised even in parliament when, during discussions on the India Bill, George Bowyer<sup>4</sup> observed that "the full advantage of the influence of the Queen's name over the Natives could not be obtained unless India were added to the style and title of the Crown."<sup>5</sup> But for "reasons of state" the proposal was considered "most inexpedient" and postponed.<sup>6</sup> The 'administrative abstraction', as the rule of the

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<sup>1</sup> Disraeli to Queen Victoria, June 24, 1858. The Letters of Queen Victoria. (ed.) A.C. Benson and Viscount Esher. London 1907. iii. 372-3.

<sup>2</sup> O.T. Burne, The Asiatic Quarterly Review. January - April 1887. V. iii. 12.

<sup>3</sup> Hansard (Third Ser.), CCXXVIII. 2036.

<sup>4</sup> Sir George Bowyer, 1811-83. Wrote valuable books on constitutional jurisprudence; entered parliament in 1852 as member for Dundalk which he represented till 1868; succeeded his father as baronet in 1860; reelected in the home-rule interest as member for Wexford, and retained that seat till 1880; was expelled from Reform Club in 1876 for his frequent voting against the Liberal party.

<sup>5</sup> Hansard. (Third Ser.) CLI. 2322-23.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid. CCXXVIII. 2036.

Company in India was called<sup>1</sup>, was not removed even after the direct assumption of authority by the crown after 1858. Subsequent governments in India constantly realised the need for providing this "practical necessity" in order to define the relations between the sovereign and her subjects in India. The matter was brought to a head in 1875-76 during the Prince of Wales' visit to India, when Lord Northbrook recommended<sup>2</sup> to the home government the need for removing the existing anomaly.

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<sup>1</sup> Burne, op. cit. p. 15.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid; also Lady Betty Balfour, The History of Lord Lytton's Indian Administration 1876-80. London 1899. pp. 106-7.

## CHAPTER II

### THE PRINCE OF WALES' VISIT TO INDIA

#### A. Decision to undertake the royal visit

The Prince of Wales' visit to India marks the first official<sup>1</sup> contact between the Indian people and British royalty. In one sense the Prince of Wales took over the Mughal practice of touring the provinces which had been lapsed in the eighteenth century. In another the royal tour might be considered the second major episode in the newly adopted practice of touring the overseas possessions which began with the Prince of Wales' visit to Canada in 1860. Clearly the failure or success of this enterprise would help determine the future role of the crown in Indian affairs. Consequently a consideration of British and Indian reaction to the royal visit is essential for an understanding of the problems raised by the passage of the Royal Titles Bill.

Francis Knollys, the Prince of Wales' secretary, wrote to

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<sup>1</sup> Earlier (December 22, 1869 to March 12, 1870) the duke of Edinburgh, the Prince of Wales' younger brother, had visited India as "the guest of the viceroy, Lord Mayo, and some of the ruling Princes". During his visit, the duke of Edinburgh was invested with the rank of "Knight Grand Commander of the Order of the Star of India." Sir Sidney Lee. King Edward VII. London 1925. i. 371. For details of the ceremony see The Times January 31, 1870. p. 5.

Henry Ponsonby, the Queen's secretary, that "the idea of this visit emanated entirely from the Prince of Wales"<sup>1</sup>; yet it is unlikely that this royal tour was undertaken entirely on the initiative of the young Prince. Although the Queen had reservations about the feasibility of the project in 1875, the idea seems to have originated in 1858 with the prince consort who "deeply cherished" a visit to the Indian empire by the Prince of Wales as part of his education.<sup>2</sup> Both Lord Canning, the viceroy of India (1856-62), and his successor, Lord Elgin, (1862-63), were consulted in this respect. In view of the age of the Prince and the disturbed political situation in India, as a result of the 'Indian Revolt', the idea did not materialize. By 1875 the advisability of a royal visit was discussed in the highest ranks of Anglo-Indian officialdom. Bartle Frere had for long cherished the desire that "Royalty should be seen in the flesh by the people of India."<sup>3</sup> Precedence for Frere's suggestion had been established by the duke of Edinburgh's visit in 1869-70, which Sir Henry Durand<sup>4</sup> described as "a visible reality to the dominion of

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<sup>1</sup> Royal Archives; T.6/18. cit. Philip Magnus. King Edward The Seventh. Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1967. p. 173.

<sup>2</sup> George Wheeler. India in 1875-76. The Visit of the Prince of Wales. London 1876. p. 1; also Lee, op. cit. i. 370; Grant Richards. Prince of Wales. London 1898. p. 95; James Macaulay. The Prince of Wales Speeches and Addresses (1863-1888). London 1889. pp. 180-1.

<sup>3</sup> John Martineau. Life and Correspondence of Sir Bartle Frere. London 1895. ii. 125-6.

<sup>4</sup> Sir Henry Marion Durand. 1812-71; joined Bengal Engineers 1828; agent to Central Indian States; foreign secretary in India 1861-65, member of the governor-general's council 1865-70; and lieutenant-governor of the Punjab 1870-71.

the crown. Hitherto it has lacked personality in India, and been more ideal than sensuous. The bona fide visit and sight of a Shahzada supplies the missing element and satisfies an Eastern craving."<sup>1</sup> The question of a state visit by royalty had been raised in the minds of some officials as a result of the private visit by the duke of Edinburgh. In the course of this informal visit the duke had been presented at the courts of several Indian princes and on his departure Lord Mayo requested him to "Tell the Prince of Wales how India has received you and what a wonderful country he will find here if he comes amongst us."<sup>2</sup> Lord Napier<sup>3</sup> wrote: "The event of the Prince's coming is a great one for our prestige in India. It is a want that has been unfulfilled since the time of the best Moguls. The shadow of it rests in the mind of the old Zamindar, who holds with pride the family sunnud given by Akbar."<sup>4</sup> Moreover Lord Northbrook, the viceroy of the day, had strongly favoured the idea. Disraeli, speaking in parliament, stated that Lord Northbrook was "deeply interested in the visit of the Prince, which he has approved from the first, and has ex-

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<sup>1</sup> Henry Durand to Lord Mayo. January 1, 1870. cit. Durand. op. cit. i. 405.

<sup>2</sup> George Wheeler. op. cit. pp. 1-2.

<sup>3</sup> Lord Napier of Magdala. 1811-1890. commander-in-chief in India 1870-76.

<sup>4</sup> cit. Durand. op. cit. i. 126.

pressed, in language which I have read, that it would be of great benefit to this country and to India."<sup>1</sup>

The project was formally discussed by Lord Salisbury and the India council on March 16, 1875, and it was resolved that "the charges in connection with the proposed visit of His Royal Highness be borne by the revenue of India."<sup>2</sup> On March 17, he informed the Queen: "The Council thinks it will have a highly beneficial influence upon the minds of Your Majesty's subjects in that country generally and on the feudatory princes of Your Majesty's Empire in particular."<sup>3</sup> Lord Northbrook was directed, despite the Queen's warning against any "premature announcement",<sup>4</sup> to make public the proposed visit in India at the approaching durbar.<sup>5</sup> The viceroy informed Lord Salisbury that not only would the visit "be agreeable to H.R.H.; but also that it may produce political advantage."<sup>6</sup> Accordingly, satisfied with Lord Northbrook's assurance, he reported to the Queen that the proposed visit was "looked

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<sup>1</sup> Hansard (Third Ser.). CCXXV. 1147-48.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. 1494.

<sup>3</sup> cit. Lee. op. cit. i. 373.

<sup>4</sup> Queen Victoria to Lord Northbrook. May 17, 1875. George Earl Buckle, The Letters of Queen Victoria (Second Series). Toronto 1926. ii. 397-8. Hereafter referred to as Victoria's Letters.

<sup>5</sup> Lee. op. cit. i. 373.

<sup>6</sup> cit. ibid.

forward to in all parts of India with great enthusiasm".<sup>1</sup> Disraeli and Salisbury both, in the words of Disraeli's biographer, "recognised the immense political importance of establishing those personal relations between the British Throne and the princes and peoples of India, on which Disraeli had insisted at the time of the Mutiny."<sup>2</sup>

The proposed visit, however, posed certain problems which had to be solved before an official announcement could be made. In fact on June 3, 1875 Disraeli refused<sup>3</sup> to answer when asked in parliament to confirm the rumour about the Prince's intended visit to India. The Queen herself did not show much enthusiasm for the project as it was "quite against"<sup>4</sup> her desire and moreover she did not feel any particular need for such a visit as she was "not alarmed about India".<sup>5</sup> Nevertheless, the Queen admitted the likelihood of some political advantage thereby;<sup>6</sup> her objections were finally overcome,<sup>7</sup> although she 'died hard'.<sup>8</sup> The visit further involved the

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<sup>1</sup> Lord Salisbury to Queen Victoria. May 3, 1875. Victoria's Letters. ii. 389.

<sup>2</sup> Monypenny and Buckle. ii. 768.

<sup>3</sup> Hansard (Third Ser.). CCXXIV. 1356.

<sup>4</sup> Queen Victoria to the German Crown Princess. June 8, 1875. Victoria's Letters. ii. 406.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> Queen Victoria to Lord Northbrook. May 17, 1875. Ibid. ii. 397.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> Disraeli to Lady Bradford. May 19, 1875. Marquis of Zetland. (ed.) The Letters of Disraeli to Lady Chesterfield and Lady Bradford. New York 1929. i. 314.



delicate problem of the capacity in which the Prince of Wales was to visit the Queen's eastern dependency and the relation in which he was to stand to the viceroy of India who was the official representative of the crown. The Queen and her viceroy were of the view that if the Prince visited India as the Queen's representative it would prejudice the viceroy's position in the eyes of the Indian people. But Lord Salisbury had a different view and wrote to the Queen's secretary:

For nearly a century the Governor-General was nominally responsible not to the Queen, but to a Company of Merchants. The natives of India learnt during that time to think that his was the highest personal authority with which they had to deal: and the lesson is one which they have been slow to unlearn. There is therefore some real danger that if the Queen's own Son is put in a position of obvious inferiority, the true relation of the Viceroy of the Queen will be misunderstood or ignored. I fear that in such a case the prestige of her Majesty's Dynasty will be lowered.<sup>1</sup>

The issue was, however, amicably settled at the suggestion of Lord Northbrook's private secretary, Captain Evelyn Baring.<sup>2</sup> It was agreed that the Prince should preside over a special Chapter of the Star of India<sup>3</sup> where the viceroy would announce a special commission from the Queen to this effect. Thus the Prince was to visit

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<sup>1</sup> Lord Salisbury to Henry Ponsonby. July 3, 1875. cit. Lee. op. cit. i. 375.

<sup>2</sup> Later Lord Cromer.

<sup>3</sup> The Most Exalted Order of the Star of India was instituted in 1861 and was enlarged in 1866 to consist of "Knights Grand Commanders, Knights Commanders and Companions". Encyclopedia Britannica (1966 edition). v. 13. 407.

India "not as representative of Her Majesty but as the Heir Apparent of Her Crown".<sup>1</sup> Lord Salisbury further assured the viceroy that the arrangement would in no way lower his position in India. He informed him that the political mission of the Prince would be to "convey to the chiefs and princes who rule in India under the paramount protection of the Queen of England the assurance of those gracious sentiments which have ever been entertained towards them by His Royal House."<sup>2</sup>

The problem of protocol overcome, there was still the question of expenditure for which a parliamentary vote was required. The visit to India entailed a certain amount of magnificence largely dispensed with on previous journeys;<sup>3</sup> it was bound to create embarrassment for Disraeli's government. Yet he accepted responsibility for the visit because of his expectation that the visit would lead to positive political results for England. The official announcement was made in parliament on July 8, 1875 by the prime minister when he proposed<sup>4</sup> that the admiralty should be empowered to spend £52,000 on the transportation of the Prince to and from India, and that a sum

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<sup>1</sup> Hansard (Third Ser.). CCXXV. 1148.

<sup>2</sup> Lord Salisbury's dispatch to the governor-general dated August 19, 1875. Annual Register 1875. Appendix vi. pp. 217-8; also Lee. op. cit. i. 376.

<sup>3</sup> In 1860 the Prince of Wales' visit to Canada was paid for by the Canadian government. Similarly the duke of Edinburgh's visit to India in 1869-70 was financed by the viceroy and the princes of India.

<sup>4</sup> Hansard (Third Ser.). CCXXV. 1145.

of £60,000 be voted for the Prince's personal expenses including presents to be made to the native princes. He further moved that the Indian treasury should make a special grant of £30,000 to the viceroy for the Prince's entertainment in India. Disraeli believed that the royal visit to India should be conducted in a befitting manner in order to impress the Indian mind. At a later stage in the debate in parliament he stated that "such a visit would create such display and excitement which had not been equalled since the days of the Great Mogul Sovereigns."<sup>1</sup>

Disraeli's announcement on the proposed visit was generally received with favour in parliament. Lord Hartington, as leader of the Liberal Opposition, supported the proposal and wanted the arrangements for the Prince's visit to be made on a "sufficiently liberal scale."<sup>2</sup> He, however, opposed the idea that India should be made to pay any part of the expenses "excepting what would unavoidably fall upon"<sup>3</sup> the Indian finances. John Bright fully supported the measure and believed that the Heir Apparent of a vast empire "should go there at least in such a state as will commend itself to the ideas, the sympathies, and the wishes of the population he is about to see."<sup>4</sup> He added:

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid. 1491-92.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. 1150.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. 1519.

... although it is impossible to say and believe that the journey of the Prince of Wales will turn the current of feeling on great political questions in the minds of the Natives of India, yet I think that in all probability by his conduct... he may leave behind him memories that may be of exceeding value, and equal in influence to the greatest measures of State policy which any Government could propound.<sup>1</sup>

Henry Fawcett, welcoming the announcement, firmly emphasized that no part of the expenses to be incurred should be borne by India and that England should entirely pay for the royal visit.<sup>2</sup> His amendment to the same effect was defeated by 379 to 67 votes.<sup>3</sup> The parliamentary sanction was not obtained, however, without earnest protests from some radical members representing working class constituencies.<sup>4</sup> Alexander Macdonald from Stafford, known as "the working Men's member of Parliament",<sup>5</sup> was the chief spokesman for the critics of the proposed visit. He feared that "votes of this character tend more to create disloyalty than all the republicanism, internationalism, or any other "ism" put together."<sup>6</sup> He was supported, among others, by P.A. Taylor, a radical member from

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid. 1520-1.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. 1151-2.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. 1153-7; 1502-7; 1509-26.

<sup>5</sup> Frederic Boase. Modern English Biography. London 1965. ii. 580-1.

<sup>6</sup> Hansard (Third Ser.). CCXXV. 1153.

Leicester and Thomas Burt from Morpeth. Another member, Sir Wilfrid Lawson, a radical liberal from Carlisle, frankly admitted: "We took India — got possession of it by a mixture of force and fraud — we hold it now by force; but we can only continue to hold it by fair and honest dealing and not by indulging in costly shams."<sup>1</sup> In the committee, however, Alexander Macdonald's motion against the proposed supply was defeated by 350 to 16 votes.<sup>2</sup>

The Prince of Wales and his friends, on the other hand, were indignant at the parsimony of the grant.<sup>3</sup> Bartle Frere,<sup>4</sup> responsible for the management and conduct of the royal visit, considered the grant "inadequate",<sup>5</sup> and believed that unless the amount was doubled "there will be risk that the thing will be shabbily and discredibly done."<sup>6</sup> Sir George Clerk,<sup>7</sup> an experienced Anglo-Indian official,

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid. 1505.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. 1526.

<sup>3</sup> Disraeli to Lady Bradford. July 19, 1875. Zetland. op. cit. i. 340; and again October 16, 1875. i. 380.

<sup>4</sup> Sir Henry Bartle Edward Frere, 1815-1884; entered Indian Civil Service 1834; resident at Sattara 1847; member Calcutta council 1859; governor of Bombay 1862-67; member council of India 1866; made baronet May 19, 1876; governor of Cape of Good Hope 1877-80.

<sup>5</sup> Martineau. op. cit. ii. 127.

<sup>6</sup> Frere to Corry. July 3, 1875. Hughenden Papers. B/XII/D/56.

<sup>7</sup> Sir George Russell Clerk, 1800-89; entered service of the East India Company in 1817 as a writer; assistant to the secretary to the government in secret and political department; assistant to the resident at Delhi 1827; political agent to Ambala, British envoy at Lahore 1831; governor of Bombay 1846-48; permanent under-secretary to the India Board; secretary to the India Board 1857; permanent under-secretary of state for India 1858; governor of Bombay 1860-62; member of the India Council 1863.

remarked:

Cost is a matter which ought to be regulated on an estimate of expenditure on no lavish scale, but requisite for effecting the important object handsomely . . . I am in the habit of never disbursing the public money of India unless convinced that its people, high and low, would go with me. On this occasion I would provide one hundred thousand pounds from the Treasury of India.<sup>1</sup>

The inadequacy of the proposed sum was noted in The Times,<sup>2</sup> but Delane wrote privately to the Queen's secretary that "care should be taken that the sum granted should not be exceeded, as, if it were, and if a supplementary vote were asked for next year after the visit was over, it would produce the very worst effect."<sup>3</sup>

The general favourable view of the visit expressed in parliament was also echoed in the British press. The Times welcomed the "anxiously expected statement" and commented editorially:

The visit of the Heir of the English Crown to the Indian Empire is an event which can hardly fail to be of momentous importance to its history. It will bring India and Indian interests more closely home to English feeling than years of ordinary intercourse; it is a worthy homage to the noblest inheritance in the world by its future possessor; and it will entail incalculable consequences in the more vivid relations it will establish between English and Indian life.<sup>4</sup>

Further, considering the government supply for the royal visit "too moderate",<sup>5</sup> The Times stated that the British people "would

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<sup>1</sup> cit. Martineau. op. cit. ii. 127.

<sup>2</sup> The Times. July 10, 1875.

<sup>3</sup> cit. Lee. op. cit. i. 377.

<sup>4</sup> The Times. July 9, 1875.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

willingly trust the Government with as large a credit as it might think necessary to organize in the best style"<sup>1</sup> the historic visit to India. On the eve of the Prince's departure<sup>2</sup> for India The Times wrote:

Without laying undue stress on the political significance of his visit, it is impossible not to regard it as in some measure marking an epoch in the history of England and its relation to its Eastern dependencies. Nations, like individuals, are moved by feeling and sentiment no less than by reason; and though the Sovereign of England is not a ruler in the sense that Eastern nations understand the word, yet the personal presence of one who represents the visible unity of the British empire cannot be without a significant influence on the people of India.<sup>3</sup>

The liberal Manchester Guardian supported the measure wholeheartedly laying great stress on the "external observances" of the royal visit for which "we must be guided to a certain extent by consideration of the characters of the people whom we wish to address through their senses and imagination."<sup>4</sup> Reflecting on the sentiment of the working classes, the newspaper believed that if the importance of the visit was brought home to them they would willingly approve that it be conducted in a befitting manner.<sup>5</sup> The newspaper severely censured the "feeble" radical opposition for their

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid. July 16, 1875.

<sup>2</sup> The Prince of Wales left England for India on October 12, 1875.

<sup>3</sup> The Times. October 11, 1875.

<sup>4</sup> The Manchester Guardian. July 10, 1875.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

"mischievous attempts . . . to stir the embers of class strife."<sup>1</sup>

Speaking in the name of the working classes, The Manchester Guardian gave assurances that "the workmen as a body share the pride and interest of every other class in the institutions and grandeur of the empire" and would share the rejoicings with other people if the royal visit would "strengthen the bond between England and her Eastern dependency."<sup>2</sup> The newspaper believed that the proposed visit would be politically beneficial as the princes and people of India would "be moved by direct contact with the Heir of the EMPRESS of India."<sup>3</sup> As to the government estimate of expenditure on the royal visit the newspaper considered it "less than was generally expected."<sup>4</sup> Further defending the government proposal to charge the Indian revenue partially for the Prince's entertainment in India, The Manchester Guardian offered justification that, "If any advantage accrues from the existence of the monarchy, it is an advantage which India shares with us; and as she makes no direct contribution to the maintenance of that institution, where is the hardship of charging her revenues on an occasion like this with something under one fourth of the total cost involved."<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid. July 17, 1875.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. The use of the title "EMPRESS of India" is interesting as the same newspaper, a few months later, was to be among the chief critics of the title when formally proposed by Disraeli.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. July 10, 1875.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid. July 17, 1875.



The Saturday Review remarked that "even on the most prosaic and moderate estimate" the royal visit was "an event of national importance."<sup>1</sup> It encouraged the government to provide all the necessary expenditure "consistent with the dignity, not of the Prince, but of the country which he represents."<sup>2</sup> The Prince would, The Saturday Review believed, render the greatest service to his subjects in England by creating in them a new interest in the affairs of India "which has hitherto not received the attention it deserves."<sup>3</sup> It also shared the general expectations of political effects the royal visit would have on the Indian princes and nobles who would "feel the delight of seeing, and being seen by, one who is to be not only a great king, but for all purposes with which they are concerned, the greatest king in the world."<sup>4</sup> The Illustrated London News, welcoming the proposed visit, felt that the idea had "evoked from the British public an assenting response."<sup>5</sup> The newspaper considered the government proposals to the parliament "considerate, moderate and politically wise".<sup>6</sup> It added assent to the impressions of The Saturday Review that the royal visit would stimulate among the

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<sup>1</sup> The Saturday Review. July 10, 1875. p. 35.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. October 16, 1875. p. 476.

<sup>5</sup> The Illustrated London News. July 17, 1875. p. 50.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

English people considerable attention towards India hitherto denied to it.<sup>1</sup>

Addresses were presented to the Prince by various public bodies<sup>2</sup> on the eve of his departure from England and special services were held in churches. Dean Stanley, in a special sermon at Westminster Abbey, spoke thus: "The first heir to the English throne who has ever visited the Indian Empire starts soon on his journey to that distant region, which the greatest of his ancestors, Alfred the Great, one thousand years ago, so ardently longed to explore, and which now forms the most precious jewel in the British Crown."<sup>3</sup> Further, the Dean held the royal visit a "mission of good will, of duty, and of hope".<sup>4</sup> Thus among such feelings of national approval and popular support, the Prince departed from England on October 12, 1875 and arrived at Bombay on November 8, 1875.

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid.

<sup>2</sup> e.g. The London corporation and the city council of Dover. The Manchester Guardian. October 11, 1875; also cit. H.C. Burdett. Prince, Princess and People. London 1889. pp. 128-9.

<sup>3</sup> The Times. October 11, 1875; The Manchester Guardian. October 11, 1875; also Burdett. op. cit. p. 128.

<sup>4</sup> The Times. October 11, 1875.

## B. Results of the royal visit

During his five month stay in India the Prince visited various parts of the country, courts of certain native princes, held durbars, reviewed the Indian armies and undertook many hunting expeditions.<sup>1</sup> The official letters and reports on the progress of the royal visit written to the Queen and government officials gave a highly favourable impression of the 'success' and the 'beneficial' results produced, particularly on the native princes. Bartle Frere wrote to Sir Stafford Northcote that the people of India "according to their myriad superstitions, looked to his advent, some with hope and affection, most with intense satisfaction, but all with an indescribable amount of awe which fascinates and attracts them in a way we can hardly realise."<sup>2</sup> Writing to Ponsonby, he exulted in the feeling that "Nothing could exceed the enthusiasm of the Prince's reception."<sup>3</sup> In fact he was so much preoccupied with his belief concerning the usefulness of the "results already apparent" that he considered them to have been "cheaply purchased by the cost of the whole tour."<sup>4</sup> Steeped in imperialistic

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<sup>1</sup> For details of the royal progress through India see W.H. Russell. The Prince of Wales' Tour of India: A Diary in India. London 1877.

<sup>2</sup> Bartle Frere to Sir Stafford Northcote. November 7, 1875. cit. Martineau. op. cit. ii. 137.

<sup>3</sup> Bartle Frere to Ponsonby. November 14, 1875. cit. Ibid. ii. 138.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

sentiment, he felt that the Prince's presence, particularly among the native princes had created an excitement "of great importance for the feeling of the upper classes towards our Government is not now always what could be wished."<sup>1</sup> Continuing in the same vein, he reported to the Queen a few days later that the visit "had the most marked and powerful effect in reconciling all classes to a complete change of rulers . . ."<sup>2</sup> The viceroy, Lord Northbrook, who had been appointed to the office in 1872 by the Liberal administration under Gladstone, though less unrestrained than Bartle Frere, expressed his "greatest satisfaction" over the manner in which the Prince was received at Bombay and observed that there was "certainly a greater appearance of cordiality towards British rule among the people of Bombay than Lord Northbrook had seen in other parts of India . . ."<sup>3</sup> At Calcutta the Prince presided over a special Chapter of the Star of India which "passed off well"<sup>4</sup> but it was at Delhi, which still had the "halo of greatness and power"<sup>5</sup> around its name, that the Prince reviewed 18,000 British Indian troops. Recounting his impressions of the event in a letter to the

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<sup>1</sup> cit. Lee. op. cit. i. 383.

<sup>2</sup> cit. ibid. i. 384.

<sup>3</sup> Lord Northbrook to Queen Victoria. November 13, 1875. Victoria's Letters. i. 431.

<sup>4</sup> Lord Northbrook to Queen Victoria. January 7, 1876. cit. Lee. op. cit. i. 387.

<sup>5</sup> Fraser's Magazine. March 1877. Vol. XV. 285.

Queen, Lord Napier, the commander-in-chief in India, added that "H. R. H. 's manner and bearing have realised their idea of a prince: they have long been without one of their own race worthy of the name, and during more than a century have been subject to an indefinite authority which they could never understand; now they are prepared to receive with loyalty and affection the Prince whom Your Majesty has sent them."<sup>1</sup> Thus the manner of reception accorded to the Prince and the visible impression he made on the Indian nobility, as reported by the Anglo-Indian officials, was most gratifying to the British government. In conveying with much satisfaction the response of the chiefs to the Queen, Bartle Frere interpreted in their reception the expressed sentiment of having "seen in reality of that of which before we had only symbols and representatives. That which was only an abstraction before is now to us visible and tangible reality."<sup>2</sup> To Henry Daly,<sup>3</sup> the viceroy's agent in central India, the effect of the royal visit on the local chiefs appeared "miraculous". Writing of the same to the viceroy, he felt that "a sentiment in their feudalism . . . has been touched. Nobody could

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<sup>1</sup> Lord Napier to Queen Victoria. January 28, 1876. cit. Lee. op. cit. i. 388.

<sup>2</sup> Bartle Frere to Queen Victoria. February 10, 1876. cit. Ibid. i. 393.

<sup>3</sup> Sir Henry Dermot Daly. 1823-1895. Indian Army Service, agent to the governor-general for central India 1871-81.

foresee this result, but it has been happy and the mark will remain . . . Englishmen can hardly understand the feelings with which the chiefs of ancient Houses regard the Queen's Son with the Royal Standard."<sup>1</sup> Whether this was truly the general Indian sentiment regarding the visit or merely the inflated impression of the British officials in India, based on the spectacle of pomp and show lavished by the princes with a certain abjectness towards the royal visitor, remains a matter of further question.

The announcement of the royal visit was received with mixed feelings in India. Most of the Indian newspapers were initially satisfied as, they thought, it would provide them with an opportunity to make their grievances known directly to the Heir Apparent of the British crown. They fervently hoped that a personal acquaintance with their future sovereign would bring suitable and swift remedies for their problems which were popularly voiced in the native newspapers as noted by Monier Williams.<sup>2</sup> Speaking about the educated Indians he wrote:

When I have enquired of such men: what are your grievances? What does India want which India has not got? 'We want,' they have replied, 'complete social and political equality; we want admission to the highest executive offices; we want a more economical government; we want a more permanent and moderate settlement of the land-tax; we want

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<sup>1</sup> cit. Lee. op. cit. i. 393.

<sup>2</sup> Sir Monier Monier Williams. 1819-1899. A renowned Sanskrit scholar.

less tedious and costly litigation; we want power of sending a few representatives to the House of Commons; we want a certain number of covenanted civil appointments to be competed for in this country.<sup>1</sup>

Some saw in the royal visit a potential change of policy towards India. The Sadharani, an extremist newspaper from Bengal, was gratified that "through the exertions of some leading men <sup>2</sup> in England, . . . the British Parliament is gradually made to take an increasing interest in India and her affairs."<sup>3</sup> It viewed the approaching visit as a proof of this growing interest and believed that the ensuing attention would in all likelihood be beneficial to India. The Indian reaction stemmed from two different sections of the native society, the nobility and the educated classes. So far as the princes were concerned the royal visit provided considerable excitement. They found in it an opportunity to display their wealth through the lavish receptions they arranged for the Prince. They vied with each other, as they had been doing through the ages, in displaying their loyalty to the paramount power in order to win favours <sup>from</sup> with it. The reaction of the educated classes as reflected in the newspapers aspired more towards the positive results of the Prince's visit to India, rather

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<sup>1</sup> Monier M. Williams. Modern India and the Indians. London, 1878. p. 240.

<sup>2</sup> Such as Henry Fawcett, Grant Duff, John Bright and Sir George Campbell.

<sup>3</sup> The Sadharani. Chinsurah weekly. September 12, 1875. Bengal Native Press Reports. (Hereafter referred to as Bengal Reports). no. 38 (1875) p. 4.

than an emphasis on grandeur and spectacle. It revealed a deep concern for the debilitating state of affairs resulting from the indifference of the paramount power. Some disapproved of the visit because of the immense sums of money, which they thought, would be spent on the royal receptions and which could advantageously be used to "increase the wealth and influence of the country."<sup>1</sup>

The general feeling of excitement and festivity prevailing among the native princes was, however, somewhat marred by a few unpleasant incidents of arrogance on the part of some Anglo-Indian officials which caused heart-burning, not only among certain chiefs, but provoked considerable criticism of their conduct from the native press as well. The Amrita Bazar Patrika, an influential weekly from Calcutta, drew the attention of the Indian government to the sad fact and asked for suitable steps to be taken to "remove the dissatisfaction of the native princes."<sup>2</sup>

To receive the Prince at Bombay on his arrival, besides the highest government officials, were more than forty<sup>3</sup> princes of India. The Nizam of Hyderabad, ruler of the largest state in India, did not attend the reception although "great measure had been exercised

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<sup>1</sup> The Amrita Bazar Patrika. Calcutta weekly. September 8, 1875. Bengal Reports no. 38. (1875) p. 2.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. November 11, 1875. Bengal Reports no. 47 (1875) p. 1. Similar views were expressed by various other newspapers; see Bengal Reports nos. 47 and 52 (1875).

<sup>3</sup> Annual Register. 1875. p. 113.



to make him come."<sup>1</sup> The fact of the matter was that the Nizam, who was only nine years old at the time of the royal visit, was not in good health and had been advised against travelling the long distance to Bombay. However, Mr. Saunders, the British resident at the Nizam's court, was not satisfied by the Nizam's explanation and reported to the Indian government that the Nizam purposely did not wish to attend as he considered himself "too great a prince to go to Bombay unless the Prince of Wales was coming in return to Hyderabad."<sup>2</sup> The situation was further aggravated by the Anglo-Indian press<sup>3</sup> which played up the whole issue in very derogatory terms casting serious aspersions on the loyalty of the Indian princes to the British crown. The unfair treatment of the Nizam was so obvious that even the Prince of Wales "deprecated" the official attitude. In view of the Nizam's tender age and sickly disposition, the Prince considered the journey from Hyderabad to Bombay by the Nizam "fraught with the greatest danger to his life." He approved of Sir Salar Jung,<sup>4</sup> who received him at Bombay with an impressive retinue, "a most proper representative of the Nizam."<sup>5</sup> Furthermore, the Nizam's agents in England, "Rogers Rock and Co.",

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<sup>1</sup> The Saturday Review. November 13, 1875.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> See North Western Provinces Native Press Reports (1875). pp. 436-64. (Hereafter referred to as N.W.P. Reports).

<sup>4</sup> Sir Salar Jung was the Nizam's prime minister.

<sup>5</sup> cit. Lee. op. cit. i. 397.

on his authority, refuted all rumours and upheld his inability to go to Bombay because of health reasons.<sup>1</sup> Colonel Yule, a former British resident at Hyderabad, also, on Sir Salar Jung's authority, published a strong contradiction and called the rumours of the Nizam's 'refusal' "preposterous".<sup>2</sup> He further regretted that the Prince of Wales did not visit Hyderabad, disclosing that "the reason for its avoidance by the sons of our Queen" was its "fanatical and turbulent population". It may be mentioned here that the duke of Sutherland, a member of the Prince's entourage, went to Hyderabad and was accorded a "magnificent reception".<sup>3</sup> The British resident was recalled in consequence of his obnoxious behaviour to the princes and people of Hyderabad.<sup>4</sup>

In India the affair provoked widespread condemnation of the government policy towards the Nizam. The Samachar of Calcutta, lamenting the government attitude, made known that the deep sorrow over the unworthy treatment of Sir Salar Jung's integrity by the government had led every native to question "whether it would not be better to appoint to the viceroyalty of India a member of the

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<sup>1</sup> The Times. October 30, 1875.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. September 11, 1875.

<sup>3</sup> Macmillans Magazine. Vol. XXXIV. 1876. M. Laing-Meason. "Sir Salar Jung and His Claims." p. 289.

<sup>4</sup> Disraeli to Queen Victoria. December 24, 1875. cit. Lee. op. cit. i. 399.

British royal family who would know how to behave towards native princes."<sup>1</sup> The Bharat Sangskarak from Twenty-four Parganahs, pointed it out as "another instance of the high-handedness and undue interference" of the British government in the local affairs of the native princes and asked the government to define its relationship with the princes clearly.<sup>2</sup> The Sulabha Samachar, an influential weekly from Calcutta, looked upon the issue of invitations to the native princes by government "more like serving summonses upon them than anything else" and felt that instead of promoting good relations between the English and Indians, as was expected of it, the Prince's visit would have the opposite effect.<sup>3</sup> The Vishwa Dutt, another weekly from Calcutta, accused the government of "gross indiscretion in its recent dealings with the Nizam" and felt that its uncalled for behaviour towards Sir Salar Jung had gravely offended the people of India who feared that the instance would give "an impetus to the already despotic power of the Residents at native courts."<sup>4</sup> The Akhbar-i-Alam, charging that the state rulers were

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<sup>1</sup> The Samachar. Calcutta weekly. November 29, 1875. Bengal Reports. no. 49 (1875). p. 1.

<sup>2</sup> The Bharat Sangskarak. Harinavi (Twenty-four Parganahs). December 3, 1875. Bengal Reports. no. 51 (1875). p. 1.

<sup>3</sup> The Sulabha Samachar. Calcutta weekly. November 30, 1875. Bengal Reports. no. 50 (1875). p. 2. The Dacca Prakash of December 6, 1875 also expressed its resentment. Bengal Reports. no. 50 (1875). p. 5.

<sup>4</sup> The Vishwa Dutt. Calcutta weekly. December 1, 1875. Bengal Reports. no. 50 (1875). pp. 2-3.

compelled to attend the official receptions against their will, failing which they would "like criminals, be punished for contempt for disobeying a summons", wondered what Indian ruler would be pleased at the royal visit if it entailed treatment in such a shameful manner.<sup>1</sup> A host of other native newspapers<sup>2</sup> criticised the government for its handling of the Nizam's affair and expressed strong resentment. There was, however, one newspaper in India which, not only supported the government's censure against the Nizam, but went so far as to suggest that Frere and the viceroy "should not permit their valuable trust to put his foot in the country of such Muhammadan traitors."<sup>3</sup> This opinion is understandable in view of the fact that the Kashi Patrika was the organ of the extremist hindu elements in Benares, the hot-bed of hindu fanaticism.

During his visit the Prince was loaded with extravagant presents by the native rulers which "far exceeded the value of those he made to them".<sup>4</sup> Despite official instructions to the native chiefs against making costly gifts to the Prince they "considerably exceeded the

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<sup>1</sup> The Akhbar-i-Alam. Lahore weekly. October 7, 1875. N.W.P. Reports (1875). p. 511.

<sup>2</sup> The Oudh Akhbar. Lukhnow tri-weekly; The Sayid-ul-Akhbar. Delhi tri-monthly; The Roznama-i-Panjab. Lahore weekly; The Aligarh Institute Gazette. Aligarh weekly; The Gawaliar Gazette. Gawaliar weekly; The Shola-i-Tur. Delhi weekly; The Sudarshan Samachar. Delhi weekly; The Meerut Gazette. Meerut weekly; N.W.P. Reports (1875) pp. 464 and 483.

<sup>3</sup> The Kashi Patrika. Benares weekly. October 15, 1875. N.W.P. Reports (1875). p. 525.

<sup>4</sup> Lee. op. cit. i. 377.

Viceroy's estimate."<sup>1</sup> The value of gifts which the native princes had ordered from London alone was estimated at £250,000.<sup>2</sup> An estimate of the value of these presents and other expenses incurred by the princes on the royal receptions and entertainments was reported in various native newspapers.<sup>3</sup> Some of the reported expenditures were:

- i. The Gaekwar of Baroda spent one lakh of rupees on the dinner given to the Prince at Baroda.
- ii. The Maharajah Holkar of Indore spent five lakhs on presents.
- iii. The Maharajah of Patiala spent four lakhs on jewellery, and fifteen lakhs on a coat presented to the Prince.

The following princes also spent the amounts mentioned against their names:

- iv. The Maharajah of Kashmir, fifty lakhs of rupees.
- v. The Maharajah Scindia, twenty lakhs of rupees.
- vi. The Nizam of Hyderabad, twenty lakhs of rupees.
- vii. Sir Salar Jung, two lakhs of rupees.
- viii. The Maharajah of Benares and other petty chiefs also spent large sums of money.

The native newspapers were highly critical of the Indian princes for spending so extravagantly on royal receptions and warned the

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<sup>1</sup> Bartle Frere to Sir Stafford Northcote. November 7, 1875. cit. Martineau. op. cit. ii. 137.

<sup>2</sup> Burdett. op. cit. p. 380.

<sup>3</sup> The Koh-i-nur. Lahore weekly. February 9, 1876. The Khair Khwah-i-Alam. Delhi weekly. February 18, 1876. N.W.P. Reports (1876). pp. 77-8.

government that if unchecked, quite a few among the princes would go bankrupt<sup>1</sup> after the visit was over. They feared that such an extravagance would ultimately add to the misery of their poverty-stricken subjects. The Soma Prakash, an influential weekly from Bengal, warned the Indian government in its issue of November 1, 1875 that the lavish expenditure likely to be incurred by the native princes to welcome the royal guest would create a highly oppressive situation for their subjects and noted that the instructions of the Indian foreign office in this connection had been largely ignored.<sup>2</sup> The Anand Lohari, deploring the lavish spending on honours to the Prince, felt that a considerable improvement in the socio-economic conditions of the people could have been brought about had the princes "laid out this money in teaching their subjects, improving their territories, and feeding the poor . . ." It lamented the unfortunate state of the poor people who would be taxed relentlessly until the empty coffers of the rajahs were filled again.<sup>3</sup> Outlining the motives behind the lavish spendings of the chiefs and princes, the Agra Akhbar contended that the Indian nobility aimed to strengthen their position by pleasing the Prince of Wales. It accused the chiefs of mismanage-

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<sup>1</sup> The Rahbar-i-Hind. Lahore weekly. August 15, 1875. N.W.P. Reports 1875. p. 419. For other newspapers see N.W.P. Reports (1875). pp. 476, 596 and 599.

<sup>2</sup> The Soma Prakash. Twenty-four Parganah weekly. November 1, 1875. Bengal Reports. no. 45 (1875). pp. 5-6.

<sup>3</sup> The Anand Lohari. Benares weekly. April 7, 1876. N.W.P. Reports (1876). p. 175.

ment and debauchery and charged them with attempting to cover up their misdemeanor through "a grand show and mislead the government",<sup>1</sup> only to follow a policy of oppression afterwards towards their subjects by their misrule, hoping that no notice of their conduct would be taken by the government. Writing hardly two weeks before the Prince's departure for home, the Suhrid, a Bengali newspaper, feared that the glittering spectacle of costly gifts and lavish entertainment given by the native princes would, instead of benefiting India, do her "considerable mischief". It believed that such a display of wealth would create an erroneous impression regarding the resources of India in the minds of the British, "a nation, already avaricious and jealous", which would, in all probability, devise new means to drain the country of her supposed wealth.<sup>2</sup> Relating the foolish open-handedness of the chiefs to its ultimate effect on the people, the Grambharta Prakashika, a "powerful"<sup>3</sup> Bengali rural newspaper, predicted that once their purses became light, the chiefs would begin "squeezing out after a little time the hard-earned income of a poverty-stricken tenantry who have barely yet recovered from the ravages of their times."<sup>4</sup> These fears were not unfounded as

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<sup>1</sup> The Agra Akhbar. Agra tri-monthly. November 30, 1875. N.W.P. Reports (1875). p. 618.

<sup>2</sup> The Suhrid. Mymensingh weekly. February 29, 1876. Bengal Reports. no. 11 (1876). p. 1.

<sup>3</sup> S.C. Sanial. "History of the Press in India". The Calcutta Review. No. 263. January 1911. p. 47.

<sup>4</sup> The Grambharta Prakashika. Kumarkhali weekly. November 20, 1875. Bengal Reports. no. 48 (1875) p. 4.

reports of oppression by native rulers were already circulating in the press. It was reported that the ruler of Jaipur had confiscated four months' salary of all his employees for the royal reception.<sup>1</sup> Similar charges were made against the Maharajah of Kashmir who was accused of making his subjects bear the expenses incurred on the Prince's visit.<sup>2</sup> Some newspapers even charged the government for compelling the native princes "against their wish"<sup>3</sup> to spend and subscribe large sums of money towards the royal receptions.

The Roznama-i-Panjab, quoting from The Vanity Fair,<sup>4</sup> wrote:

... the inhabitants of India are being compelled against their will to subscribe towards the reception of the Prince of Wales, and that high European officials with letters to the princes and rais of India, that such an amount had been put down against their names in the subscription list, and that those princes and rais are compelled to send the sum against their wishes.<sup>5</sup>

Within six weeks of the Prince's departure, the Rahbar-i-Hind pointed out the extreme burden and distress caused by the royal visit on the Indian treasury in a protest against a rumoured rise

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<sup>1</sup> The Rahbar-i-Hind. Lahore weekly. December 14, 1875; The Panjabi Akhbar. Lahore weekly. December 14, 1875. N.W.P. Reports (1875). p. 629.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> The Jalwa-i-Tur. November 8, 1875. N.W.P. Reports (1875). p. 566. The Panjabi Akhbar. Lahore weekly. November 6, 1875. N.W.P. Reports (1875). p. 579.

<sup>4</sup> The Vanity Fair. A weekly show of political, social, and literary wares. London.

<sup>5</sup> The Roznama-i-Panjab. Lahore weekly. November 6, 1875. N.W.P. Reports (1875). p. 579.



in taxes to replenish the depleted funds.

The reaction of the Indian intelligentsia as noted in the native press reflected new hopes and aspirations. The newspapers in the various parts of the country, while expressing their loyalty to the British government, were exhorting the people to present their grievances to the Prince. The Dacca Prakash, asking the people "to do their utmost in manifesting their loyalty and devotion" to the government, emphasized the urgency "to lay before the Prince the wants and grievances of the country."<sup>1</sup> Emphasizing the same, the Amrita Bazar Patrika urged the people to organize a "monster meeting"<sup>2</sup> on the Calcutta Maidan for this purpose. It wrote:

Those that would give themselves up to pleasure while the miseries of India remained patent before them, — those that would rejoice to see the Prince, while thousands of natives are daily ruined on all sides, — and those that would, in absolute forgetfulness of the rigors of the criminal code, the cruel discipline in the jails, the degradation of the Hindu race, the extinction of noble families, and the poverty of the country, seek to produce an erroneous impression in the mind of the Prince regarding the happiness of natives, — would not only be guilty of deception, but of treachery and every other form of evil that has disgraced humanity.<sup>3</sup>

The Benares Akhbar considered the occasion of the royal visit a "matter of rejoicing" and felt that it was a "duty" for the people

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<sup>1</sup> The Dacca Prakash. Dacca weekly. November 28, 1875. Bengal Reports. no. 49 (1875). pp. 2-3.

<sup>2</sup> The Amrita Bazar Patrika. Calcutta weekly. December 16, 1875. Bengal Reports. no. 52 (1875). p. 4.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. September 23, 1875. Bengal Reports. no. 40 (1875). p. 2.

of India to accord a splendid reception to the Prince, although the newspaper expressed strong doubts if the visit would be beneficial in any way to India.<sup>1</sup> The Sadadarsha, from Delhi, wrote that the visit would have the effect of "strengthening the attachment of the Indian people to the British Crown".<sup>2</sup> Ten weeks later the newspaper was bitterly complaining that "only the bright side of India was shown to the Prince. India's riches have been shown but not its poverty."<sup>3</sup> It further doubted if Disraeli's pledge in parliament, that the visit was being undertaken by the Prince to acquaint himself with India and its problems, was honoured.

Their fears were confirmed when they saw that throughout his stay in India the Prince was "altogether surrounded by Europeans" and the fact was "noticed and commented upon"<sup>4</sup> by the native press. The Behar Bandu had anticipated that every possible care would be taken by those who surrounded the Prince "to see that no one with a grievance be permitted to have access to him" and all educated Indians, who were well versed in matters concerning the natives, would be carefully kept away.<sup>5</sup> The Amrita Bazar Patrika strongly

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<sup>1</sup> The Benares Akhbar. Benares weekly. December 30, 1875. N.W.P. Reports (1876). pp. 75-7.

<sup>2</sup> The Sadadarsha. Delhi weekly. September 13, 1875. N.W.P. Reports (1875). p. 457.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. November 22, 1875. N.W.P. Reports (1875). pp. 594-596.

<sup>4</sup> Annual Register. 1876. p. 95.

<sup>5</sup> The Behar Bandu. September 8, 1875. Bengal Reports. no. 38 (1875). pp. 5-6.

objected to the arrangements being made by the British Indian Association, which represented "to a large extent the landed proprietors of Bengal",<sup>1</sup> to receive the Prince in Calcutta. The newspaper severely criticised the unrepresentative character of the reception committee demanding that representative men from the mofussil be also invited to the royal reception.<sup>2</sup> The Hindu Ranjika feared that the visit would ultimately "be productive of injurious consequences" inasmuch as no opportunity would be given to the masses to present their grievances to the Prince, who would, consequently, carry with him to England "an erroneous impression regarding the wealth and happiness of the natives under British rule."<sup>3</sup>

Apart from the criticism of the princely extravagance, strong sentiments expressing native disapproval of the prodigious receptions arranged for the Prince were voiced throughout the country by the native press. They criticised the public subscriptions to the "Prince of Wales' Reception Fund"<sup>4</sup> launched by the government in respect of the fact that gay and festive receptions would not truly represent the conditions of the country.<sup>5</sup> The Tohfa-i-Panjab observed that "the

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<sup>1</sup> Lord Northbrook to Queen Victoria. January 1, 1875. Victoria's Letters. ii. 365.

<sup>2</sup> The Amrita Bazar Patrika. September 30, 1875. Bengal Reports. no. 41 (1875). p. 1.

<sup>3</sup> The Hindu Ranjika. Rajshahi weekly. September 22, 1875. Bengal Reports. no. 40 (1875). pp. 1-2.

<sup>4</sup> The Rahbar-i-Hind. Lahore weekly. November 30, 1875. N.W.P. Reports (1875). p. 609.

<sup>5</sup> For details see Bengal Reports. nos. 50 and 51 (1875); N.W.P. Reports (1875). pp. 495-566.

people simply do all this as the English Government is powerful."<sup>1</sup>

This dominance of the English government over the native element manifested itself in the severely oppressive and arrogant behaviour of the Anglo-Indian officials towards the natives. Even the Prince of Wales, at an early stage of his visit, was "struck most forcibly" with the "rude and rough"<sup>2</sup> attitude of the official class in India. In a letter to Lord Granville, the Prince expressed his disapproval that "Because a man has a black face and a different religion from our own, there is no reason why he should be treated as a brute."<sup>3</sup> A little later he drew the attention of Lord Salisbury, secretary of state for India, "to the disgraceful habit of officers in the King's service speaking of the inhabitants in India, many of them sprung from the great races, as 'niggers'."<sup>4</sup> Touching on the racial arrogance of the English officials, The Amrita Bazar Patrika consoled its countrymen that inability to see the Prince should not depress them "considering that they did not invite the Prince." Therefore, "if any insidious distinction be made between natives and Europeans, they should reflect that such a course is natural, when the case lies between a stronger and a weaker party."<sup>5</sup> Writing on the subject,

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<sup>1</sup> The Tohfa-i-Panjab. Amritsar weekly. N.W.P. Reports (1875). p. 495.

<sup>2</sup> The Prince of Wales to Queen Victoria. November 14, 1875. cit. Lee. op. cit. i. 399; also Ponsonby to Disraeli. January 26, 1876. Hughenden Papers. B/XIX/B/438.

<sup>3</sup> The Prince of Wales to Lord Granville. November 30, 1875. cit. Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> cit. Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> The Amrita Bazar Patrika. Calcutta weekly. September 2, 1875. Bengal Reports no. 37 (1875). pp. 3-4.

The Vakil-i-Hindustan observed:

From the relation in which subjects in this country stand to the rulers, we draw the correct conclusion that in England every one is born a prince or a duke, whereas in unfortunate India there is not a one respectable person. On this account the first foundation for India's welfare should be, that the rulers out here should treat the subjects as rulers in England treat Englishmen. Until this stage is arrived at, how can natives make known their wishes to Government.<sup>1</sup>

The native newspapers blamed the Anglo-Indian officials for the ill-feeling prevailing between the two communities and expressed strong doubts if the Prince's visit would much change the situation. Commenting on the blatantly unprovoked oppression of the natives, The Sadurshan Samachar laid the blame not on "the Queen but her unworthy officials" as the sole cause of the misfortunes and troubles burdening the people.<sup>2</sup> In Bengal The Rajshahi Samachar believed that "If the Prince were to ask us about the feelings of natives, we would briefly, but promptly, say to him, — "Gratify our high aspirations, put a stop to the drainage of our wealth by the British, and save us from the ill-feelings towards us."<sup>3</sup> Supporting its view that the visit would have the beneficial effect of removing these ill-feelings, The Sulabha Samachar hoped that the Prince's contacts

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<sup>1</sup> The Vakil-i-Hindustan. Amritsar weekly. April 8, 1876. N.W.P. Reports (1876). p. 174.

<sup>2</sup> The Sadurshan Samachar. Delhi weekly. September 22, 1875. N.W.P. Reports (1875). pp. 476-7.

<sup>3</sup> The Rajshahi Samachar. Karachmaria, Rajshahi weekly. October 19, 1875. Bengal Reports no. 50 (1875). pp. 1-2.

with native rulers would "teach the oppressive and overbearing Anglo-Indians to be generous and considerate towards the children of the soil."<sup>1</sup>

Such anticipations, however, remained unfulfilled as the Prince had not come to India vested with any special powers. At the end of the royal visit the native newspapers, including those that had earlier anticipated "beneficial results", unanimously expressed their disappointment. They looked back at the visit and were convinced in their suspicions that it had not been undertaken "to sympathise with their woes but rather to give an occasion for general rejoicing."<sup>2</sup> The Anand Lohari believed that the visit "simply added to the misery of a poverty-stricken country, and served no good purpose."<sup>3</sup> The Behar Bandu, which had earlier been offended<sup>4</sup> to learn that the Prince was not visiting Behar, summed up its impressions of the royal visit in highly poetic diction, expressive of aspirations smothered by high-handedness, and characteristic of oriental graciousness and good-will which, in this instance, the people of India unstintingly poured out for the royal guest:

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<sup>1</sup> The Sulabha Samarchar. Calcutta weekly. October 19, 1875.

<sup>2</sup> The Amrita Bazar Patrika. March 16, 1876. Bengal Reports no. 13 (1876). p. 3.

<sup>3</sup> The Anand Lohari. June 2, 1876. N.W.P. Reports (1876). p. 273.

<sup>4</sup> The Behar Bandu. Patna weekly. September 1, 1875. Bengal Reports no. 37 (1875). p. 6.

The moon which rose from the west has set also in the same direction; this moon verily arose, but did not cool our heated breasts with its light: neither has it served to dispel the darkness which envelopes this land. India is so unfortunate that that moon which enlightens the whole world failed to do so here, and left the country as it was. We have been ever anxious about the Prince leaving behind him some traces of his visit, but no such exists, his visit was like that of an arrow.<sup>1</sup>

Evaluating the results of the visit in terms of publicized intentions, The Adib-i-Alam felt that the Prince of Wales brought much disheartenment to the people in failing to inquire into their grievances and troubles, and had undertaken the visit to India "simply to take back with him to England money, precious stones, and jewellery, in place of which he only gave the chiefs and rais of Hindustan sticks, books, monograms, and pictures."<sup>2</sup> The Suhrid shared the common disappointment of the people that the Prince had not come vested with any political powers. Lamenting the failure of the visit, considering that the Prince of Wales failed to address himself to India's problems, it believed that "some good would doubtless have accrued to India if even, after all the expenses for his reception, the people of India had had the satisfaction to know

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid. March 22, 1876. Bengal Reports no. 13 (1876). p. 6.

<sup>2</sup> The Adib-i-Alam. Mooradabad. March 17, 1876. N.W.P. Reports (1876). pp. 130-1. On Frere's request Lord Northbrook assented to provide an additional £10,000 from the Indian treasury to supplement the sum of £30,000 already sanctioned by parliament. Martineau. op. cit. ii. 128-9.

that the Prince had become acquainted with the true state of the country."<sup>1</sup> The newspaper added that the officials tried to disguise the Indian poverty to the Prince "in a gay and brilliant garb".<sup>2</sup>

The Prince was presented with 'loyal' addresses<sup>3</sup> of welcome wherever he visited in India, but it is difficult to say that they represented the genuine feelings of the people. On the contrary the character of these addresses as representative of the true sentiment of the people was challenged by many newspapers. The Ashraf-ul-Akhbar contended that all that had been written had been contrived to flatter or praise the Prince, nothing had been "written impartially, all the addresses presented to him are false, and not one has expressed the genuine feelings of the inhabitants of India."<sup>4</sup>

L.H. Courtney,<sup>5</sup> a Liberal member of parliament, visiting

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<sup>1</sup> The Suhrid. Mymensingh weekly. February 15, 1876. Bengal Reports no. 9 (1876). p. 3.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> For some of these addresses see W.H. Russell. op. cit. pp. 593-604.

<sup>4</sup> The Ashraf-ul-Akhbar. Lahore weekly. January 11, 1876. N.W.P. Reports (1876). pp. 27-8. The Punjabi Akhbar also expressed similar views. N.W.P. Reports (1876). pp. 28-9.

<sup>5</sup> (Lord) Leonard Henry Courtney. 1832-1918. Journalist and statesman. After a distinguished university career appointed leader-writer to The Times under John Delane in 1865; occupied the chair of political economy at University College, London, entered parliament in 1875 as a liberal M.P. for Liskeard; belonged to the left wing of the party; under-secretary for the colonies under Gladstone's second administration; "an obstinate opponent of Imperialism"; accepted peerage in 1906 and became Baron Courtney. Dictionary of National Biography 1912-21. pp. 127-8.



India at the time of the royal visit, expressed his doubts that the visit would be in any way beneficial. Recording an eye-witness impression in a letter to a friend, he described the general atmosphere created among different sections of society by the visit:

The Europeans here (those at least who are not overburdened with the care and responsibility of being his host) are pleased with the curtailments that accompany the visit and flock in crowds to the balls and levées, and the native princes enjoy the opportunity of wearing their best clothes and making a show of importance, though there have been sad heartburnings among them in way of precedence. The masses of the people believed at first that when the Prince came they would have nothing to do but to present petitions to him and he would at once cause all their miseries to cease; they would throw themselves in his way as he rode in the streets and a word of his would set all things right. They are now better informed, and they turn out in large numbers to see fireworks and processions; but the Prince is an accidental part of the show. The permanent result apparently will be nil.<sup>1</sup>

J. L. Ashbury,<sup>2</sup> a conservative member of parliament, after visiting India during the Prince's tour, made known his impressions of the royal visit in an address to the "Conservative and Constitutional Association" of Brighton. Covering his address The Standard reported that he did not consider, so far as the mass of the people were concerned, that their coming forward in great numbers to see the royal visitor was indicative of loyalty as understood in

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<sup>1</sup> Courtney to J. H. Roby. December 28, 1875. cit. G. P. Gooch. Life of Lord Courtney. London 1920. pp. 98-9.

<sup>2</sup> James Lloyd Ashbury. 1834-95. conservative member for Brighton (1874-1880).

England. He was inclined to think that "the congregation of the people arose more from great curiosity to see the white man, who might at some period be the ruler of their country, and, knowing the despotic characters of present or past Indian princes, assume his Royal Highness possessed a personal power which he can never have under our form of government, and they would be the more impressed with that idea when they found all the oldest, proudest, and richest princes from all quarters of the country flocking to the various capitals to do honour to the Prince of Wales."<sup>1</sup> No less struck by this obeisance and tribute was Sir Alfred Lyall,<sup>2</sup> a veteran civil servant, who was serving in India at the time of the Prince's visit. In his observation on the people's reaction as manifested in their mixed feelings of awe at British power and resentment at their own subjection, he saw in the hindu a recognition of the vanity and meaninglessness of the pomposity surrounding the Prince and his escorts, which would "flicker away" like "phantoms" once the roaring cannons of welcome quietened down to the uneasy routine of daily life after the visit was over. In the figure of the "civil and mild" muslim as he watched the vainglorious exaltation of the hated foreign yoke, Sir Alfred read his burning prayer:

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<sup>1</sup> The Standard. April 13, 1876. p. 5.

<sup>2</sup> Sir Alfred Lyall. 1835-1911. administrator and writer; governor-general's agent to Rajputana from 1874-78 besides holding other higher offices.

... as he counted his beads and smiled,  
"God smite their souls to the depths of hell."<sup>1</sup>

Writing his personal impressions in a letter to John Morley, he stated:

It was very curious to notice the extraordinary reverence with which the people regard a king's son; the proudest chiefs of Rajputana were quite ready to bow down before him; and I perceived that this was a natural effect of the strong feelings of these chiefs towards royalty and, above all, high lineage. I am convinced that our influence in India is very much greater than we take it to be, and that the upper classes are tending to become Anglo-maniacs rather than haters of foreign rule. The masses and the religious orders don't like us, out of that instinctive hatred for the foreigner and the infidel which you can see always among the same classes in Europe; but as to the rich men and the nobles, my fear is that the next generation will be seen squandering their revenues in the great hotels of Paris and London, and demoralising England rather than improving India by virtuous examples of the blessings of civilization. They will think scorn of this dull hot land, and will give no heed to the advice of respectable officials.<sup>2</sup>

The Indian princes were the class immediately affected by the royal visit. They spent their wealth freely and seem to have accepted as far as externals are concerned the visiting Prince as a representative of the successor of the Mughals. It seems likely that the royal visit did much to encourage that rising Anglophile

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<sup>1</sup> Sir Alfred Lyall. Verses Written in India. (Fifth Edition). London 1901. pp. 44-7; also cit. Lee. op. cit. i. 400.

<sup>2</sup> Sir Mortimer Durand. Life of the Rt. Hon. Sir Alfred Lyall. London 1913. pp. 190-1.

sentiment noted by Sir Alfred Lyall among the Indian princes which was to have a considerable social importance in the coming generations. As for people along the route of the royal visit, it is difficult to say whether they accepted the young Prince as they would have a true successor of the Mughals. Their enthusiastic greetings of the Prince were taken as evidence that they did, and against this can be placed the denial offered in the Indian press. Certainly there must have been disappointed hopes and it is inconceivable that the Prince, from a distant island, who did not share the religion of either of the major groups, could have a strong place in their affections. On the other hand the educated classes which dominated the press did not have the wide influence in the seventies that they were to acquire later and might be inclined to confuse their own sophisticated views which show utilitarian influence and coincided with those of many British radicals for popular feeling.

About the attitude of the educated, and only really articulate class in India, there can be no doubt. Their views, expressed in the Indian press, saw the royal visit as wanting in positive results and a shameful waste of resources gained by the sweat of their labour callously squandered under the direct or indirect auspices of the government. The voice of the Indian press, impotently protesting against the dictatorial dominance, was supplemented, in its own manner, by the utterances of a handful of Englishmen of eminence. Their attempts to raise India and her people to their rightful

position in the eyes of the English public were no more effective than the attempts of Indians to gain redress for the offenses suffered by them at the hands of arrogant Anglo-Indian officials.

In a sharp contrast to this, the general view in England highly approved of the royal visit as fulfilling the aims and intentions ascribed to the undertaking by Disraeli. The traditional welcome of Indians lined along the road-side to greet the visitor was taken by the English public as a sign of loyalty to the crown — and this feeling was congenial to the rising spirit of imperialism and not offensive to the powerful liberals and free traders who remained an important element in the British opinion. The newspaper columns carried very extensive and detailed accounts of the royal visit accompanied with frequent editorial comments on the character and significance of the receptions accorded to the Prince of Wales in India. The Times spent over ~~£~~10,000 on its coverage of the royal tour.<sup>1</sup> The Standard's correspondent, covering the royal tour in India, wrote:

The mass of the people — that is the Hindoos — were a conquered race when the country came under our power, so they have never had a ruling family to look up to, they have for centuries ceased to think of a government of their own, and the Queen of England is as near to them now as the Emperor of Delhi was in former times.<sup>2</sup>

Illustrated weeklies<sup>3</sup> depicted week after week the gorgeous scenes

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<sup>1</sup> W.H. Russell to Frere. May 17, 1876. cit. Martineau. op.cit. ii. 127.

<sup>2</sup> The Illustrated London News. December 4, 1875. p. 563.

<sup>3</sup> The Illustrated London News and The Graphic issued special supplements during the entire duration of the royal visit.

and events of the Prince's entertainments and receptions. Thus this wide publicity given to the royal visit in the British press stimulated among the English public an interest to a degree which stood in sharp contrast to their past indifference towards India. Contemporary observers commented on the change that marked the English attitude towards Indian life and civilization as a result of the information thus obtained. Before, India had been to the generality of educated Englishmen a barbarous land — open to commercial exploitation; a land of careers for the civil servant class and of opportunity for those whose position was not such as to enable them to obtain comfortable means at home; a land of starving peasants for whose welfare England was in some dim manner responsible. From the written and pictorial accounts of the royal visit a new appreciation of India was derived. The antique culture of the educated Indian, the stability and magnificence of Indian civilization began to be taken into account by the English mind. A one-sided picture was, of course, presented, which considerably toned down the finer points of the Indian culture and personality. In 1857 The Times had branded the Indian population as one destined by its very nature to be "ruled"; at the close of the Prince's visit an editorial in the same newspaper admitted not only the possibility but the necessity for Indian participation in the government of the country. The Times wrote:

If we continue to regard the heirs of the vast civilization (of India) as conquered dependents, a feeling of alienation will slowly but surely deepen. But if . . . we trust them and seek for their co-operation in the development of their race and their country, we may bind them to ourselves by the closest and most permanent ties.<sup>1</sup>

Reviewing the royal visit, the British press unanimously lauded a great success productive of vital political effects. The Times felt that the 'success' of the visit had completely dissipated any aspersions cast on its value prior to the undertaking and contended that "even those who are least disposed to courtly vanities recognize that in the particular circumstances of India, and having regard to the character of its princes and people, the visit of the Heir of the British Crown is likely to prove a great political event."<sup>2</sup> The Saturday Review<sup>3</sup> declared that the Prince's visit to India commanded universal approval and favour. The liberal Manchester Guardian, commenting editorially at the end of the visit, came to the conclusion that:

We may look for greater results from the immediate contact into which the members of the native aristocracy have been brought with their royal visitor . . . The great houses of India, whether royal or noble, possess and will continue to possess vast power and authority over their humbler countrymen. That power and authority we should if we were wise, endeavour to utilise at once for support of our Empire and the

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<sup>1</sup> The Times. March 6, 1876.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. February 8, 1876.

<sup>3</sup> The Saturday Review. May 13, 1876. p. 601.

social advancement of the people. Hitherto we can hardly be said to have done this.<sup>1</sup>

For this 'success' of the Indian visit, Disraeli was in no small degree responsible. One would, in fact, agree with E. F. Benson that had Gladstone been the prime minister in 1875 the visit would never have been realised.<sup>2</sup> Thus the popular recognition accorded in England to the 'success' of the royal visit conformed with the rising imperial sentiment in England in the seventies, and provided a favourable atmosphere for Disraeli to realise his more ambitious dream conceived some thirty years before.

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<sup>1</sup> The Manchester Guardian. May 11, 1876.

<sup>2</sup> E. F. Benson. Queen Victoria. London 1935. p. 272.



### CHAPTER III

#### THE ROYAL TITLES BILL AND PARLIAMENT

The first official announcement of the government's intention to affect an addition in the existing royal style came in the speech from the throne on February 8, 1876, at the opening of the new session of parliament. The Queen's personal appearance on the occasion may be considered significant in view of her seclusion from public ceremonials since her widowhood. The announcement to this effect in the throne speech followed the reference to the Prince of Wales' visit to India so that, as Disraeli suggested, "What then might have been looked upon as an ebullition of individual vanity, may bear the semblance of deep and organised policy."<sup>1</sup>

The relevant paragraph in the throne speech read:

The hearty affection with which he [The Prince] has been received by my Indian subjects of all classes and races assures me that they are happy under my rule, and loyal to my throne. At the time that the direct Government of my Indian Empire was transferred to the Crown, no formal addition was made to the style and titles of the Sovereign. I have deemed the present a fitting opportunity to supplying this omission, and a Bill upon the subject will be presented to you.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Disraeli to Lord Salisbury. January 11, 1876. cit. Monypenny and Buckle. ii. 797-8.

<sup>2</sup> Hansard (Third Ser.) CCXXVII. 4.

Prior to the royal announcement the "many" difficulties inherent in such a proposal had been discussed by the government, but later events were to cast doubts on the extent and seriousness of government deliberations on the subject.

The idea of an imperial title for the Queen recognizing her paramountcy over India was no sudden innovation of Disraeli's deep fascination for the East. It had been lingering in the Queen's mind for a long time. She wrote to Ponsonby in 1873 enclosing an address referring to her as Empress of India: "These words make the Queen again think of her wish & indeed determination to take the additional title of Empress of India. Not to raise her rank but to add to the higher title."<sup>1</sup> Early in the same year a suggestion had been made to Lord Granville<sup>2</sup> to the same effect and although it "formed the subject of some consultation in the Government",<sup>3</sup> nothing came of it. The idea appears to have been revived by the Prince of Wales' visit to India during which time Disraeli wrote to Lord Cairns: "The Empress-Queen demands her Imperial Crown."<sup>4</sup> Although Disraeli was "pressed much by the Empress"<sup>5</sup> for it, as he ad-

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<sup>1</sup> cit. Arthur Ponsonby. Henry Ponsonby. London 1942. p. 141.

<sup>2</sup> Ponsonby to Earl Granville. January 26, 1873. Victoria's Letters. ii. 238.

<sup>3</sup> The duke of Argyll to Ponsonby. February 1, 1873. Ibid. ii. 242.

<sup>4</sup> Disraeli to Lord Cairns. January 7, 1876. Monypenny and Buckle. ii. 797.

<sup>5</sup> Disraeli to Lord Salisbury. January 11, 1876. Ibid. ii. 797.

mitted to Salisbury, it may well be doubted that he would have consented to such a suggestion had it not been congenial to his own taste.

The announcement in the throne speech concerning the proposed addition did not provoke any noticeable opposition. Lord Granville expressed his disapproval rather obliquely in his warm praise for the simple dignity of the old royal style,<sup>1</sup> but to Lord Derby, the proposed addition would "mark more clearly" the sovereign's relation to the native princes of India; he did not anticipate any "difference of opinion" in parliament over the issue.<sup>2</sup> In the Commons Gladstone and Lord Hartington, the official leader of the Liberal Opposition, did not even mention the subject in their reply to the throne speech. The initial calmness with which the proposal was received was heartening for Disraeli and led him to believe that the measure would be "most popular in the country."<sup>3</sup> He was, however, soon to be disappointed.

The Royal Titles Bill<sup>4</sup> was introduced in parliament on February 17, 1876 and met with an immediate and strong opposition for which Disraeli himself was largely responsible.<sup>5</sup> Contributing mainly to

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<sup>1</sup> Hansard. (Third Ser.) CCXXVII. 19.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. 34.

<sup>3</sup> Disraeli to Queen Victoria. February 9, 1876. Monypenny and Buckle. ii. 799-800.

<sup>4</sup> See Appendix A.

<sup>5</sup> Ponsonby. op. cit. p. 138. Lord Granville had expressed the same view. p. 141; also Gladstone to Granville. February 18, 1876. cit. Agatha Ramm. The Political Correspondence of Mr. Gladstone and Lord Granville. London 1952. ii. 482-3.

this unexpected criticism were two factors. Firstly, Disraeli had evoked the displeasure of the Opposition by overstepping the respected convention of prior consultation with Opposition leaders on matters pertaining to the crown.<sup>1</sup> Secondly, he did not disclose the actual title that the Queen was to be advised to assume, which created concern over its scope and intent. The Bill, as introduced in parliament, simply provided for an addition of a new title through a royal proclamation, leaving the precise form of the additional title a matter for the royal prerogative.

The mysterious attitude of Disraeli in withholding the new title was particularly annoying to the Opposition and the matter was soon raised by W.E. Forster.<sup>2</sup> He was supported by John Bright who considered the information important as it affected "the sentiment of the people, not only in the United Kingdom, but in every part of the empire", and particularly since it concerned "not only those who are living, but those who are to come after us."<sup>3</sup> Disraeli refused to meet the Opposition demand as he believed that such information would, besides restricting the Queen's choice, be "an invasion of the just Prerogative of the Crown."<sup>4</sup> This, however, did not prevent

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<sup>1</sup> Lord Granville to Ponsonby. February 26, 1876. cit. Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice. Life of Lord Granville. London. 1905. ii. 161-2.

<sup>2</sup> Hansard. (Third Ser.) CCXXVII. 420.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. 427.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

the Opposition from anticipating the new title. In fact Disraeli had already in his opening speech with its constant reiterations of the words 'Imperial' and 'Empire' conveyed enough idea as to the nature of the proposed title. Thus his continued refusal to disclose officially the precise title provoked bitter criticism from the Opposition. Lord Granville informed the Queen about the "unanimous expression of opinion adverse to the particular title "Empress" and added that such an opinion was "not confined to the Liberal Party".<sup>1</sup> Gladstone believed that Disraeli had "exposed the Queen to a snub"<sup>2</sup> by mismanaging the introduction of the Bill in parliament. He held that the "vice of the proposal" lay in the title "Empress", admitting, however, that "that may also be thought its only virtue."<sup>3</sup>

Repeated failure of the Opposition to learn the actual title from the prime minister led to a formal notice in the Commons that, without being informed of the proposed addition, the House would not read the Bill a second time.<sup>4</sup> Therefore, in spite of his "caution and care" in manoeuvring the Bill through parliament, Disraeli could evade no further the Opposition demand and finally announced that

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<sup>1</sup> Lord Granville to the Queen. February 24, 1876. cit. Fitzmaurice. op. cit. ii. 162.

<sup>2</sup> Gladstone to Lord Granville. February 18, 1876. Ramm. op. cit. ii. 482-3.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Hansard. (Third Ser.) CCXXVII. 1569.

the proposed title would be "Victoria, by the Grace of God, of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, Queen, Defender of the Faith, and Empress of India."<sup>1</sup>

Shortly after the announcement almost the full strength of the parliamentary Opposition rose up against the adoption of an imperial title, although willingness was expressed to consider any alternative title. While Gladstone was shocked, Robert Lowe was conspicuously vociferous in his invective. A large body of moderate opinion represented by Lord Hartington expressed preference for some other title. The Opposition attack was mainly based on three objections. Firstly, they objected to the new title "Empress" itself; secondly, they questioned the government's claim that the proposed addition was in response to the wishes of the princes and peoples of India; and, finally, they objected to the scope of the Bill which excluded any reference to the colonies.

Anticipating that the new title was to be "Empress", Robert Lowe, member for the University of London, opened the attack by questioning the wisdom of "breaking away"<sup>2</sup> from the age old custom concerning the title of English sovereigns. He believed that designating the English sovereign as "Queen" in England and "Empress" in India would cause "confusion and mischief"<sup>3</sup> and compared it to

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<sup>1</sup> Hansard. (Third Ser.) CCXXVII. 1725.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. 412-4.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. 412.

"putting a new patch on an old garment."<sup>1</sup> He further argued that to give the Queen a title for India which implied the "supremacy of force" would amount to a declaration that Great Britain had "won India by the sword" and wanted to "keep it by the sword." He considered such a step to be ill-thought, unwise and injudicious.<sup>2</sup> Moreover, reminding parliament of a future possibility of losing India as nearly happened in 1857, Lowe felt that it would be embarrassing for parliament to retract the imperial style. Disraeli sharply reacted to this statement by labelling Lowe "a prophet of evil".<sup>3</sup> Forster supported Lowe and considered the imperial title "unsuited to English ideas" as the imperial idea of government was not "very pleasing to English feelings."<sup>4</sup> Gladstone was frightened, not so much by the idea of having an "Empress", as an "Emperor" on the English throne and doubted if any minister other than Disraeli would be "rash enough or bold enough" to bring before parliament or the country such a proposal.<sup>5</sup>

Disraeli refuted the Opposition charges that the title "Empress" or "Emperor" were "unconstitutional", "un-English" or denoted "military dominion". He countered the Opposition's attacks on the evil

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid. 415.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. 413-4.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. 424.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. 420.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid. CCXXVIII. 492.

associations of imperial appellation by resorting to Gibbon's account of the Roman Empire, extracting from it the argument that emperors, like the Antonines, had assured greater happiness and prosperity for their subjects than any other rulers.<sup>1</sup> Further, to prove that the title "Empress" was no innovation or un-English, he referred to its use by Edmund Spenser<sup>2</sup> who had dedicated "The Fairie Queene" to "The most high, mightie and magnificent Empress Elizabeth." Outlining the basis of the need for an imperial title, he stressed:

The amplification of titles is no new system — no new idea; it has marked all ages, and has been in accordance with manners and customs of all countries. The amplification of titles is founded upon a great respect for local influences, for the memory of distinguished deeds, and passages of interest in the history of countries. It is only by the amplification of titles that you can often touch and satisfy the imagination of nations . . .<sup>3</sup>

The Opposition attacks mainly proceeded from a fear that the imperial title might be employed in relation to home affairs. They suspected that the new title could not be restricted to India and would inevitably come into general acceptance and usage in England, even supplanting the ancient and time-honoured royal style. Their fears were perhaps not totally unfounded. Already while the Bill was still before parliament, certain important organizations, most

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid. CCXXVII. 1721.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. 1725.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. 1724.



unwisely, employed the imperial title in England. The Lord Mayor of London at an official reception proposed a toast to the "Empress Victoria"<sup>1</sup>, while inscriptions on the occasion of the Queen's visit in March of the same year to the City and Whitechapel<sup>2</sup> carried the imperial title, and at Portsmouth the Prince of Wales on his return from India was welcomed as "our future Emperor".<sup>3</sup>

The dislike for the title "Empress" was not confined to the Liberals, as one of Disraeli's own colleagues advised him to "surrender."<sup>4</sup> Lord Carnarvon, the colonial secretary, reported "considerable dislike" for the proposal and opined that unless the new title was restricted to India alone and "have no indirect connection with the Queen's English attributes" it could not be carried without considerable unpopularity.<sup>5</sup> He himself did not "much like the title."<sup>6</sup>

If on the one hand as Disraeli confessed, his "own men cd. not be trusted",<sup>7</sup> the attitude of the Liberals was not less divided on the issue, and Lord Hartington seemed doubtful of securing the

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<sup>1</sup> The Times. March 22, 1876.

<sup>2</sup> Queen Victoria to Sir T. Martin. March 14, 1876. Victoria's Letters. ii. 450-1.

<sup>3</sup> The Times. March 28, 1876.

<sup>4</sup> Disraeli to Lady Bradford. March 10, 1876. cit. Monypenny and Buckle. ii. 807.

<sup>5</sup> Lord Carnarvon to Disraeli. February 21, 1876. Hughenden Papers. B/XX/1He/55.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> Disraeli to Lady Bradford. March 10, 1876. cit. Monypenny and Buckle. ii. 807.

votes of "many Liberals."<sup>1</sup> Lord Hartington, representing the moderate opinion among the Liberals, considered it "expedient" that the transfer of the government of India to the crown be recognized through an addition to the royal style and titles but wanted postponement of the committee on the Bill.<sup>2</sup> He had already discussed with his colleagues the possibility of "postponing the whole subject with a view to collecting the opinions and feelings which may prevail in the several remote portions of the Empire."<sup>3</sup> Sir William Harcourt, convinced of the rapidly growing "feeling of dislike and opposition" against the Bill in the country, and "the repugnance of English sentiment" towards any change in the royal style, wrote to Lord Hartington that the Opposition might move a resolution before going to the committee to the following effect:

That the House will not proceed with the Bill till it is furnished with some information as to the sentiments on the subject of the Princes and the People of India.<sup>4</sup>

Lord Hartington, however, did not follow Harcourt's suggestion but moved a different amendment. It seems obvious that Hartington was not keen on any division on the Bill and would not have moved his

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<sup>1</sup> Lord Granville to Mr. Gladstone. March 15, 1876. cit. Ramm. op. cit. ii. 483.

<sup>2</sup> Hansard. (Third Ser.) CCXXVII. 1758; CCXXVIII. 76.

<sup>3</sup> Lord Hartington to Lord Granville. March 11, 1876. cit. Bernard Holland. Life of the Duke of Devonshire. London. 1911. i. 164.

<sup>4</sup> Sir William Harcourt to Lord Hartington. March 11, 1876. cit. A.G. Gardiner. The Life of Sir William Harcourt. London. 1923. i. 302-3.

amendment, as he did, had he not been pressed by the radical wing of the party.<sup>1</sup> He even informed the Queen of this reason for the official amendment.<sup>2</sup> His amendment read:<sup>3</sup>

That, while willing to consider a measure enabling Her Majesty to make an addition to the Royal Style and Title, which shall include such Dominions of Her Majesty as to Her Majesty may seem meet, this House is of the opinion that it is inexpedient to impair the ancient and Royal dignity of the Crown by the assumption of the style and title of Emperor.

This led to a heated discussion in parliament and George Anderson, member for Glasgow, referred to a rumour that it was for the members of the royal family who wished to be styled imperial highnesses that the imperial title was being assumed by the Queen.<sup>4</sup> Hoping that the rumour was not true he, however, felt it likely that Disraeli might create "a certain Royal Personage "Grand Duke of Edinburgh", in order to put him on level with his Imperial wife."<sup>5</sup> Strong attacks were made<sup>6</sup> by Sir William Harcourt, George Anderson and Ernest Noel but they "failed to carry the right wing of the party."<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Holland. op. cit. i. 164; also A. Ponsonby. op. cit. p. 140.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Hansard. (Third Ser.) CCXXVIII. 75.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. 139.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid. 139-40.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid. 97-107, 136-41 and 158-9.

<sup>7</sup> Ramm. op. cit. ii. 483.

In spite of all the parliamentary oratory by the critics of the Bill, its fate was never in doubt. The real parliamentary battle was fought and won by Disraeli on the order for going into the committee when Lord Hartington's motion was defeated by a majority of 105 votes.<sup>1</sup> In the division twenty eight English and Scottish Conservatives absented themselves, though not all for political reasons, while seven English and Scottish Liberals voted with the government.<sup>2</sup> The extent of Disraeli's triumph can be explained in part by the roughly equal division among the Irish who voted and the neutrality of forty-two of them who either paired or simply abstained.<sup>3</sup> This would have been difficult if not impossible to secure in the days of O'Connell and Parnell. However, at this time the Irish nationalists under the inspiration of Isaac Butt were trying to win concessions by adopting a sympathetic attitude towards imperial measures. Butt himself did not take advantage of the Bill to demonstrate his loyalty to the empire. The only articulate Irish opposition came from O'Shaughnessy who considered the imperial title "at variance with the constitution which had for centuries existed in this country."<sup>4</sup> After the Bill had passed Isaac Butt reprimanded the House for the turn which the debate had

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<sup>1</sup> Hansard. (Third Ser.) CCXXVIII. 160.

<sup>2</sup> "An Observer." The Times. March 22, 1876. p. 10.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid; also Hansard. (Third Ser.) CCXXVIII. 160-4.

<sup>4</sup> Hansard. (Third Ser.) CCXXVIII. 112.

taken. While describing his own position as neutral he expressed the opinion that although the proclamation had been "carelessly framed" no practical result was "likely to follow from the division — nothing but the roll-call of one Party."<sup>1</sup> In spite of his large majority in parliament the controversy gave anxious moments to Disraeli<sup>2</sup> and made the Queen "nervous and upset."<sup>3</sup>

The Opposition had, however, achieved an important result. They had all along expressed strong fears that the new title, through popular and careless use, would corrupt and ultimately replace the old English titles of 'King' and 'Queen' in England. These fears brought from Disraeli, with the Queen's consent,<sup>4</sup> strong assurances to the House that "under no circumstances would Her Majesty assume, by the advice of Her Ministers, the title of Empress in England."<sup>5</sup> He further assured that imperial titles would not be conferred upon members of the royal family and that any such step would be "entirely disapproved of."<sup>6</sup> Disraeli was himself aware of the rational objections

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid. CCXXIX. 417-21.

<sup>2</sup> Disraeli to Lady Bradford. March 10, 1876. Monypenny and Buckle. ii. 807.

<sup>3</sup> Lady Ely to Disraeli. March 21, 1876. Hughenden Papers. B/XIX/B/479. The letter is also partly cited in Monypenny and Buckle. ii. 809. How strongly the Queen felt on the matter may best be seen from her various letters on the subject in Victoria's Letters. Chapter XV.

<sup>4</sup> Queen Victoria to Disraeli. March 18, 1876. Monypenny and Buckle. ii. 808-9. Queen Victoria to Sir T. Martin. March 14, 1876. Victoria's Letters. ii. 450-1; also Ponsonby. op. cit. p. 141.

<sup>5</sup> Hansard. (Third Ser.) CCXXVIII. 273.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

that could be argued against the proposal and had explained them with force for the Queen's consideration.<sup>1</sup>

The second objection of the Opposition came over Disraeli's statement in parliament that the new title was a response to the desire of the Indian princes and people when no evidence to support this contention was produced. While introducing the Bill, Disraeli had stated that the proposed addition was "a step which will give great satisfaction not merely to the Princes, but to the nations of India. They look forward to some Act of this kind with intense interest, and by various modes they have conveyed to us their desire that such a policy should be pursued."<sup>2</sup> A few days later he reiterated:

It is not without consideration, it is not without the utmost care, it is not until after the deepest thought that we have felt it our duty to introduce this Bill into Parliament. It is desired in India. It is anxiously expected. The Princes and nations of India — unless we are deceived, and we have omitted no means by which we could obtain information and form opinions — look to it with the utmost interest. They know exactly what it means, though there may be some hon. Members in this House who do not. They know in India what this Bill means, and they know that what it means is what they wish.<sup>3</sup>

That these were highly inflated claims and not based on very

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<sup>1</sup> Disraeli to Queen Victoria. January 21, 1876. Victoria's Letters. ii. 440.

<sup>2</sup> Hansard. (Third Ser.) CCXXVII. 410.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. 1727.

convincing evidence was proved during the subsequent proceedings. The Opposition was quick to challenge the accuracy of such statements and fully exploited the weakness of the government case by embarrassing it through repeated demands to produce such evidence before the House. Bernhard Samuelson, liberal member for Banbury, opened the Opposition attack<sup>1</sup> in this regard and was vigorously supported by Gladstone to whom it was a "moral" and "parliamentary" right for the House to have such information.<sup>2</sup> Gladstone, desiring to "avoid all hasty and precipitate declarations of opinion" on the issue in order to avoid division on the Bill,<sup>3</sup> joined the debate only after Disraeli had announced the proposed title. In a strong attack against the imperial title Gladstone elaborated what Sir Edward Colebrooke<sup>4</sup> had earlier<sup>5</sup> merely hinted at. Gladstone believed that the proposed measure had created "misgiving and mistrust in every portion of society" that he was familiar with.<sup>6</sup> Further criticising the despotic govern-

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid. 1727-30.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. 1736.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. 1733.

<sup>4</sup> Sir Thomas Edward Colebrooke. 1813-1890. M.P. for Taunton 1842-52; M.P. for Lanarkshire 1857-68; M.P. for North Lanarkshire 1868-85; president of Royal Asiatic Society 1864-66, 1875-77 and 1881; among other works author of Life of Mountstuart Elphinstone. 1884.

<sup>5</sup> Hansard. (Third Ser.) CCXXVII. 422-3.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid. 1734.

ment in India, devoid of any free institutions, he hoped that the assumption of the imperial title would "not attempt to turn into glory that which, so far as it is true, I feel to be our weakness and our calamity."<sup>1</sup> He reminded parliament of the presence of various sovereign princes in India over whom the British paramountcy was never established, "whatever may have been our superiority of strength."<sup>2</sup> He added that it was through the assumption of the imperial title that "we are now going to assume that dominion, the possible consequences of which no man can foresee."<sup>3</sup> He warned that even though many Indian princes enjoyed only nominal political independence they would not "desire to surrender even that" under the new title.<sup>4</sup> To change the status of Indian princes would be, he considered, "an act of temerity almost approaching to insanity."<sup>5</sup> Therefore, he advised against taking a step that England "may possibly have to regret or retract."<sup>6</sup>

Several appeals for further time and consideration were made by the Opposition and were endorsed by Lord Hartington although he was not disposed to divide on the principle of the measure.<sup>7</sup> Lord

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid. 1737.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. 1739.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid. 1740.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid. 1757-8.



Granville had, in fact, suggested to the Queen the need "for more time for a calm consideration"<sup>1</sup> of the issue. However, all attempts by the Opposition to gain time failed and the subsequent motion for adjournment was defeated overwhelmingly by 284 to 31 votes.<sup>2</sup> The Liberal Opposition and particularly the radical wing continued to press for more concrete evidence on the Indian feelings. Ernest Noel's demand<sup>3</sup> that the government should lay upon the table of the House any papers or dispatches on the subject from the governor-general or any other authority in India was declined by Disraeli under the plea that it was not "expedient" to produce them since they involved political considerations touching upon the particular title contemplated by the Queen.<sup>4</sup> Sir William Harcourt, "always hostile to the spirit and forms of Imperialism",<sup>5</sup> believed that the effects of the measure would be "disastrous" in India as it would mean "a complete and most dangerous change in the whole scheme of our Indian government" and which he wanted to "resist."<sup>6</sup> Criticising the Bill

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<sup>1</sup> Lord Granville to Queen Victoria. March 18, 1876. cit. Fitzmaurice. op. cit. ii. 162-3.

<sup>2</sup> Hansard. (Third Ser.) CCXXVII. 1759.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. 1867.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. 1867-8.

<sup>5</sup> Gardiner. op. cit. i. 302-3.

<sup>6</sup> Harcourt to Lord Hartington. March 11, 1876. cit. Ibid. i. 302-3. It read: "Thinking over the matter as regards India I believe the measure will be most disastrous . . . . Holkar, Scindia, the Nizam and the Rajpoots represent houses whose proudest tradition is that they successfully threw off the yoke of the Emperor of Delhi. To tell them that the Queen claims to revive that authority, which for a century and a half they have repudiated, is a complete and most dangerous change in the whole scheme of our Indian government."

as "political fireworks in a powder magazine",<sup>1</sup> Sir William Harcourt demanded to know if the government had asked for the advice of the governor-general and his council or the India council at home.<sup>2</sup> Disraeli once again evaded the issue by saying that since no change was to be effected in government in India and its relations with the Indian princes, the government had not considered such an advice necessary.<sup>3</sup> However, it may be pointed out here that Lord Salisbury, the secretary of state for India, had "informally" consulted his India council and conveyed to Disraeli the "prevailing view", although there was "some difference of opinion", that the council believed that the authority over the native princes had been "again and again asserted by the British Paramount in formal documents and by personal acts", and that "Padishah", the imperial Mughal title would best be translated in English by the titles "Empress" and "Emperor".<sup>4</sup> These views of the India council were never brought before parliament.

Disraeli's case was obviously weak and he was evasive in his replies in this regard. Whatever paltry information the government produced came in stages as the Bill progressed through parliament and it was Sir Stafford Northcote, afterwards Lord Iddesleigh, who came to Disraeli's rescue. Pointing out that the title was no innova-

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<sup>1</sup> Hansard. (Third Ser.) CCXXVIII. 103.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. CCXXVII. 2013.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. 2013-14.

<sup>4</sup> Lord Salisbury to Disraeli. March 14, 1876. Hughenden Papers. B/XIX/F/3.

tion and had been previously applied in India he referred to a letter by Lord Northbrook written in 1873 to the Amir of Yarkand wherein the governor-general had described Victoria as "the Queen of India and the Empress of Hindostan."<sup>1</sup> He further produced an extract from an address presented by the Talooqadars of Oudh to Lord Northbrook on December 12, 1873, which read:

We would entreat your Excellency to assure Her Majesty, Empress of Hindostan, of our eternal gratitude and constant loyalty . . . In conclusion, we earnestly beg your Excellency to convey to our beloved Sovereign our long-wished-for and fervent prayer that Her Majesty, in addition to her numerous high titles, be graciously pleased to be called in accordance with the immemorable usage of our country.<sup>2</sup>

The chancellor of the exchequer further quoted from some addresses from certain Indian chiefs,<sup>3</sup> sent to the Queen upon the Prince of Wales recovery in 1872, wherein the Queen had been addressed as "Empress". He repudiated Gladstone's objections regarding the sovereign status of some Indian princes as there was not a "single Native state which has the right of declaring war or of making peace Treaties."<sup>4</sup> Their status, he added, was that of

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<sup>1</sup> Hansard. (Third Ser.) CCXXVII. 1749.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. 1750.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. CCXXVIII. 96. They included the ex-king of Oudh, Raja of Dholapur and the Maharaja of Jeypur. The address from the last named, written in English, was addressed "To her most Gracious Majesty Victoria, Queen of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, and of the Colonies, Empress of Hindostan."

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. 90.

"feudatory and subordinate states" which was "most accurately described" by the proposed imperial title,<sup>1</sup> and without which the transfer of India to the direct government of the crown remained "incomplete."<sup>2</sup> To impress further the need of such a step he quoted from Lord Canning's dispatch of 1858 in which he had recommended:

A time so opportune for the step can never occur again. The last vestiges of the Royal House of Delhi, from which, for our own convenience, we had long been content to accept a vicarious authority, have been swept away. The last pretender for the representation of the Peishwah has disappeared. The Crown of England stands forth the unquestioned ruler and paramount Power in all India, and is, for the first time, brought face to face with its feudatories. There is a reality in the Suzerainty of the Sovereignty of England which has never existed before, and which is not only felt but eagerly acknowledged by the Chiefs.<sup>3</sup>

Sir William Fraser, another conservative member informed the House that Maharajah Dhuleep Singh,<sup>4</sup> living in England at the time, was in favour of the imperial title as it would be "most pleasing to the people of India."<sup>5</sup> Sir George Campbell<sup>6</sup> was quite enthusiastic about the proposed addition as, he felt, it would "distinctly

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid. 91.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. 96.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. 92.

<sup>4</sup> Maharajah Dhuleep Singh. 1838-93. son of Ranjeet Singh, ruler of the Punjab; deposed and granted pension after the conquest of Punjab 1849; went to England; converted to christianity; on government's rejection to settle his claims he left England for India 1885; re-embraced sikhism; stayed some time in Russia; died in Paris 1893.

<sup>5</sup> Hansard. (Third Ser.) CCXXVII. 307.

<sup>6</sup> Sir George Campbell 1824-1892 ; joined Indian service in 1842; appointed lieutenant governor of Bengal 1871-74; entered parliament as a liberal member in 1875. In all divisions on the Bill in parliament he voted with the Liberals.

mark the Imperial character of our rule."<sup>1</sup> He believed that the time had come for the English sovereign to "assume in name, as in effect, the position hitherto occupied by the Great Mogul in India."<sup>2</sup> Sir Edward Colebrooke, who associated the Mughals with tyranny, protested and "deprecated" that a member so familiar with India should advise the English sovereign "to assume the powers of the Great Mogul."<sup>3</sup> Sir George Campbell, in defence of his remarks argued:

...the memory of the Great Mogul was not one that excited either laughter or hatred in India. His memory and name were very great. It might be that, judged by a modern standard, his Empire was not a perfect one; but judged by the standards of the 18th century, it was very great and glorious, and was in many respects an excellent and good Empire. It was remarkable for religious toleration to a degree that did not exist in Europe in those days. Hindoos were tolerated, and placed in a social position under that Empire which Non conformists had not then attained in Great Britain . . . Great arts, great monuments, great laws, many great reminiscences of that Empire had made the memory of the Great Mogul a power in India which continued to the present day.<sup>4</sup>

He, however, preferred the title of "Queen" against that of "Empress" as there were no kings but only princes in India.<sup>5</sup> In fact he supported a Liberal amendment to provide sufficient safeguards to maintain the parliamentary supremacy in India as against

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<sup>1</sup> Hansard. (Third Ser.) CCXXVII. 417.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. 422.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. 1730-31.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid. 1732.

a "confirmation of a system of absolutism" already prevailing in India.<sup>1</sup> Another liberal member Grant-Duff<sup>2</sup> criticised the government for its handling of the measure in parliament and, considering the imperial title "disagreeable to British ears", favoured other titles such as "Sovereign Lady" or "Lady Paramount."<sup>3</sup> P.B. Smollett,<sup>4</sup> a conservative member for Cambridge and with 30 years' experience in India, supported the new title as he believed that the assumption of a "titular dignity in India" by the Queen would give the Indian people "the greatest possible satisfaction."<sup>5</sup> He added that such an assumption by the Queen would be looked upon in India as "a proof that she was proud of her eastern dominions, and the princes would regard the act as a renewed pledge of her protection to them for the future."<sup>6</sup> J.W. Pease,<sup>7</sup> a liberal member for South Durham, looked upon the title as "an insult to the people of India" and demanded that the government institutions in India "should be made more constitutional like England."<sup>8</sup> The Liberal concern for constitutional develop-

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid. CCXXVIII. 303-6.

<sup>2</sup> Sir M.E. Grant-Duff. 1829-1906 ; under secretary of state for India 1868-74; visited India in 1874; appointed governor of Madras 1881-86.

<sup>3</sup> Hansard. (Third Ser.) CCXXVIII. 124.

<sup>4</sup> P.B. Smollett. 1805-95 ; entered Madras civil service in 1825; agent to the governor-general at Vizigapatam 1847-51 and 1856-57; M.P. for Dumbartonshire 1859-68 and for Cambridge 1874-80.

<sup>5</sup> Hansard. (Third Ser.) CCXXVII. 1754.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid. 1757.

<sup>7</sup> Sir Joseph Whitwell Pease, first baronet. 1828-1903; liberal M.P. for South Durham 1865-85; strong supporter of Gladstone.

<sup>8</sup> Hansard. (Third Ser.) CCXXVIII. 309-14.

ment as a basic goal of British rule in India was succinctly expressed by George Anderson, member for Glasgow. Instead of carrying a despotic title to India, he argued, England ought to give the people of India the hope that "they might in time arrive at representative institutions like our own — we ought to give them a share in our own Royal title."<sup>1</sup> Further quoting from Indian newspapers opposed to the new title, Anderson observed that the Indian people, instead of regarding it as a good-will gesture "in return for the hospitable reception they had given to the Prince of Wales, looked upon it with very great disfavour indeed."<sup>2</sup> He expressed grave fears that instead of affecting any good, the new proposal might "stir up feelings of quite another kind."<sup>3</sup> He added:

There were many educated Natives who recognized and appreciated our institutions, and was this title of Empress to be sent to them as a message of peace and good will? Was the House to stamp that despotic title upon them in perpetuity, and would it not be far more worthy of the country and safer for our rule, to leave India a share in our own old constitutional title, and a hope that they might in time without revolution, and without upsetting the British Raj, work out for themselves by degrees some of those constitutional forms of government which were the chief glory of ourselves and our colonies, but which were hardly compatible with the title of Empress.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid. 481.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. 484.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. 140.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. 140-1.

It may, however, be asserted that there was a consensus in the Commons, both among the Liberals and Conservatives, regarding recognition of India in the royal style and titles. They only differed as to the form in which the recognition was to be affected, which further shows the exclusively classical or Roman significance, rather than the contemporary colonial connotation, attached to the imperial title.

Another strong objection raised by the Opposition was against the exclusion of colonies from the scope of the proposed title. Soon after Disraeli introduced the Bill in Commons on February 17, Lowe declared that to include India in the imperial title and to omit the colonies would be an extraordinary favour to the former and a slight upon the latter.<sup>1</sup> W.E. Forster, a leading liberal and known for his strong imperialist sympathies, supported Lowe.<sup>2</sup> Disraeli, in his defence, referred to the Act of 1801 which entitled George III to adopt "a style and title appertaining to the Imperial Crown of the United Kingdom and its dependencies" but did not do so on the grounds that the dependencies were included in the title that he eventually adopted.<sup>3</sup> Disraeli believed that no distinction should be drawn in the royal style between the subjects of the Queen in the United Kingdom and those in the colonies.<sup>4</sup> The government seemed determined

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<sup>1</sup> Hansard. (Third Ser.) CCXXVII. 416-7.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. 421.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. 425.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. 425-6.



not to give way on the issue of the colonies and, introducing the second reading of the Bill, Disraeli refuted the Opposition charge of ignoring the interests of the colonies. He declared:

No one honours more than myself the colonial empire of England; no one is more anxious to maintain it.<sup>1</sup>

In substantiating the government position regarding the colonies Disraeli made some excessive remarks about the character of the colonists. To prove that the existing relations of the colonists to the crown were ample, he depicted the colonist as one who "finds a nugget, or he fleeces a thousand flocks."<sup>2</sup> He makes a fortune, returns to England, dwells near Hyde Park, attends Court Levies and drawing-rooms, and, thus far from requiring connection with the sovereign through any title, "he is in frequent and direct communication with her." To the further annoyance of the former colonists, Disraeli went on to say that the colonists "look forward to return when they leave England, they do return — in short, they are Englishmen."<sup>3</sup> Disraeli had somewhat overstated his case and provoked indignant protests from the Opposition who viewed such remarks as misrepresentation of the colonial life and character. Sir William Harcourt argued that an exclusion of the colonies from the new title would represent "India as the prodigal and the colonies as the faithful

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid. 1726.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. See below Chapter VI. p. 260.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

ones."<sup>1</sup> Disraeli soon realised the looseness of his remarks and explained that he had made those observations "perhaps in a lighter vein than suited the subject." He added:

When I made the remarks referred to I certainly had no intention of describing our colonial fellow-subjects as a migratory population, nor did I do so. What I wished to convey to the House was, that from the happy accidents of their colonial life a considerable number of the subjects of the Queen, after being settled for some years in the colonies, do visit and return to their country, and that thus maintained active relations between her colonial subjects and the Sovereign which do not exist with respect to her subjects in India.<sup>2</sup>

The only public petition of some note for the inclusion of the colonies in the new title came from the Royal Colonial Institute. Hailing the Queen's intention to make an addition in her style in connection with India, it petitioned the crown for a similar recognition for the colonies.<sup>3</sup>

To consider the Opposition demand for including the colonies in the new title, Disraeli entertained and discussed with the Queen and his Cabinet<sup>4</sup> the possibility of creating the Queen's two younger sons as dukes of Canada and Australia while making the Prince of Wales 'Prince Imperial' of India. Lord Carnarvon, the colonial sec-

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid. CCXXVIII. 1746.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. 279.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. 146.

<sup>4</sup> Victoria's Letters. op. cit. ii. 448-9; also Monypenny and Buckle. ii. 806.

retary, when consulted on the issue, opposed it as he believed that "the proposal will not harmonise with the general temper, that it will be looked upon as an inferior and second-rate recognition of Canada and Australia and one dictated by the desire to escape from a Parliamentary difficulty."<sup>1</sup> He preferred the "complete omission" of the colonies than any "indirect" recognition of their claims.<sup>2</sup> Besides, the Prince of Wales had expressed "strong repugnance" to any addition in his style.<sup>3</sup> Thus the idea was dropped.

Disraeli, further defending the official stand vis-à-vis the colonies and against the Opposition amendment<sup>4</sup> to include the colonies in the new title, considered such a step unwise in view of the rapidly changing status of the colonies and particularly the prevailing sentiment in the great settlements that they "should no longer be regarded as merely colonies and dependencies."<sup>5</sup> Moreover, he argued, no pressing reason existed in their case for such a change as in India, and while "we must not by any means despair some day of expressing in a happier manner the relations between the sovereign and the colonies", the government was unwilling to advise such a recognition at the time.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Lord Carnarvon to Disraeli. March 20, 1876. Hughenden Papers. B/XIX/B/478.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Monypenny and Buckle. ii. 806.

<sup>4</sup> Hansard. (Third Ser.) CCXXVIII. 276-8.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid. 279.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid. 280.

Forster and Lowe supported the amendment; Gladstone did not show much enthusiasm for pressing the issue although he would not "be a party to their exclusion."<sup>1</sup> However, the amendment, after a moderate discussion, was withdrawn by the Opposition.<sup>2</sup>

All amendments in committee were either negatived or withdrawn and Disraeli, delighted over "the most unusual feat", believed that the Bill would be carried "unanimously" in the third reading.<sup>3</sup> The Bill came before the Commons for final reading on March 23. Repudiating the Opposition assertions that the measure was not popular in the country, he referred to many letters that he said he was receiving from his English correspondents on the subject and quoted two of them in parliament; one from a twelve year old school girl who had read the Queen's imperial title in her school geography book in 1873; and the other from a nonconformist clergyman quoting the use of the imperial title of the Queen in Whitaker's Almanac of 1861.<sup>4</sup>

Disraeli, who in his earlier speeches on the Bill, had spoken of the "political considerations of the highest character"<sup>5</sup> as justification for the proposed measure but had never elaborated on them, startled the House by stating that the measure was being proposed

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid. CCXXVII. 1746; again CCXXVIII. 292.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. 294.

<sup>3</sup> Disraeli to Lady Bradford. March 21, 1876. Monypenny and Buckle. ii. 809.

<sup>4</sup> Hansard. (Third Ser.) CCXXVIII. 498-9.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid. CCXXVII. 1867-68; CCXXVIII. 293.

to counter the Russian advance in central Asia. It was completely ill-timed as the debate appeared to have, for all practical purposes, closed, and another division at that stage was not expected.<sup>1</sup> He declared that the imperial title was proposed as a means to check the Russian advance towards the Indian frontiers and would stimulate loyalty and confidence among the peoples of India.<sup>2</sup> In a dramatic fashion, referring to the fall of Tartary, he announced that the people of India were not only "well acquainted with the power which has accomplished this great change, but they know well the title of the Great Prince who had brought about so powerful a revolution."<sup>3</sup> He added:

The frontiers of Russia, I will not say a rival Power, but the frontiers of Russia — are only a few days' march from those of Her Majesty's dominions in India . . . This announcement . . . will signify in a manner which cannot be mistaken, that the Parliament of England is resolved to uphold the Empire of India.<sup>4</sup>

This imprudent<sup>5</sup> statement was received with "astonishment

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<sup>1</sup> Annual Register. 1876. p. 16.

<sup>2</sup> Hansard. CCXXVIII. 500.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. 501.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. 500-1.

<sup>5</sup> The falseness of this contention was vividly demonstrated a month later when in defending himself against charges of Russophobic views, as evidenced in his speech on the final reading of the Bill in Commons, he adopted a posture which virtually contradicted his earlier stand. Hansard. (Third Ser.) CCXXIX. 107-40.

and irritation, slightly qualified by amusement and incredulity."<sup>1</sup> Joseph Cowen,<sup>2</sup> an important radical member from Newcastle, in a vigorous speech opposed the measure and described Disraeli's speech "in some parts solemn, and in some parts frivolous."<sup>3</sup> He viewed the imperial title as the first "but a substantial step, towards abolishing the time-honoured and historic title of Queen of England, and supplanting it by tawdry common-place, and vulgar designation of Empress."<sup>4</sup> Henry Fawcett denounced Disraeli's speech as "rash and dangerous."<sup>5</sup> Lowe, bitterly but aptly criticised Disraeli for having fed the House in instalments by delivering a succession of speeches, each containing "some variation, some addition, and some alteration" of that previously uttered,<sup>6</sup> and mocked his speech as "lispings of nursery."<sup>7</sup> This bitter onslaught from the Liberals forced another division in the Commons which the government won

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<sup>1</sup> George Carslake Thompson. Public Opinion and Lord Beaconsfield, 1876-80. London. 1886. i. 273.

<sup>2</sup> Joseph Cowen. 1829-1900; politician and journalist; from early life interested and associated himself with revolutionary movements; sympathised with chartists; entered parliament in 1873 for Newcastle; reelected in 1874 and retired in 1885. This was Cowen's maiden speech in parliament and created a great impression and Disraeli sent his compliments. Dictionary of National Biography. supplement ii. 73.

<sup>3</sup> Hansard. (Third Ser.) CCXXVIII. 501.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. 504.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid. 512.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid. 514.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid. 515.

by 209 to 134 votes.<sup>1</sup>

The Bill moved to the Lords immediately on March 30 and was read a second time without division though not without comment. However, the discussion was largely a repetition of the opinions expressed in the Commons. The chief criticism focused on the assumed impossibility of restricting the use of the new title to India alone. The duke of Somerset believed Disraeli to be "intoxicated by the atmosphere of the Court" whereby he wanted to pay a compliment to the Queen in making her an Empress.<sup>2</sup> Regarding India he believed that the people and princes were being "subjugated to a yoke which in England we will not bear."<sup>3</sup> The "fantastic innovation", he added, would not have "any other effect than the humiliation of the Crown."<sup>4</sup> Lord Napier and Ettrick,<sup>5</sup> who had held important positions in India, although he did not consider the prime minister's remarks on Russia "perfectly discreet" or "most appropriate", felt that the assumption of a new title would "strengthen the authority of the Indian Government" and manifest the British deter-

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid. 516.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. 832.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. 834. The Queen was very much annoyed over the "most ungentlemanlike and unusual" language of the duke of Somerset. Victoria's Letters. ii. 451.

<sup>5</sup> Lord Napier and Ettrick 1819-1898 ; after holding important diplomatic positions in Europe and America, was appointed governor of Madras 1866-72; acted as viceroy of India after Lord Mayo's death in 1872 till Lord Northbrook's arrival.

mination "to maintain inviolable its rights with reference to India."<sup>1</sup> He, however, favoured "Paramount Sovereign"<sup>2</sup> as the new title for the Queen and absented from the division in the Lords<sup>3</sup> on Lord Shaftesbury's motion against the imperial title. Lord Lawrence,<sup>4</sup> although he felt that any addition to the Queen's style would be received in India "with pleasure by the greatest mass of the people" doubted if it would have "any real and permanent influence on their minds, or be any additional source of power to our Indian Empire."<sup>5</sup> In fact, he feared that "the grace, and honour, and influence" of the Queen's name in India would be "somewhat diminished" if she adopted a title that was disapproved in England.<sup>6</sup> Moreover, he believed that the title "Empress" would not be understood by the majority of the people in India and would thus fail to convey its true implications to them. Therefore, he preferred a title from Indian classical languages which would convey to the people "the power and authority" of the British sovereign<sup>7</sup> and supported Lord Shaftesbury's resolution in the Lords.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Hansard. (Third Ser.) CCXXVIII. 835.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. 840 and 1067.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. 1092-94.

<sup>4</sup> John Laird Mair Lord Lawrence; 1811-89; first arrived in India in 1830; held many important positions in India; appointed viceroy 1864-69; generally voted with the Liberals though not a party man.

<sup>5</sup> Hansard. (Third Ser.) CCXXVIII. 847.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid. 1091-92.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid. 1092-94.



Lord Stanley of Alderley wanted all "faithful subjects" of the Queen to oppose the new title which he considered "fraught with danger to the Crown in England, and calculated to impair the stability of the Queen's overseas dominions."<sup>1</sup> Further he believed that assumptions of titles from foreign possessions had always been "ill-omened and ephemeral."<sup>2</sup> Lord Granville, opposed to the measure from the beginning, denounced Disraeli's Russian argument as "a rhetorical after-thought — not a very happy one."<sup>3</sup> Lord Rosebery, opposed to the measure though keen to avoid any division on the Bill, believed that the official assurances to restrict the new title only to India were a clear indication of the government's realisation that there was strong opposition against the title in England and introduced an element of humour in stressing that the title might be labelled "Poisonous — for outward application only."<sup>4</sup> He considered the proposal "derogatory to the Crown, as well as unwise and unnecessary."<sup>5</sup>

On the government side it was largely a repetition of what had already been said in the Commons. Lord Cairns, the lord chancellor,

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid. 851.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. 853.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. 859.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. 1084.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid. 1085.

quoted at length the views of Dr. Duff<sup>1</sup> who had strongly supported the new title. Dr. Duff was reported to have stated:

Remember the tie that exists between us and . . . India. There is no such tie between this country and any other kingdom of heathenism. We have conquered these tribes, every throne in India is prostrate at our feet, and the Princes and Rajahs are feudatories of Queen Victoria . . . This tie is peculiar and intensely providential. There is thus an obligation laid upon us by Providence to do this work, and if the British Parliament will do what India has done without being consulted in the matter — regard our Queen Victoria as Empress of India, and the successor of the Great Mogul Emperor — the connection between this country and India will be closer than ever it was.<sup>2</sup>

The Earl of Feversham, supporting the measure, referred to the use of the title "Empress of India" by Lord Lawrence in 1867 while presiding over a durbar.<sup>3</sup> This was, however, denied by Lord Lawrence as he had used a local word and not the word "Empress."<sup>4</sup> Lord Carnarvon, in his emphasis on the historical tradition that centered on the title Emperor in India as was demonstrated during the uprising of 1857 when the old king of Delhi was proclaimed as 'Emperor of India', argued that "the Queen of England, as the Empress

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<sup>1</sup> Alexander Duff. 1806-1878; the Church of Scotland's first missionary to India in 1830; editor Calcutta Review 1845-49; president General Assembly of The Free Church of Scotland 1851 and 1873; virtual governor of the University of Calcutta 1857-63; among other works author of India and India Missions. 1840.

<sup>2</sup> Hansard. (Third Ser.) CCXXVIII. 1054. Later in a letter to Lady Durand, Dr. Duff wrote that the measure "was miserably bungled and mismanaged in Parliament through the wretched spirit of political partisanship." Dr. Duff to Lady Durand. December 23, 1876. cit. George Smith. Life of Alexander Duff. London 1879. ii. 526.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. 1080.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. 1091-92.

of India, shall, as it were, take up the thread of history, and gather round her all the feelings and traditions which the title of Empress of India represents."<sup>1</sup> Further, refuting the Opposition assumptions that the imperial title was "personal in its nature" and was being adopted "from personal considerations", he believed that it would be "an addition to the honours of the state." He considered the assumption of the imperial title to be "the embodiment of the rule and dignity of England — it is the State carried up, so far as words can carry it, to its highest attributes."<sup>2</sup>

The chief opposition to the proposed title in the Lords came from Lord Shaftesbury on April 3, when he formally moved a resolution for an address to the crown praying for the adoption of a title "more in accordance than the title Empress with the history of the Nation and with the loyalty and feelings" of her subjects.<sup>3</sup> He referred to his interview on the subject with a large group of Indians who un-animously expressed to him their dislike for a title which would have "an air military, despotic, and offensive and intolerable."<sup>4</sup> Lord Shaftesbury believed that India would not gain anything except "a name which is repudiated by the English people", and such a distinction would "turn the Natives from unity of heart, unity of spirit, and

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid. 1088.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. 1089.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. 1047.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. 1042.

a sense of common rights" from the English people.<sup>1</sup> He considered it against the interest and dignity of the English crown to accept a title conferred without "full and enthusiastic unanimity" of the people.<sup>2</sup> Moreover, he feared that, in days of economic distress and general discontent, people would be emboldened to say, "you are trying to turn your King into an Emperor; we also shall be making an effort to turn him into a President."<sup>3</sup>

It required courage of conviction to express such a frankly honest opinion particularly when during the discussion of the Bill in parliament, Lord Shaftesbury had been telegraphically invited by the Queen to stay at Windsor Castle. It was twenty years since Shaftesbury had been so invited by the Queen.<sup>4</sup> The fact that the royal influence was being exercised to solicit a more positive response towards the Bill in parliament was well known at the time.<sup>5</sup>

A long and heated debate followed Lord Shaftesbury's resolution which was defeated by 137 to 91 votes in the Lords.<sup>6</sup> Eight dukes and "many habitual Courtiers" voted with the minority against "a vul-

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid. 1047.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. 1044.

<sup>4</sup> Edwin Hodder. The Life and Work of the Earl of Shaftesbury. London 1887. iii. 367.

<sup>5</sup> Lord Granville had told Ponsonby that "the Queen had not acted constitutionally in trying to influence votes." Ponsonby. op. cit. p. 141.

<sup>6</sup> Hansard. (Third Ser.) CCXXVIII. 1092.

gar and impolitic innovation."<sup>1</sup> Gathorne-Hardy, war secretary in Disraeli's cabinet, commenting on the division in the Lords, wrote: "The Lords gave a majority of 46 for the titles Bill, but there is apathy about it, and indeed the subject can hardly kindle enthusiasm."<sup>2</sup> The Bill finally passed its third reading in the Lords on April 7 without further division.<sup>3</sup> It received the royal assent on April 27 and the royal proclamation was issued the next day.<sup>4</sup>

That the Royal Titles Bill was steered through parliament with considerable haste can hardly be contested. The government realised that "the sooner we get rid of the Bill the better".<sup>5</sup> Lord Hartington blamed the government for "unnecessary haste",<sup>6</sup> and John Bright considered the "extraordinary" speed and urgency and the "degree of . . . compulsion" with which the whole measure was pushed through as "unusual" in parliamentary legislation.<sup>7</sup>

Meanwhile when more information became available from India on the local reaction towards the new title, the Opposition, particularly

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<sup>1</sup> The Saturday Review. April 16, 1876. p. 476.

<sup>2</sup> Alfred E. Gathorne-Hardy (ed.). Gathorne Hardy, first Earl of Cranbrook; a memoir, with extracts from his diary and correspondence. London 1910. i. 360-1.

<sup>3</sup> Hansard. (Third Ser.) CCXXVIII. 1386-93.

<sup>4</sup> See Appendix B.

<sup>5</sup> Duke of Richmond and Gordon to Disraeli. April 18, 1876. Hughenden Papers. B/XX/Le/109.

<sup>6</sup> Hansard. (Third Ser.) CCXXVIII. 1769.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid. 1770-71.

the radical group, was up in arms again. In view of the latest information from India, falsifying Disraeli's statements that the Bill was introduced in response to Indian desires, the radical members Fawcett,<sup>1</sup> Cowen<sup>2</sup> and Anderson<sup>3</sup> strongly urged reconsideration of the whole issue. After a heated debate Fawcett's motion<sup>4</sup> was withdrawn as it was interpreted to be a vote of censure against the government.<sup>5</sup> Disraeli had himself confessed privately that "the accounts from India prove dislike" for the new title.<sup>6</sup>

When the royal proclamation was issued on April 28 the issue flared up again for a brief time, as under its provisions the new title was to be used, not in India alone, but outside of the United Kingdom. The new title was to be generally employed in legal documents except those which did not extend in their operation beyond the United Kingdom. Further restrictions were left to custom. The Opposition in both Houses contended that the proclamation had failed

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid. 1576.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. 1757.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. 1764-65.

<sup>4</sup> Fawcett's motion was written by Sir Charles W. Dilke. See Stephen Gwynn and G.M. Tuckwell. Life of Sir Charles W. Dilke. New York 1917. i. 196.

<sup>5</sup> Hansard. (Third Ser.) CCXXVIII. 1778.

<sup>6</sup> Disraeli to Rowton. April 28, 1876. Hughenden Papers. B/XX/D/270.

to carry out the government promises to restrict the title to India alone. A resolution by the Opposition censuring the government for breach of faith was defeated in the Commons by 334 to 226 votes.<sup>1</sup> An unpleasant stir was further caused when Robert Lowe's statement at East Retford<sup>2</sup> that two previous prime ministers had evaded the Queen's suggestion for the title, was brought to the notice of the House. Gladstone at once denied this through a letter to the press<sup>3</sup> and wrote to the Queen<sup>4</sup> accordingly. It was further denied in parliament by Disraeli on the Queen's authority that such proposals were "ever made to any minister at any time."<sup>5</sup> Lowe was left "in the

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<sup>1</sup> Hansard. (Third Ser.) CCXXIX. 470. Lord Granville was not in favour of a vote of censure but would not like the government "to go perfectly scot free." Lord Granville to Mr. Gladstone. May 1, 1876. cit. Agatha Ramm. op. cit. ii. 483-4.

<sup>2</sup> Addressing a public meeting at East Retford on April 18, Lowe stated: "I strongly suspect that this is not now brought forward for the first time. I violate no confidence, because I have received none, but I am under a conviction that at least two previous Ministers have entirely refused, though pressed to do so, to have anything to do, with the proposed addition to the Queen's titles . . . it is not merely the pressure put on members of Parliament — more than political pressure, — but the whole matter has been carried in such a manner as to raise in my mind the most painful apprehension that it is only the beginning of much evil, which might by the least effort of manliness and straightforwardness have been averted if the Minister of the Crown had had the courage to tell Her Majesty that he would not, any more than his predecessors, lend himself to such a course, which he believed in his conscience to be injurious to her Crown and dignity." The Times. April 20, 1876. p. 4. Annual Register. 1876. pp. 47-8.

<sup>3</sup> The Observer. April 23, 1876; The Manchester Guardian. April 24, 1876; also Annual Register. 1876. p. 48.

<sup>4</sup> Gladstone to Ponsonby. April 21, 1876. cit. Philip Guedalla. The Queen and Mr. Gladstone. London 1933. i. 455.

<sup>5</sup> Hansard. (Third Ser.) CCXXVIII. 2037.

mud"<sup>1</sup> and two days later made an abject apology.<sup>2</sup>

That the proposed addition was open to objection is obvious. Disraeli could have softened the opposition considerably and could have saved the Bill from becoming a party issue by handling it more tactfully. He might very well have substituted some other title, as many were suggested, for the imperial one. He, however, believed that to yield would be "an act of weakness, not of conciliation . . . . If you want to govern the world you must know how to say 'Bo' to a goose. And what is the use of power, if you don't make people do what they don't like?"<sup>3</sup> These somewhat cavalier reflections were safe enough after the event for a prime minister with a secure majority in parliament. Moreover, Disraeli had complete support of his 'Royal Mistress' to sustain such an attitude. During the controversy when it was rumoured that the Queen was against the measure in view of its strong opposition in the country, she strongly contradicted it and assured Disraeli: "you know how anxious I am for the measure — How is it anyone could suppose otherwise."<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Disraeli to Lady Chesterfield. cit. Monypenny and Buckle. ii. 819; also Robert Blake. Disraeli. New York. 1967. p. 564.

<sup>2</sup> Hansard. (Third Ser.) CCXXIX. 52.

<sup>3</sup> Disraeli to Lady Chesterfield. April 2, 1876. Zetland. op. cit. ii. 33.

<sup>4</sup> Ponsonby to Disraeli. March 15, 1876. Hughenden Papers. B/XIX/B/467; and again on March 16, 1876. B/XIX/B/471. The Queen had also told Ponsonby that "she could not think of withdrawing it. All England had thought she was Empress of India. This Bill only affirmed the popular impression. To withdraw the Bill would be to assume she was rebuffed, when no such desire existed." cit. Ponsonby. op. cit. p. 139.



On the other hand opposition to the new title was, in some degree, based on strong fears and suspicions, aggravated by Disraeli's attitude, and was partly factious.<sup>1</sup> The radicals disliked any title as they were opposed to monarchy itself. Gladstone was shocked by the idea that "Empress" might gradually supplant "Queen". Foster and others believed that lack of adequate explanation on Disraeli's part regarding the scope of the Bill had led to popular suspicions. Lords Granville and Hartington would have liked to avoid parliamentary divisions if not pushed by the radicals. The Liberals as a whole feared that assumption of the imperial title would retard the constitutional development in India and would not find favour with the educated class in India. However, it is clear that both the Conservatives and Liberals generally favoured the idea of recognizing India in the Queen's style. A recognition of the truly imperial position of the Queen as possessor of the vast colonial empire accorded well with the temper of the English people who had applauded the recent revival of the imperial orientation of British policy under Disraeli. Only ninety-eight petitions were received by the House of Commons against the Bill as compared with 9000 for the release of a bogus baronet, the Tichborne claimant, and 150,000 for doing away with the political disabilities of women.<sup>2</sup> It was only the classical connotation of the imperial title which excited agitation among the more well-informed and historically educated people.

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<sup>1</sup> Ponsonby. op. cit. p. 140.

<sup>2</sup> Hansard. (Third Ser.) CCXXVIII. 482.

## CHAPTER IV

### PUBLIC OPINION IN THE UNITED KINGDOM

#### A. The National Press

The stratagem of connecting the new imperial title with the Prince of Wales' visit to India enjoyed initial success and the idea did appear to possess a semblance of a deep and organized policy. The paragraph in the throne speech relating to the new title was, at first, received favourably and while the initial parliamentary reaction was complacent, in the press it was received with excitement. The Times not only credited Disraeli with a "happy idea" but also considered the measure "a compliment to the people of India rather than an assertion of supremacy."<sup>1</sup> The Standard, a conservative daily, opined that the proposed addition would be gratifying to the Indian sentiment in the direct recognition of the princes and people "as subjects of the Empress, and not merely as subjects of England, and bringing their suzerain into direct relation with themselves", which would thus "appear to affirm and define a supremacy which has hitherto existed de facto rather than de jure."<sup>2</sup> It complimented

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<sup>1</sup> The Times. London. February 9, 1876.

<sup>2</sup> The Standard. London. February 9, 1876.

the government for its "most generous and statesmanlike" policy, "calculated to enhance the glory of the British name and to secure the stability and prosperity of the British Empire."<sup>1</sup> The Morning Post, journal of the Beau Monde, remarked that "if such an augmentation of style and title as may express the sovereignty of the Monarch of England over the Empire of India be one of the incidental results of the Prince of Wales' visit it will be one more justification of that brilliant expedition."<sup>2</sup> To The Pall Mall Gazette, a liberal newspaper, the measure appeared "admirably appropriate"<sup>3</sup> while The Daily Telegraph, the popular exponent of liberal views, called it "judicious."<sup>4</sup> The Daily News, another liberal daily, saw in the proposed addition "a prominent and popular" recognition of "the existence of the most splendid dependency that any nation ever won."<sup>5</sup> It, however, did not favour the title of "Empress." To The Manchester Guardian the suggestion seemed an "interesting announcement."<sup>6</sup> It asserted that since the transfer of the direct government of India to the crown it had been the custom to think and speak of the Queen as "Empress of India", although there had been no formal assumption of such a designation. Therefore, the newspaper believed that such

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid. February 10, 1876.

<sup>2</sup> The Morning Post. London. February 9, 1876.

<sup>3</sup> The Pall Mall Gazette. London. February 9, 1876.

<sup>4</sup> The Daily Telegraph. London. February 9, 1876.

<sup>5</sup> The Daily News. London. February 14, 1876.

<sup>6</sup> The Manchester Guardian. Manchester. February 9, 1876.

a title would be received with much pleasure in India, "where the pomps and ceremonies of life are better understood than they are here."<sup>1</sup>

The Spectator, a whig weekly, stated that the Queen had been "well advised" to assume a new title regarding India which would not be "seriously disputed."<sup>2</sup> The Saturday Review, an independent weekly, justified the proposed addition to the royal titles on the grounds that it duly expressed the relation of the crown to the princes and people of India while, at the same time, impressing upon the English minds "the intimacy of the connection between England and India."<sup>3</sup> The journal, however, objected to the title "Empress" which, it held, was a lower title than "Queen" when applied to India, "for it is a word despised by the governing race, and thought specially suited to the governed."<sup>4</sup> Thus, it believed that on an occasion marking the intimate connection between the two countries, "it seems scarcely worth while to stamp upon a portion of them this mark of inferiority."<sup>5</sup> The Graphic, an independent illustrated weekly, welcoming the proposal, remarked that the new title "formally raises Hindostan from the rank of dependency to that of an integral portion of the British

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid.

<sup>2</sup> The Spectator. London. weekly. February 12, 1876.

<sup>3</sup> The Saturday Review. London. February 19, 1876.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

Empire, and gives it in lieu of the extinct glories of its own Royal Houses the titular splendour of a new line of Sovereigns."<sup>1</sup>

Thus the idea of recognizing India officially in the royal style and titles was unanimously received by the British press though there were differences as to the precise title. On February 17, 1876 when Disraeli introduced the Royal Titles Bill in parliament, he had not mentioned the title that his government would advise to the Queen. Nevertheless the press was quick to assume that the designation of the new title would be in an imperial strain for which certain leading newspapers<sup>2</sup> had already expressed dislike. The Times supported the Bill in principle and criticised the Opposition objections in parliament as "partly frivolous and partly perverse."<sup>3</sup> However, it held the commonly anticipated title "Empress" unfit for India since it was not "known to the east and translation of it would denote something different from the Imperial dignities of Europe."<sup>4</sup> It preferred the title of "Queen" which India was familiar with. The Daily Telegraph criticised the imperial title as it would signify "a conquering and an irresponsible authority."<sup>5</sup> The Daily News favoured the idea of recognizing India in the royal titles, considering it "highly probable that

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<sup>1</sup> The Graphic. London. February 12, 1876.

<sup>2</sup> The Times. February 18, 1876; The Daily News. February 14, 1876; The Spectator. February 12, 1876 and many others followed.

<sup>3</sup> The Times. February 18, 1876.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> The Daily Telegraph. February 18, 1876.

some such addition would have a good effect upon the minds of the people and princes of India", but objected to the title of "Empress", suggesting "Sovereign Lady" as an alternative.<sup>1</sup>

The Examiner, a radical weekly, expressed its opinion on the issue in a manner tantamount to a ridicule of what it believed to be Disraeli's motives in the proposal of the new addition to the royal style. It wrote:

There is no reason why we should not strut and fret while we have our hour upon the stage of the world, and let the meek Hindoos know that they are our subjects, and must put up with our Imperial rule whether they like it or not. We are, generally speaking, a modest people, but no nation in the world ever had so splendid a dependency as India, and why we should not enjoy the feeling of empire as long as we have it. Nations do not endure for ever, and they should improve the shining hour . . . If we are the Great Mogul in India, why should we not boldly announce the fact, and put to shame all "those mere economists, and those foreign diplomatists who announce that India is to us only a burden or a danger?" . . . Further when we have a theatrical Prime Minister, why should we not enjoy a phenomenon so rare in English history? If it tickles his fancy to create an Empress, after the creation of Baronets and Dukes . . . why should we not fall in with his humour.<sup>2</sup>

The Spectator was opposed to all imperial titles and even rejected any muslim title such as "Padishah", considering it "entirely unsuited to the Queen who intends to be impartial among the faiths";

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<sup>1</sup> The Daily News. February 19, 1876.

<sup>2</sup> The Examiner. London. February 19, 1876.

it recommended "Queen of India" as most appropriate. Its main objection to an imperial title was that it expressed absolute power and would not suit a constitutional monarch such as the Queen of England. The Indian people, the newspaper argued, would "hate her, as a ruler who claims and possesses, but will not use for her subjects protection against wrong, the viceregency of Heaven on earth. Nothing to the oriental mind, can be more contemptible than that."<sup>1</sup> The Globe, a strong supporter of the Conservative party, was "disappointed" at the opposition to the new addition. It supported the measure since it believed that it would "strengthen and develop" among the British the newly kindled interest in India which had till then been "so strangely wanting."<sup>2</sup>

Disraeli's insistence on keeping the proposed title a secret provoked increasing criticism of the measure in all circles. He was being, as his critics thought, "unnecessarily mysterious."<sup>3</sup> The Daily News charged Disraeli that by "his manner of wrapping himself and his proposal in a mantle of mystery he has shown no judgement and no understanding of the national sentiment."<sup>4</sup> The Manchester Guardian's London correspondent reported what he had learned on "perfectly reliable authority" that the Queen desired an

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid. February 19, 1876.

<sup>2</sup> The Globe. London. February 18, 1876.

<sup>3</sup> The Times. March 8, 1876; The Mail. London. March 8, 1876.

<sup>4</sup> The Daily News. March 9, 1876.

imperial title.<sup>1</sup> Also, that "though led away by the glamour of the project" at first, Disraeli faced much criticism since an imperial title was not only disapproved of at home, but also much condemned in India. The correspondent was of the opinion that Disraeli realised that "any proposal to change the Royal style so far as regards the United Kingdom will raise tenfold greater violence" than in India.<sup>2</sup> Therefore he believed that Disraeli was hesitant to give any information on the designation of the title in the hope that before the second reading of the Bill "the Queen may yield to the strong current of public opinion which is setting against the assumption of any imperial title whatever."<sup>3</sup> Under the Opposition pressure in parliament when Disraeli finally announced the proposed title it led to an immediate and strong reaction against the proposal. Indeed the condemnation was now almost as universal as the excitement a month earlier had been unanimous.

The Times, reversing its policy, became the chief critic of the measure. Calling it a "mistake", the newspaper pointed out that "if the ministry were well-advised, they will not hesitate to retire from a false position."<sup>4</sup> It strongly emphasized that if all decisions of the viceroy of India were first to be approved by Downing Street,

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<sup>1</sup> The Manchester Guardian. March 9, 1876.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> The Times. March 11, 1876.



it was only just to refer the issue to Calcutta "for a report upon its merits" in India.<sup>1</sup> The newspaper condemned the Royal Titles Bill which it believed "all wise men would rejoice to see shelved."<sup>2</sup> This shift in the expressed views of The Times came about when the regular editor-in-chief, Delane, resumed charge of his duties after a leave of absence cut short by the great controversy generated by the Royal Titles Bill. In his absence for most of the month of February his editorial responsibilities were temporarily assumed by his assistant, William Stebbing.<sup>3</sup> From then on The Times became the chief critic of the Bill. Numerous letters appearing in the newspaper favoured an addition to recognize the Queen's sovereignty over India but were largely opposed to the title "Empress".<sup>4</sup> One George A. Denison called it "eminently absurd."<sup>5</sup> Professor Max Müller, a learned Sanskrit scholar, wrote to The Times that due consideration to the ancient language and history of India had not been given in the selection of the new title, pointing out that it was "an historical atmosphere which surrounds all titles and makes them dear even to those who have no accurate knowledge of their origin and history."<sup>6</sup> He suggested the

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> The history of The Times. London. 1935-52. II. 506.

<sup>4</sup> The Times. March 13, 1876.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid. March 14, 1876.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid. March 15, 1876.

ancient imperial hindu titles of "Adhiraj" or "Samraj"; but was immediately opposed by one "Anglo-Indian" who, in a letter to The Times, held that a hindu title would be "an offence" to all muslims in India.<sup>1</sup> Although The Times admitted that recognition of India in the royal styles "may be right and judicious", it vehemently opposed any change in the existing designation of the Queen and of the royal family.<sup>2</sup> Commenting on the parliamentary debates on the Bill, the newspaper wrote that "we may be content" with the overwhelming authority of the British throughout all India and added realistically that when the government proceeded to declare that "our authority is that of an Emperor succeeding to the power of the GREAT MOGUL, we are forced to admit to ourselves that neither historically nor politically is it anything of the kind."<sup>3</sup> Nevertheless the newspaper pointed out that the English nation was "heartily ready to approve an addition to the Royal title" expressive of the sovereignty of the crown over India, but was equally convinced of a greater satisfaction in parliament and among the people if "the addition to be made would not be that of Empress."<sup>4</sup>

One John Drummond, who had lived in India, wrote to The Times that any difference between the Queen's titles in England and

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid. March 16, 1876.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. March 17, 1876.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. March 18, 1876.

in India would be questioned by the Indians.<sup>1</sup> Many other letters appearing in The Times at this stage supported "Queen of India" as the new addition in place of Disraeli's proposal. Sir C.E. Trevelyan<sup>2</sup> opposed the imperial title endorsing "Queen of India" as an apt title since "King" and "Queen" were the household words in India.<sup>3</sup> Another letter by "A loyal Subject" censured the government for its total "want of consideration"<sup>4</sup> in dealing with the issue and enquired if the viceroy of India and the India council had been consulted. Referring to Disraeli's claim that the title was to fulfil the expressed desire of India's people and princes, The Times asserted that "their attitude towards the proposal is one of profound indifference . . . they cannot understand it, and care nothing for it."<sup>5</sup>

Similarly a large section of the press which was openly hostile to Disraeli's proposed imperial title, questioned the veracity of this claim. The Daily Telegraph considered Disraeli's claim "absurd" believing it to be a "mistake in conception", which would prove "mis-

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid. March 20, 1876.

<sup>2</sup> Sir Charles Edward Trevelyan. 1807-1886. Joined Bengal civil service 1826; assistant to Sir C.T. Metcalfe, commissioner at Delhi 1827; deputy secretary Indian political department, Calcutta 1831-34; secretary board of revenue 1836-38; assistant secretary to treasury 1840-59; K.C.B. 1848; governor of Madras 1859; financial member governor-general's council, India 1862-65; created baronet 1874; author of The Letters of Indophilus to the Times 1857 and various other books.

<sup>3</sup> The Times. March 21, 1876.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. April 3, 1876.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid. April 28, 1876.

chievous in practice", as it would tend to "divide Great Britain and India by a title which either means nothing or too much."<sup>1</sup> It recounted that at the initial announcement of linking India closer to English sympathies "by some form or phrase", the idea had been "hailed with satisfaction" and heartily endorsed by public opinion in the hope that "by the judicious choice of an inclusive formula, Indians might henceforth feel themselves taken more warmly" into the susceptibilities of the crown.<sup>2</sup> But the expression of the imperial title proposed by Disraeli had been taken as a great offense and rejected. Therefore, the newspaper appealed to the Queen's affection for the loyalty of her people to decline "the dangerous alteration proposed."<sup>3</sup> Similarly, many letters appearing in The Daily Telegraph were largely opposed to the imperial title though invariably in favour of the recognition of India in some other form.<sup>4</sup> One "NEMO" wrote that the proclamation of the imperial title would suggest to the people of India "the intention to force uniformity of faith on all castes and classes" and might lead to the possibility of another insurrection.<sup>5</sup> The newspaper suggested that prior to the final reading of the Bill in the Lords some equivalent of "Empress" in the local languages of India should

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<sup>1</sup> The Daily Telegraph. March 15, 1876.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. March 22, 23, 25, 28, 30 and 31; April 2, 3, 4 etc. 1876.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid. March 30, 1876.

be considered and proposed various alternatives. It further suggested the appointment of a committee of "Indian officials, Oriental scholars, and natives" to recommend the most suitable title for India.<sup>1</sup> The Daily Telegraph reported that the Indian press was "dissatisfied" over the proposed title and that native princes were preparing "novel and vain demands based on the new addition."<sup>2</sup>

The proposed imperial title appeared "exotic" to The Daily News which criticized Disraeli for the delay in its announcement. The newspaper admitted that the idea of commemorating the Prince of Wales' visit by an additional designation expressing the Queen's sovereignty over India was "graceful and happy", but objected that the new title would "overshadow" the historic style of the English monarchy.<sup>3</sup> The comments of the newspaper on Disraeli's 'Indian argument' reflected strong doubts on the truth of the prime minister's contention that the imperial title had been requested by the Indian princes and people, and deplored that "we cannot see the evidence."<sup>4</sup> It lamented that Disraeli had "spoiled a good and graceful idea by a perverse application of it, and has made what should have been an appeal to Indian loyalty an affront to English sentiment."<sup>5</sup> The newspaper asserted that "the press of India — and more especially the native press —

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid. April 6, 1876.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. May 4, 1876.

<sup>3</sup> The Daily News. March 13, 1876.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. March 14, 1876.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid. March 15, 1876.

did not by any means appreciate"<sup>1</sup> the new title and quoted from various Indian newspapers<sup>2</sup> in support of its argument.

The Manchester Guardian, opposed<sup>3</sup> to any imperial title, demanded to know whether the proposed title was regarded so highly in India "as to incline us to sink our own preferences in the matter" particularly when "a tittle of evidence" had not been produced to substantiate the claim.<sup>4</sup> The newspaper reported that a Reverend George Gillifillan in the course of a sermon to an "overflowing congregation" had questioned<sup>5</sup>:

... if the Queen knew what she was about when she took herself the title of Empress of India. Did she know that India was got up by fraud the most flagrant; by war the most unjust; by a system of falsehood, treachery, and crime which formed one of the foulest pages of history? Did she know that there was a flaw in her Indian title, and that her Indian crown was red with blood of murder and oppression? Could she, an amiable and motherly woman, feel proud when a title recalling such disgraceful memories was added to her many crowns? "Empress of Canada" would have reminded us of an honourable victory over the French, but "Empress of India" reminded us of a victory won over numerous but feeble people, and the crown she is called to wear was worthier on the brows of a Tamerlane, or another human tiger, than of an English lady and a British Crown. Why should India be reminded that while Victoria was a constitutional Monarch at home she was a despot in India.

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid. April 25, 1876.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. April 27, 1876.

<sup>3</sup> The Manchester Guardian. March 11, 1876.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. March 15, 1876.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid. April 4, 1876.

The Pall Mall Gazette expressed opposition to the imperial title and asserted that the desirability and acceptance of such a title in India by the natives was "a question upon which incredulity is very prevalent and very reasonable. At the best, we imagine, the people of India would view the change with indifference."<sup>1</sup> A letter by "Indicus" to the newspaper, although in favour of the idea, stressed that if there had been any indication of a desire among Indians to see the Queen exalted as "Empress of India", it was "the hope that their personal status would be thereby improved and elevated."<sup>2</sup> He further suggested that the title "Padishah", the imperial title under the Mughals, should be used in India since the succession of Mughal rule by the British marked them "as the inheritor of its political power."<sup>3</sup> Another correspondent "F.J.G.", claiming a long service in India, declared that any change in the royal style would be meaningless, unimportant and "almost imperceptible", strongly doubting if the people of India had expressed any spontaneous interest in the issue.<sup>4</sup> Expressing a similar opinion, "An old Political" took the government to task for the Royal Titles Bill and strongly censured Disraeli's 'Indian argument' with the contention that neither princes nor people had the least desire that the Queen should be proclaimed

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<sup>1</sup> The Pall Mall Gazette. March 8, 1876.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. March 13, 1876.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. March 17, 1876.

"Empress or Queen of India."<sup>1</sup> A few days later<sup>2</sup> the same correspondent wrote criticising the government for its failure to acquaint itself of the Indian "feelings and wishes" on the issue through the offices of the Council of India. He further noted with regret the "noticeably reticent" manner with which the secretary of state for India conducted himself during the course of the parliamentary debates on the Bill.

The initial views of The Mail, a tri-weekly and a partial reprint from The Times, supporting<sup>3</sup> the idea of recognizing India in the royal style underwent a complete change, quite similar to that of most of its contemporaries, when it became known that the new addition would be "Empress of India." Adding its voice to the general disbelief over Disraeli's 'Indian argument', the newspaper regretted that the "gradual transformation" of the British rule in India from "an Imperial into a constitutional regime" would be reversed through the assumption of any imperial title.<sup>4</sup> Such a move, it pointed out, would declare "before the world the fact of our autocratic dominion."<sup>5</sup> As such, The Mail rejected the new title, particularly when the natives of India were "profoundly indifferent"<sup>6</sup> towards it.

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid. April 29, 1876.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. May 9, 1876.

<sup>3</sup> The Mail. London. February 18, 1876.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. March 13, 1876.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid. April 28, May 8 and 22, 1876.



The Saturday Review emphatically asserted that since the Bill was an Indian question, it ought to be treated from Indian perspectives, and suggested "Padishah" as the most appropriate title expressive of the local sentiment.<sup>1</sup> The Examiner apprehended that the assumption of any imperial title would fail to touch the popular Indian mind, and was likely to "breed distrust" among the princes who would probably see in it "a threat levelled at their independence guaranteed by treaties with the East India Company."<sup>2</sup> It countered Disraeli's claims of Indian approval for the imperial title by publishing large extracts from Indian newspapers representing the native dislike for the new addition.<sup>3</sup> To The Economist, a liberal weekly, Disraeli's explanation that the imperial title was to satisfy Indian wishes appeared immaterial and "worthless" in view of the nature of British domination over India. It wrote:

Whether it be Queen or Empress, they know that a great army and navy is behind the name, and that is enough for them. If the Queen likes to be called Empress she will be called Empress. If she prefers to be Queen she will be called Queen, but she will not be thought of in any different way whether she calls herself the one or the other. It is not the magic of traditional and historical association which constitutes the chief charm of the Queen's authority in India, it is, to the natives of India, the far greater magic wielded by a powerful sword.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The Saturday Review. March 11, 1876.

<sup>2</sup> The Examiner. March 11, 1876.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. April 22, 1876.

<sup>4</sup> The Economist. March 18, 1876.

There were, however, some newspapers which supported the government measure. The Standard expressed unrestrained support for the new title on the grounds that "India is a military dominion won by the sword and held by the sword, and therefore Emperor is the supreme title which is most fitting to its ruler."<sup>1</sup> Alluding to the Prince of Wales' visit to India as a necessary preface to the declaration of the Queen's intentions to take an imperial title, it asserted that "if it has drawn the two countries closer, as we believe no other act of policy could have drawn them, we have ample reason to . . . think ourselves repaid for all the sacrifice it has entailed . . . in our making the Queen of GREAT BRITAIN an Empress of INDIA."<sup>2</sup> The newspaper contended that an imperial title would be gratifying to the feelings of the people of India who were familiar with the term "Empress" and fully conversant with its implications.<sup>3</sup> Many letters appearing<sup>4</sup> in the newspaper endorsed the new title and one R.N. Fowler,<sup>5</sup> who had recently returned from India, claimed that the title "Empress" was "received with satisfaction"<sup>6</sup> there. He added that in 1858 when the

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<sup>1</sup> The Standard. March 10, 1876.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. March 13, 1876.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. March 16, 1876.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. March 15 and 25, 1876.

<sup>5</sup> Sir Robert Nicholas Fowler. 1828-91. A London banker; organised Conservative party in city of London; M.P. for Penryn and Falmouth 1868-74; M.P. for city of London 1880 to death; Lord Mayor of London 1883-4 and April to November 1885; knighted 1885; created baronet 1885; author of A Visit to China, Japan and India 1877.

<sup>6</sup> The Standard. March 25, 1876.

crown took over the administration of India directly, Sir Henry Rawlinson,<sup>1</sup> had advocated the title "Empress" for the Queen. The Standard felt that the imperial title "best expresses the fact of our rule" and credited the government for acting judiciously "in seeking to combine the peculiar needs of India with the personal inclinations of the Sovereign."<sup>2</sup> The objects of the new measure, the newspaper remarked, were "the extension of the Queen's dignity, the security of her power, and the consolidation and perpetuation of her rule over the magnificent dominion in India."<sup>3</sup>

Another conservative supporter, The Globe, argued that the title Empress best expressed the facts of British rule over India.<sup>4</sup> Referring to two recent incidents in India which, the newspaper alleged, had questioned the Queen's paramountcy, it manifested great satisfaction over the proposed addition as a "practical necessity" in order to define the relations between the crown and its Indian feudatories. The incidents in question involved the deposition of the Gaekwar of Baroda and the inability of the Nizam of Hyderabad to wait upon the

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<sup>1</sup> Sir Henry Creswicke Rawlinson. 1810-1895. Joined Bombay grenadiers 1827; employed in Persia 1833-9; political agent to Kandhar 1840; served during the Afghan war 1842; political agent of the East India Company in Turkish Arabia 1843; consul at Baghdad 1844-51; F.R.S. in 1850; a crown director of the East India Company 1856-58; M.P. 1858; member of Council of India 1858-59 and 1868 to death; minister plenipotentiary to Persia 1859; M.P. 1865-68; K.C.B. 1856; life director of Royal Asiatic Society 1862; president 1878-81.

<sup>2</sup> The Standard. April 4, 1876.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. April 29, 1876.

<sup>4</sup> The Globe. March 10, 1876.

Prince of Wales at Bombay. In the case of Baroda, the legality of its ruler's trial and subsequent deposition had been questioned by the native press, which The Globe viewed as an assertion "in the plainest terms that England was not, and never had been the Paramount power in Hindustan."<sup>1</sup> This question of paramountcy apparently existed only in the minds of the journalists concerned and a few British officials as there is no evidence that either the Gaekwar or the Nizam or those who took their part in the Indian press, were in any way concerned.<sup>2</sup> Concerning the Nizam of Hyderabad whose absence at Bombay had been interpreted as intentional by the English bureaucrats, The Globe wrote that according to Anglo-Indian opinion the Nizam had absented himself at the instigation of his muslim advisors since his visit to Bombay would create the impression that "he acknowledged his own rank to be inferior to that of the English Prince."<sup>3</sup> As such the newspaper justified the assumption of an imperial title which would adequately state "the supremacy of the British SOVEREIGN that neither chiefs nor people could fail to understand their true position towards the Paramount Power."<sup>4</sup> The newspaper opposed the suggestion of a native title for the Queen since even "the Mogul emperors acclimatised their own designation in India" after they settled in the sub-continent. It continued that even though the title "Empress" might not convey much to the sentiment of the Indian people, "they would thoroughly comprehend that her dignity had been raised far above that of the native princes."<sup>5</sup> It asserted that such a feeling would be most satisfying to the English people who, it contended,

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid. March 13, 1876.

<sup>2</sup> See above Chapter II, pp. 59-61.

<sup>3</sup> The Globe. March 10, 1876.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

desired that "the power of England should be strengthened and confirmed", to accomplish which it was befitting "to endow the SOVEREIGN with a style appropriate to the supreme ruler of India."<sup>1</sup> It admitted, however, that the popular feeling prevailing in the country was "one of indifference."<sup>2</sup> In answer to those British newspapers which had evidenced their claims of Indian antagonism to the new title by publishing extracts from the Indian native press, The Globe retorted that it was "a notorious fact that the Indian journalism does not represent the real sentiments of the people in the slightest degree."<sup>3</sup> It argued that an exclusion of all Indian journals from an analysis of the native reaction, "except those of recognised position and influence", exhibited "a remarkable consensus" in favour of the new title.<sup>4</sup> In support of its contention the newspaper quoted extracts only from Anglo-Indian newspapers favouring the title "Empress".<sup>5</sup>

Thus it is clear that inasmuch as the recognition of India in the royal style was concerned, both the press and the public responded with great favour to the announcement in the Queen's speech of February 8, 1876. The only note of dissent, to this otherwise widely acclaimed move, arose over the suspicions created by the prime minister's guarded manner that the scope and form of the recognition

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid. March 17, 1876.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. April 28, 1876.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. May 2, 1876.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid. May 1, 1876.

would be alien and offensive to the British sentiment. The widespread fears were that an imperial title, if adopted for India, would be difficult to localise to India alone and would ultimately replace the ancient title of Queen. These fears were further accentuated by the total lack of evidence to substantiate the government claims that an imperial title was desired by the Indian aristocracy for which it was brought under repeated attacks and criticism by the Liberals.

Another issue involved in the controversy was the question of the inclusion of the colonies in the new title brought up by the Opposition. The absence of any reference to the colonies in the Bill brought added criticism on the government for neglecting to give due acknowledgement to other parts of the empire, a demand which represented a surprising shift of emphasis in Opposition ranks, contradictory to their expressed views against any imperial title. The Times manifested sudden interest in such an extension, claiming that the popular feeling in England favoured the recognition of the colonies in the royal titles.<sup>1</sup>

The Pall Mall Gazette took up the issue for the "feelings of the colonies on the subject "which, it argued, ought not to be ignored. It emphasized that any new title which would appear to overlook "the claims of the Queen's subjects of English blood to those of the natives of a foreign country won and held by the sword, would be a false step,

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<sup>1</sup> The Times. March 16, 17 and April 3, 1876.

and one not easily remedied."<sup>1</sup> It questioned<sup>2</sup>:

Why, when it was proposed to bring India nearer to the throne, were the English colonies kept aloof from the distinction? Why is it unreasonable to suppose that a desire exists in the breasts of millions of Englishmen abroad to be brought together under the flag of the mother country? If it is important to gratify loyal Indian sentiment, why intentionally refrain from gratifying a like sentiment in millions of true Englishmen who have made little Englands at the ends of the earth?

As such, the newspaper criticised Disraeli's statement in parliament<sup>3</sup> and called it "burlesque" and "mockery of our fellow-countrymen abroad."<sup>4</sup> It was of the opinion that the title "Queen of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, of India, and of the English beyond the seas" best exemplified the Queen's supremacy over her foreign domain.<sup>5</sup> Such a title, the newspaper believed, would embrace every English colony in the world and draw them all "together under one flag."<sup>6</sup> It added that such an inclusive title would not only recall the history but would also suggest "much of the romance of a race whose most splendid achievements in war and peace have been made beyond the narrow seas", and thereby concluded with the claim that there was a "strong feeling in favour of including the

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<sup>1</sup> The Pall Mall Gazette. March 8, 1876.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. March 10, 1876.

<sup>3</sup> See Chapter VI, p. 260.

<sup>4</sup> The Pall Mall Gazette. March 10, 1876.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid. March 14, 1876.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

colonies in whatever change may be decided on."<sup>1</sup> Similarly the idea was also supported by The Daily News.<sup>2</sup>

However, support for the inclusion of the colonies in the new title was not the most popular notion among the journalistic circles. The Mail, as yet a supporter of the Bill, opposed such a step since it believed that the colonies were already included in the Queen's existing titles. It pointed out that the colonists believed themselves to be English citizens and would "resent any proposal to class them with natives of India".<sup>3</sup> Therefore, it argued, any move on their part to desire specific reference in any new title would "denote a separation of interest which might soon lead to something more."<sup>4</sup> The Standard was equally opposed to any such reference to the colonies and called the Opposition demand "a new-born sympathy for the colonies."<sup>5</sup> Considering the Royal Titles Bill "a special bill, with a particular object, an object in no way affecting the colonies" argued that the change in the royal style was "not a change in the kingly authority, but a change in the Indian Government."<sup>6</sup> It added that colonies "would receive with anything but pleasure the announcement that they were included with India in the Royal Titles Bill. They would expect to be paid the

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid.

<sup>2</sup> The Daily News. March 17, 1876.

<sup>3</sup> The Mail. February 18, 1876.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> The Standard. March 11, 1876.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid. March 21, 1876.



compliment at least of being asked their opinion as to the title which the Queen should bear to express her sovereignty over them — an opinion, which, of course, it would be absurd to ask of India, which has no representative government, which is not a colony, nor a British community."<sup>1</sup> It went on to expatiate on its high consideration for the feelings of English settled colonies illustrating its argument with the example that in the Queen's dominions the term 'colony' was objected to, "it being notorious that in Canada the term has long been invidious, and could not be revived without offence to the popular sentiment."<sup>2</sup> Likewise The Globe<sup>3</sup> too opposed any reference to colonies in the new title.

The Royal Colonial Institute presented a petition to the crown for the extension of the royal title to the colonies, which, however, made no mention to any particular title but presumably did not favour any imperial designation. Frederick Young, honorary secretary of the Institute, wrote to The Standard that members of the Institute were "averse" to the title "Empress" and "it was inconceivable that we should desire her Majesty to take it."<sup>4</sup> Earlier, one "Colonus",<sup>5</sup> writing in the same newspaper, had opposed the petition of the Institute which led to this clarification.

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> The Globe. March 10, 1876.

<sup>4</sup> The Standard. March 25, 1876.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid. March 18, 1876.

It appears that the Opposition demand to recognize the colonies in the new title had failed to attract any considerable interest. Sir Charles Trevelyan, in a letter published in various newspapers, expressed the feeling that it was unnecessary for the British colonies to be separately named "for they are all included with the mother country, whose new honours they will share."<sup>1</sup>

However, the chief misgivings of the Opposition as expressed in parliament and taken up by certain highly vocal sections of the public and press, centered over the fear of a gradual replacement of the ancient and historic sovereign title in England by the imperial title. The issue involved two objections, namely, "aesthetic" and "constitutional."<sup>2</sup>

It was largely Disraeli's peculiar manner of introducing and piloting the Bill in parliament that aroused strong suspicions in public circles as to the intended scope of the new title. The degree of such fears can well be observed in the fact that The Standard, Disraeli's chief supporter throughout the controversy, was the first journal to criticise the imperial title. It argued against the imperial title as demeaning to English kingship, pointing out that if an imperial title were once assumed, it could very well be beyond "the power of the Queen or her successors to prevent first an admixture and then a

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<sup>1</sup> The Times. March 21, 1876; The Manchester Guardian. March 13, 1876; The Spectator. March 11, 1876; The Pall Mall Gazette. March 24, 1876.

<sup>2</sup> Thompson. op. cit. vol. I. p. 271.

change."<sup>1</sup> The Globe, another supporter of the Bill, however, did not see any danger of the title being used in England as it was meant to be adopted for India alone,<sup>2</sup> and condemned the growing opposition to the Bill as "virulent invective" and "factitious".<sup>3</sup> When the terms of the proclamation failed to allay the fears of the Opposition over the scope of the title, even The Globe admitted the desirability of "more exhaustive definition of the limits within which the new title will have effect."<sup>4</sup> It, however, opined that English public opinion had "declared itself too unanimously against such misuse of the new title for it ever to come into general acceptance at home."<sup>5</sup> Considering the Opposition fears as unfounded, the newspaper reaffirmed the government view in the argument that "no ministry which proposed to change the Royal into an Imperial title in England would merit public confidence."<sup>6</sup>

The Times, disapproving the use of any imperial title by the Queen "in the west"<sup>7</sup> strongly appealed to the prime minister to allow the "voice of reason" to prevail over the "tumult of party conflict."<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The Standard. February 23, 1876.

<sup>2</sup> The Globe. March 10, 1876.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. March 13, 1876.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. April 29, 1876.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid. May 3, 1876.

<sup>7</sup> The Times. March 16, 1876.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid. March 17, 1876.

It favoured the extension of the title "to include India and the colonies since that is determined upon", but spoke severely against the extension taking "a form threatening the Crown of England with the degradation of a tawdry Imperialism" particularly when a designation, "free from the evil association", but connoting equal authority, could be used.<sup>1</sup> It summed up its reaction in words, generally representative of the sentiment which had been offended over the possible extension of the imperial title to England and had been expressed in terms of fear, suspicion and aversion.

There is, of course, nothing in the letters that make up the word "Empress" more alarming than in the letters which make up the word "Queen"; but the two words are connected with entirely different sets of associations, they correspond with different trains of ideas, and their use induces different habits of mind and forms of thought. If the question before us is one of a choice to be made de Novo, we should most stubbornly and with reason, resist the adoption of a title having its origin in military command, which has always been associated with the exercise of power uncontrolled by the conjoint Sovereignty and which insensibly encourages an assumption of authority on the one hand and promotes submissiveness on the other . . . It is strange that a Conservative minister, speaking as the mouthpiece of a Conservative Government, should describe the repugnance of the English people to such a proposal of change as an unreasoning fear. We should have thought the feeling of the nation showed a jealous regard for the past history of the Crown that should be cherished rather than despised.<sup>2</sup>

The strong public dislike of the imperial title and its possible

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

misuse in England compelled Disraeli to announce in the Commons on March 20, 1876, that the new title would be used in India alone and would, under no circumstances, be applied to England. The Times received this assurance with "great satisfaction" considering the delay in its announcement "unfortunate".<sup>1</sup> The newspaper, however, questioned that when all parties were opposed to the acclimatisation of any imperial title within England, "why run the risk of their slipping into use" when all that was desired was a title expressive of British supremacy in India.<sup>2</sup> "An Observer" in a letter to The Times, commenting on the division in the Commons over the Bill, stated that the minority which opposed the Bill "really expressed the sentiment of the majority of the people", and censured the measure as "inexcusable".<sup>3</sup> Further, alluding to the incident at the party given by the Lord Mayor of London at which his toast to the health of the "future Empress of India" had been drowned by cries of "The Queen", the newspaper expressed much concern that "when the once unanimous toast of "The Queen" comes to be fought over by the old Royalists and the new Imperialists at public dinners, the authors of the Bill will be the first to regret mischief which it will be too late to remedy."<sup>4</sup> The Times, in a strong editorial, condemned the entire issue

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<sup>1</sup> The Times. March 21, 1876.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. March 22, 1876.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

as "a policy conceived in a spirit of unparalleled recklessness" in the adoption of which the parliament was expected to commit itself in a manner "which may be used for the education of a party, but must not be permitted to hoodwink the nation."<sup>1</sup> It judged the measure to be "no more than the foolish fancy of some misjudging mind to add a vulgar ornament" to the English crown, and resented the government's neglect to correct in the public mind the "false impressions of the motive and meaning of the change."<sup>2</sup> Such a handling of the Bill, it believed, had "provoked a spirit of repugnance to it which has steadily grown at every stage of its progress."<sup>3</sup>

When the Bill came before the Lords criticism of it had reached its highest pitch. Public meetings were held for the purpose of voicing opinion on the issue and newspapers opened their columns to public comment. The Times reported "a general movement in the north of England"<sup>4</sup> preparing to petition the House of Lords against the Bill. One "D", in a letter to the newspaper, criticised the illuminations at Portsmouth, prepared to welcome the Prince of Wales returning from India, carrying the words "Welcome to Our Future Emperor."<sup>5</sup> "An Irish M.P." feared that the new addition to the royal style would

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid. March 24, 1876.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. March 25, 1876.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. March 28, 1876.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

become "interwoven with the whole administration of our policy and our laws."<sup>1</sup> The Times, in view of the general dislike towards the imperial title, felt assured in the opinion that "if this title of "Empress" is forced upon us, we shall have to pass through a period of angry agitation and resentment" which, it felt, could well be avoided by adopting another designation "equally expressive of authority over India."<sup>2</sup>

Of all public meetings held across the country, a few favoured the new measure, but the overwhelmingly expressed opinion was in strong opposition to it. Such feelings of protest were manifested in civic meetings held at Manchester, Wolverhampton, Liverpool, Darlington, Leamington, Birmingham, Edinburgh and Leeds,<sup>3</sup> to mention a few. In London a "large and enthusiastic" meeting expressed "most vigorous" opposition to the new title, declaring, however, that the meeting was aimed "to protest — not against the Bill itself but against the title Empress."<sup>4</sup> At the meeting when someone tried to defend the title of "Empress" as a necessity to the rule of an Empire, "nearly the whole meeting" stood up and sang "God save the Queen."<sup>5</sup> An amendment defending the new title was lost and a protest resolution

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. March 31, 1876.

<sup>3</sup> Reported ibid. April 1 and 3, 1876.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. April 6, 1876.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

was passed by an "immense majority."<sup>1</sup> "A London Alderman", writing to The Times, rejected the title as "obnoxious", claiming that the people, both Liberals and Conservatives, were "ten to one against the alteration of our beloved Queen's title."<sup>2</sup>

On the passage of the Bill, The Times expressed resentment over, what it believed to be, the prime minister's "large demand on the loyalty of the British people in a tone and with arguments proper to a child's controversy."<sup>3</sup> It believed that the "off hand and trifling manner" in which the Bill was manoeuvred through parliament signified that Disraeli's interest in the matter was "assumed", and that "all the gain he gets by it is the occupation of the public mind, always a gain to a minister not on footing of entire confidence with the people."<sup>4</sup> "An Observer" writing to the newspaper on the government's "tardy and somewhat reluctant protestations" over the widespread public fear that the imperial title might come into use at home, protested against the delay in such an announcement. It strongly believed that "the promised limitations of the title are the practical and substantial results of the opposition to the Bill."<sup>5</sup>

The attitude of The Daily Telegraph was one of equal suspicion

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. April 8, 1876.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. April 10, 1876.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid. April 11, 1876.



and hostility towards the possible use of the new title in England. Denouncing the move towards "electroplating the CROWN OF EGBERT" it appealed to the Queen to "decline the dangerous alteration."<sup>1</sup> The newspaper regretted the government's failure to anticipate the possible effect that the new measure could produce in England as well as in India, and pointed out that public suspicion would not cease to regard the Bill as "an attempt to import Imperial fashions, conducted as stealthily as parliamentary forms permitted."<sup>2</sup> It warned that the government as well as the crown would suffer from "the injurious, injudicious, and perilous method whereby the cabinet has sought to compass a desirable end."<sup>3</sup> "A Loyal Scott", writing to the newspaper questioned that if the Conservative government were to proclaim the Queen "Empress of Great Britain" would it not move the leaders of the Liberal party to oust such an "autocratic government, or must we be content to wait till discontent generates a wave of Republican sentiment in the masses."<sup>4</sup> The Daily Telegraph charged Disraeli with attempting to "inaugurate Caesar's title by a Caesarean policy"<sup>5</sup> through the introduction of the new measure. It contended that the majority of 105 which had won the issue for the government in the

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<sup>1</sup> The Daily Telegraph. March 15, 1876.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. March 17, 1876.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. March 20, 1876.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

Commons was "plainly" the result of "party discipline and expediency rather than of judgement."<sup>1</sup> As such it charged the government with responsibility for all evil consequences that might follow such "a false step", denouncing the Conservative statesmen "who pique themselves on fidelity to a constitution which they have now marked with a brand of Imperialism."<sup>2</sup> The Daily Telegraph admitted that few people disapproved of the Bill which sought to bring about "the formal inclusion of India among the Queen's dominions"; but objected to the Queen "converting herself into an Empress" of an upstartish order.<sup>3</sup> It lamented the "vast amount of vulgar liking for tawdry magnificence", which, it feared, would be stimulated by the new title and forced into general use "in spite of Mr. Disraeli's good intentions and inoperative assurances to the contrary."<sup>4</sup> It accused Disraeli of sacrificing the national sentiment "for the preservation of the old kingly name and all implied in it, to the exigencies of party or to courtly compliances" largely on the basis of government majority in parliament.<sup>5</sup> The newspaper felt that the manner in which Disraeli had pushed the Bill through parliament recalled "the worst traditions of those Imperial times from which he plucks this new and distasteful title", and severely criticised him for introducing the Bill "without the title , the title without

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. March 21, 1876.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. March 22, 1876.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid. March 25, 1876.

its definitions, the definitions without their objects, the objects without their reasons."<sup>1</sup> Like most of its contemporaries The Daily Telegraph carried reports of the various protest meetings against the imperial title. Among the several letters of protest published in the newspaper, one by "Tweedlemouth" blamed Disraeli for "indecently foisting upon the people of England and India this high-sounding, but to us empty, foolish and most obnoxious Imperial title."<sup>2</sup> However, a letter by "Indian Ink" supported the new title and charged that the liberal portion of the press had opposed the new measure "with a view of damaging the Government and obtaining some party advantages."<sup>3</sup> The correspondent outlined the purchase of the Suez Canal shares, the visit of the Prince of Wales to India, and the Royal Titles Bill as three events "profoundly significant" which would "command approval by the country the more that the policy indicated by these events is reflected upon."<sup>4</sup>

The Daily News manifested equal dislike for the imperial title, expressing preference for a title which would have significance in India only and would not be assimilated into common parlance in England thereby assuming a local character which would off-set the traditional sovereign title.<sup>5</sup> Commenting on its possible effects on the English

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. April 13, 1876.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. April 14, 1876.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> The Daily News. March 9, 1876.

monarchy, the newspaper believed that inasmuch as the new measure suggested that Disraeli was "in intention a good friend of the monarchy", he was, in effect, "one of its most mischievous enemies."<sup>1</sup> It regretted, in view of the parliamentary division on the Bill that the prime minister's new device was "a poor sort of compliment" to the Queen, particularly when it had been extracted "by the sheer force of numbers from a reluctant minority, and somewhat scandalized country."<sup>2</sup> In the midst of this controversy the Queen left for Europe, an action which provoked further criticism in the already hostile press. The Daily News criticised this new development as part of Disraeli's "fantastic experiments" with the monarchy and the patience of the nation.<sup>3</sup> The vicar of Winford, Reverend Henry Tripp, writing in a local newspaper, articulated what was, in all probability, the commonly held fear that "if the Queen is Empress of India, she is Empress wherever she is."<sup>4</sup>

Referring to the various meetings held all over the country in protest of the imperial title, The Daily News cautioned that the new addition could prove to be "mischievous in India, and most unhappy in its effects at home."<sup>5</sup> As such, it believed that if a few more

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid. March 16, 1876.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. March 20, 1876.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. March 27, 1876.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. March 29, 1876.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid. April 7, 1876.

days had been available for a fuller consideration of the Bill, it would not have gained parliamentary sanction "without a promise from the ministry that they would not advise her Majesty to adopt the title of Empress."<sup>1</sup> The bitterly controversial circumstances and course of the Royal Titles Bill led the newspaper to wonder if "in the history of the great nation the title of its sovereign was ever so dealt before."<sup>2</sup>

The Pall Mall Gazette, even before the announcement of the proposed title, demanded that in the event it was to be Empress, "the extent to which that title is to apply should at least be publicly stated."<sup>3</sup> It, however, felt assured that even in a restricted form any imperial title would be strongly disliked by the country. Nevertheless the newspaper expressed fears that a possible extension of the imperial title to England could come about through its common usage by people "who are fondest of having titles in their mouths" and which would leave "little room to doubt in what direction they would determine it."<sup>4</sup> E. A. Freeman,<sup>5</sup> the great nineteenth century

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid. April 8, 1876.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> The Pall Mall Gazette. March 8, 1876.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. March 10, 1876.

<sup>5</sup> Edward Augustus Freeman. 1823-92. Scholar Trinity College Oxford 1841; fellow 1845-47; hon. fellow 1880; hon. D.C.L. 1870; hon. D.C.L. Camb. 1874; hon. L.L.D. Edinb. 1884; wrote in Saturday Review 1855-78, and in The Guardian and other papers; Rede lecturer at Camb. 1872; regius professor of history at Oxf. 1884 to death; author of various books on history.

historian, writing to the newspaper expressed fear that a "new gate will be opened for flunkeyism and self-abasement, while the true dignity of the Crown of England, the Crown of so many Kings and Queens, will be really lowered in proportion."<sup>1</sup>

Criticising Disraeli's arguments in parliament in defence of the Bill as "unfit for the subject matter and unequal to the occasion", the newspaper pointed out that the "cultivated portion of society . . . keenly alive to the vulgarity, the bad taste and the historical inappropriateness" of the proposal had taken deep offence over the Royal Titles Bill.<sup>2</sup> Comparing Disraeli's administration with that of Gladstone immediately preceding it, the newspaper remarked:

Disraeli's administration has hurt the sentimental susceptibilities of the whole nation, but then it was something deeper than sentiment which the preceding government outraged . . . . It can hardly be expected that the alarm and disgust caused by offences to feeling can be as strong and durable as resentment, at injury to material interests; and on the whole recent miscarriages of the Government are chiefly worthy of note, as bringing out its chief defect — its imperfect appreciation of moods of the national mind which, if not properly treated, may become fits of delirium."<sup>3</sup>

It expressed resentment, a few days later, over the "sheer force of party majority" employed to carry the Bill through parliament, condemning the government for its obduracy over the issue when "no-body really believes in the political necessity of the addition

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<sup>1</sup> The Pall Mall Gazette. March 28, 1876.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. April 6, 1876.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

to the Queen's titles. No-body earnestly desires it."<sup>1</sup> The newspaper anticipated a prolonged resistance "beyond the usual parliamentary limits", as a result of the government's "deplorable contempt of public opinion."<sup>2</sup> In its concluding editorial on the controversy the newspaper charged Disraeli with purposely creating ambiguity over the scope and object of the Bill "for the purpose of preventing or shortening debate" in parliament. Thus, it wrote: "The form of the Bill first excited suspicion, and then added to the intensity of the fast-accumulating anger and disgust; nor would its authors probably deny that it would have gone through all its trials with far greater smoothness if it had stated its objects directly but with all proper qualifications."<sup>3</sup>

The Manchester Guardian, another influential critic of the imperial title, felt that the proposal would find no favour with the English people.<sup>4</sup> Referring to the official views on the issue, it granted that inasmuch as the government was empowered to "advise the Queen to assume what title they may please", it was not within the powers of the authorities to "win for it the favour of any part of the English people."<sup>5</sup> It regretted that the government by its official highhanded-

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid. April 20, 1876.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. April 28, 1876.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. May 4, 1876.

<sup>4</sup> The Manchester Guardian. March 15, 1876.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid. April 1, 1876.

ness over the popular national sentiment, had created a difference of opinion among the people toward the English monarchy, an issue on which "we never were conscious of differing before."<sup>1</sup> This, the newspaper feared to be "the worst result which may follow upon their almost incredible folly."<sup>2</sup>

Among the weeklies The Spectator was the foremost to reject the idea of any imperial title, suspicions of which grew shortly after the throne speech, in the belief that a "change in the habitual title of the sovereign would be mischievous" since it would be "very difficult to keep the superior title out of sight, or out of the mouths of foolish adulators."<sup>3</sup> Considering such a change "inexpedient and unpleasant" it warned Disraeli that if he attempted to make the Queen "Empress of Great Britain", he would not "retain power three days, and the Monarchy itself would rock."<sup>4</sup> Even Disraeli's announcement that the new addition would be "Empress of India" failed to allay the fears of The Spectator since it removed "no prejudice and smoothed away no animosity."<sup>5</sup> As such the newspaper strongly appealed to the Lords to reject "the vulgar measure" which, it believed, was being forced by the prime minister "on an unwilling Parliament."<sup>6</sup> On Disraeli's assur-

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> The Spectator. February 12, 1876.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. February 19, 1876.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid. March 11, 1876.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid. March 18, 1876.



ances that the new title would be restricted to India only, it retorted:

Disraeli grants an Imperial title, but is ashamed that it should be worn; grants as one who gives a guinea to a child, on condition that it is never spent; or rather, as a stage-manager gives a crown to his first lady in tragic parts, with an understanding that it is only to be worn upon the boards. Lady Macbeth is not to be Queen of Scotland in home life."<sup>1</sup>

In a fervent appeal to the Queen to decline the new title, The Spectator concluded: "The Heiress of Egbert may justifiably be ambitious, but the desire of promotion should be an ambition reserved for meaner mortals. It can never become the head of a monarchy of a thousand years."<sup>2</sup> Commenting on the royal proclamation, the weekly charged<sup>3</sup> the government with failure to substantiate its assurances of restricting the use of the new title to India alone and guarding against its possible misuse in England. It summed up its impressions of the government in words reflecting on its opinion of the manner in which the Bill was handled: "Disraeli's Government enters into engagements rashly, remembers them feebly, toys with them languidly, makes no sustained effort to carry them out . . . . The whole sense of responsibility which the Government has exhibited in this matter has been of the most relaxed kind."<sup>4</sup>

The Economist expressed amazement over the "very delicate

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid. March 25, 1876.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. May 6, 1876.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. May 13, 1876.

experiments on the nature and extent" of British loyalty being conducted in a most provoking fashion by the Conservative government.<sup>1</sup> It expressed strong fears that if the Queen was designated an Empress whether in England or in India, she would be called Empress in both countries. By the same token if members of the royal family were referred to as imperial highnesses, though only in relation to India, they would be called imperial highnesses elsewhere too. Thus it concluded: "You cannot give a name and then restrict its use."<sup>2</sup>

The Examiner had been most vociferous in opposing the imperial title from the beginning. On the official announcement of the title, the weekly charged Disraeli with clothing "the old Monarchy in a novel and gaudy garb to gratify his own political vanity", fearing that the passage of the Bill through the Commons would vulgarize and morally imperil the monarchy by lowering it "to the level of Napoleon III's travesty of Caesarism."<sup>3</sup> It resented that Disraeli's "orientalism" which was totally "out of accord with our English habits of thought and confirmed tastes" had been allowed to influence national consideration of means to enhance the dignity of the crown.<sup>4</sup> It asserted that the feeling in the country was repugnant "to any title which invests the Crown with a semblance of independent power."<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The Economist. March 18, 1876.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> The Examiner. March 11, 1876.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid. March 18, 1876.

Ridiculing Disraeli's assurances of localizing the imperial title to India alone as "an amusing illustration of the pretentious incapacity of some of our rulers", The Examiner charged him of having "committed as preposterous a blunder as if he had proposed that the House of Peers should be called the House of Cotton Lords everywhere except in Great Britain, or that the first minister of the British Crown should be dignified with the title of the Great Mogul everywhere except the ministerial benches."<sup>1</sup> When the Bill passed second reading in the Lords without division the weekly regretted that the peers had "lost an excellent opportunity for vindicating their existence" since, it felt convinced that, never had need for a second chamber been felt more than in the instance of the Royal Titles Bill which had passed through the Commons not only against the national sentiment and declared feelings of the country, "but even against the secret wishes of those who voted for it."<sup>2</sup> As such, it felt that any opposition to minimise the "mischief" of the Bill would be fully justified.<sup>3</sup> On the royal proclamation of the imperial title The Examiner charged the government of a "scandalous breach of faith."<sup>4</sup> Attacking the devious manner with which the entire issue had been handled by the government, it denounced the Conservative ministry

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid. March 25, 1876.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. April 1, 1876.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. April 29, 1876.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. May 6, 1876.

for being "grossly ignorant of the sentiments which have long been for Englishmen the guiding principles of honourable public controversy."<sup>1</sup>

The Saturday Review, another critic of the imperial title, considered official assurances of localisation of the new title to India "very improbable" unless strict precautions were taken to guard against it from "spreading like the cholera from the Ganges to the Thames."<sup>2</sup> Summing up its evaluation of the popular reaction evoked by the issue, it wrote:

Whether the measure is unpopular or not, we have no means of judging. We imagine the truth to be that, with most persons who know enough of history to be able to criticise the Bill, it is unpopular; to the mass of the people it is a matter of entire indifference, as much as the proper relations of the Indian Government here to the Indian Government in India. To some few who love to indulge in noisy and vulgar manifestations of what they call loyalty the measure is welcome, and it is also welcome to some Conservatives, who like any opportunity out-voting the Opposition. Those who disapprove of the measure can only say in a quiet way what they think . . . The only body in which public discussion of the subject could probably be held was Parliament, and though the Bill has been carried by large majorities, the criticism it has received has by no means been unavailing."<sup>3</sup>

The Saturday Review refused to extend approval to a title which had been carried "under protest"<sup>4</sup> dismissing it as a "vulgar and

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid. May 13, 1876.

<sup>2</sup> The Saturday Review. March 18, 1876.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. March 25, 1876.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. April 8, 1876.

impolitic innovation."<sup>1</sup>

Punch repeatedly manifested its dislike for the imperial title through cartoons and pointed quips.<sup>2</sup> On Disraeli's assurance that the Queen would, under no circumstances, assume the style of Empress in England, it remarked that "Victoria in fact is to be Empress "Limited" to India."<sup>3</sup> It made no attempt to conceal its aversion to the Royal Titles Bill, the title of Empress and the royal proclamation, "like all sensible people of his acquaintance."<sup>4</sup>

On March 23, during the course of the final reading of the Bill in the Commons, almost at the conclusion of the deliberations, Disraeli created a highly sensational effect by the introduction of a new line of thought, which, caught the House by surprise, as justification for the assumption of the imperial title. In his earlier speeches on the Bill he had often referred to "high political considerations" as necessitating such a step, but had always declined any explanation of his words. However, as a result of repeated parliamentary and press demands for explication of such vague remarks, Disraeli stated that the Queen was being made "Empress of India" to counteract the threat of Russian advances in central Asia and assure the people of India that their sovereign was in no way inferior to the Russian em-

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid. April 15, 1876.

<sup>2</sup> e.g. on April 1, 1876 it wrote: "No, no, Benjamin, it will never do! You can't improve on the old 'Queen's Head!'"

<sup>3</sup> Punch. April 1, 1876.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. May 20, 1876.

peror. This revelation, coming at such an advanced stage, intensified the Opposition's antagonism to the measure and added ridicule to the existing criticism in the press. The Bill would have passed without any further division but for the interjection of such an idea as testified<sup>1</sup> by W.P. Adam, the chief Opposition parliamentary whip in the Commons.

The Standard endorsed the government views as an attempt to unite India "in a common sentiment of nationality with us" against Russian threat, the thwarting of which fully justified "giving a personal character to our government and presenting to her loyalty a local centre."<sup>2</sup> Furthermore the newspaper declared that an imperial title was necessary to demonstrate British determination for the preservation of its Indian empire and also to signify to the people of India that "we recognize their relation to us and our duty to them."<sup>3</sup> The Globe, expressing a similar sentiment, emphasized that the Russian danger was "the real significance of the new title."<sup>4</sup>

The Times considered Disraeli's declaration as "the single real argument" advanced in favour of the new measure, regretting that the revelation, "thus tardily vouchsafed", made the proposal appear "more dangerous than ever."<sup>5</sup> It dismissed as unnecessary any move

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<sup>1</sup> Letter to The Standard April 1, 1876.

<sup>2</sup> The Standard. March 24, 1876.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> The Globe. March 24, 1876.

<sup>5</sup> The Times. March 24, 1876.

to overemphasize the British hold over India. The Daily Telegraph warned that rivalry with Russia in titles would "stimulate disaffection", a risk too great when the use of the word "Empress" would not add "one iota to our strength, which resides in something more irresistible even than sonorous words."<sup>1</sup> Dazed by the impact of Disraeli's statement, The Daily News wrote that all previous arguments advanced by the government in justification of the Bill had been "shrunk and dwarfed under the overshadowing influence of this new revelation."<sup>2</sup> It rejected as impolitic any move which would make it known to the people of India that "we think the dangers from without are growing so urgent as to require some special measures of protection", since it might convey a confession of British weakness and thus, not prove to be "the best means of strengthening the loyalty and warming the devotion of the princes of India to the English Crown."<sup>3</sup> The Pall Mall Gazette denounced the new argument as "profoundly perilous", lacking the "common prudence" and discretion of a responsible statesman.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The Daily Telegraph. March 24, 1876.

<sup>2</sup> The Daily News. March 27, 1876.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> The Pall Mall Gazette. March 24, 1876.

The Examiner considered the entire issue "a ridiculous business", and so it treated it. It published a fictitious interchange between "two high personages"<sup>1</sup> as an illustration of the devious and arbitrary basis of the new title: "'My Pappa is an Emperor, and your Mamma is only a Queen, and he will be at Calcutta in a twinkling.' 'But my Mamma is the Great Mogul, and she will get herself called an Empress, and then your Pappa will never be able to get to Calcutta. Our soldiers will beat him. Ha! Ha'."<sup>2</sup>

Similarly, The Saturday Review, ridiculed "the arts of government" as being "far simpler than the foolish world imagines! We have only to say 'Empress', and Russia is checkmated and India happy. This is indeed pleasant, and it adds to our pleasure to think that the device is of almost universal application."<sup>3</sup> J.E. Jenkins,<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> It was rumoured at the time that the presence of a Russian princess, wife of the duke of Edinburgh, an imperial highness in her own right, had caused heart-burnings among Victoria's daughters.

<sup>2</sup> The Examiner. March 21, 1876.

<sup>3</sup> The Saturday Review. March 27, 1876.

<sup>4</sup> John Edward Jenkins. 1838-1910. Politician and satirist; born at Bangalore in India; moved to Canada; educated at McGill University; went to England 1870; associated with the Anti-slavery Society; anonymous author of "Ginx's Baby, his Birth and other Misfortunes"; a strong imperialist, organised in 1871 the 'conference on colonial questions'; appointed as first agent-general in London for the dominion of Canada 1874-6; M.P. for Dundee 1874-80; defeated as a liberal from Edinburgh 1881; became a conservative in 1885 and was defeated again.



in a political brochure,<sup>1</sup> ridiculed the drama of the entire issue and attributed Disraeli's action to the prompting of the devil who "put it into the heart of that subtle Jew, Little Ben, to deflower the glory,

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<sup>1</sup> "The Blot on the Queen's Head; or how Little Ben, the head waiter, changed the 'Queen's Inn' to the 'Empress Crown Hotel Limited', and consequences therefore." London. Strachan and Co. March 27, 1876. The brochure, said to have been wholly written and printed in eleven hours, commenced by stating that the Queen's Inn was the greatest and the most wonderful inn in the world, having begun in a humble way, gone on increasing and extending until it grew beyond the dimensions of any other inn under one management that ever was heard of. It had always been conducted in a spirited, defiant, self-radiant sort of way with perfect independence of outside influence. There were a number of other inns about, some of which were imprudent enough to claim superiority. All these inns were called hotels, and in most cases imperial hotels. The one that tried most to vie with the Queen's Inn was the Imperial Bear, which pushed its custom in every quarter, especially in the direction of the Alhamra Palace, which was called 'Hindoo Court' of the Queen's Inn. The proprietors of the Inn were proud of it, and proud of their name and of their signboard with the Queen's head on it. The pamphlet then goes on to caricature the Queen and the leaders of the rival political parties as Queen's Inn (the Queen), Big Billye (Gladstone) and Little Ben (Disraeli) respectively. The sign of the "Queen's Inn" had a bare head of the Queen on it to show that it represented a Queen who reigned, not by virtue of her crown, but for the inherent dignity, and by the love of the people. Little Ben was a thorough-going Queen's Inn man; he had a florid oriental fancy, and the devil approached him, tempting him to alter the name and titivate the sign. The debates in the House of Commons are then paraphrased, and Disraeli's explanations on the third reading are rendered — "What if our guests should look across upon the sign of the Imperial Bear Hotel, and find no corresponding sign over their own door? Gentlemen, the Hindoo Court depends upon this momentous question." So, at night, Little Ben took what he thought was a pot of gold paint, but which proved to be lamp-black, and commenced to add to the "Grand old style" with his "Tuck-Aryan brush and Brummagem skill." In the morning the people saw an ugly crown, with a great blot, on the Queen's head. Time went on, and all that was foreboded by Big Billye and his friends came to pass. The bells and the linen, the forks and the spoons, of the 'Hindoo Court', and the old house got mixed. People have no time to stop and draw distinctions, and the old name became really forgotten.

the simplicity, the fame of this unrivalled sign."

Among the leading periodicals and quarterlies Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine, a conservative supporter, regarded the new title as an "appropriate" expression of the "splendour" of the Queen's eastern dominions.<sup>1</sup> It assured the Liberals of the complete innocuity of the new title in reference to the constitutional position of the crown or its relations to the princes of India. Justifying a show of imperial splendour as a necessity for the preservation of imperial power, it declared that it was a folly not to acknowledge the larger historical and political significance through a public proclamation "of English rule in India at the seat of the Mogul empire, on the very spot where the Indian Mutiny was suppressed and the supremacy of Great Britain finally vindicated."<sup>2</sup> The Quarterly Review, another conservative organ, considered the imperial title a declaration of the fact that Queen Victoria was "the personal head of a great Asiatic Empire", a position which could never with honour be rescinded.<sup>3</sup> It further felt that the new addition aptly defined her position towards the Indian princes, indicating her supremacy over them. Referring to discussions on the possible extension of the new title to the colonies, the Quarterly Review believed that the "analogy between India and the colonies showed . . . a complete misapprehension of the position of both."<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine. September 1876. vol. CXX. 392.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Quarterly Review. cit. B. D. Basu, India under the British Crown. Calcutta. 1933. p. 165.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

The Edinburgh Review, a liberal supporter, denounced as "needless and premature" the action of the government in raising "the formal question" regarding the existing relation between the native Indian states and the crown through an alteration in the Queen's title.<sup>1</sup> Inasmuch as it considered the measure a "foolish" one, it commended the government for using the new title "as little as possible."<sup>2</sup> Summing up the general reaction, a few years later, the Edinburgh Review wrote:

The upper ten thousand regarded the Imperial title with a coldness bordering on disgust. The commonality simply did not understand what it meant. Imperialism in their mind was identified with despotic institutions and the recent experiment of the kind in a neighbouring country began in fraud and violence and ended in confusion and disaster. The Prime Minister, seeing how badly his magnificent idea was received, made a desperate effort to retrieve it by declaring that the assumption of the title of empress by her Majesty would strike terror into the heart of the Czar. This pretentious announcement, which might vie in absurdity with certain memorable passages in Mr. Disraeli's maiden speech, was alone wanting to cover the thing with ridicule and contempt."<sup>3</sup>

The Fortnightly Review, another liberal supporter, asserted that the initial public gratification over "the titular recognition of our vast responsibilities in India" was the result of "carelessness" since the people "had not realised that sychophants would be likely to transform the customary titles into the phrases of Imperialism."<sup>4</sup> It rejected

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<sup>1</sup> Edinburgh Review. July-October, 1876. vol. CXLIV. 170.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. January-April, 1879. vol. CXLIX. 246-7.

<sup>4</sup> Fortnightly Review. London. (New ser.) January to June, 1876. vol. XIX. 618.

Disraeli's justification for the new addition as an assurance to India of safeguard against any Russian advances, emphasizing that "no man on earth can believe that the disturbance of feeling will be appeased by the mummeries of the herald and the court usher."<sup>1</sup> It believed that the history of the Bill had been a "series of mockeries from beginning to end" and had "left an ill-sounding word among the old titles."<sup>2</sup> Further, it had "set an example of unsettlement and resettlement of title, which may perhaps set men thinking in the days of one of our future emperors."<sup>3</sup> The Fortnightly Review, however, admitted that the public sentiment on the new addition was "not in the least vehement" observing that the initial "careless approval" had been replaced by "a mild irritation." It went on to say that with the exception of Pall Mall and some of the London newspaper offices, "there is nothing like that indignation which it is convenient to manufacture at Westminster for party purposes."<sup>4</sup> It observed that "the Liberals in the country have for the most part held a half-cynical neutrality."<sup>5</sup>

This view is further borne out by a statement of public petitions and addresses on the subject as published by The Globe.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid. 619.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid. 929.

<sup>6</sup> The Globe. May 11, 1876.

	<u>number</u>	<u>signatures</u>
<u>Against the title</u>		
petitions to the Commons	23	653
petitions to the Lords	25	500
petitions for Mr. Fawcett's motion	159	10,392
total	<u>207</u>	<u>11,545</u>

	<u>number</u>	<u>signatures</u>
<u>For the title</u>		
petitions to the Commons	5	393
petitions to the Lords	103	3,000
against Mr. Fawcett's motion	1	231
addresses to the Queen	<u>812</u>	<u>46,236</u>
total	921	49,870

The relatively small number of signatures on these petitions, both for and against the new title, clearly shows the general indifference among the English masses towards the issue.

The issue was also of some interest to certain contemporary notables whose impressions form a valuable comment of a party detached from any direct involvement in the issue. The Dean of Westminster, A. P. Stanley, felt that animosity towards the new title was "occasioned by the inadvertence of the Ministers in not consulting"<sup>1</sup> the Opposition leaders before the Bill was introduced in parliament.

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<sup>1</sup> Dean Stanley to Max Müller. undated letter. cit. R. E. Prothero, The Life and Correspondence of Arthur Penrhyn Stanley. New York. 1894. ii. 501-2.

The Dean was also critical of the conduct of newspapers on the issue for receiving the new title with "enthusiasm", at first, then attacking it "furiously."<sup>1</sup> He disbelieved if the "country at large" had taken any great interest in it, "or we should have heard of meetings and the like", concluding that "on the whole, I place it among the most curious of the panics, theological, ecclesiastical, and political, of which I have seen so many during the last thirty years."<sup>2</sup> Alexander Duff, a veteran missionary to India, complained that although the measure had been spoiled "through the wretched spirit of political partisanship", he emphasized that the fact it had become an Act of parliament made it incumbent upon "all loyal subjects . . . to unite in trying to make it work for good in India."<sup>3</sup>

#### B. The Provincial Press, Scotland and Wales.

Opinion in London as represented by the larger section of the metropolitan press was opposed to the imperial title. The fact that Disraeli had suffered a set-back among the national press over the issue is vividly reflected in the Queen's concern for the need of "securing" the support of some newspapers.<sup>4</sup> Disraeli's own explana-

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Alexander Duff to Lady Durand. December 23, 1876. cit. Smith. op. cit. ii. 526.

<sup>4</sup> Queen to Disraeli. March 17, 1876. cit. Monypenny and Buckle. ii. 808.

tion of the strong opposition to the Bill was the conjecture that the London newspapers were "all connected with the Liberal party" which, through civility to the editors, had solicited their support.<sup>1</sup>

That the issue had taken the form of a party move was further demonstrated by the attitude of the provincial press. Everywhere in the country the newspapers rigidly followed the party lines and invariably echoed the views expressed in the party national organs. In central England the Nottingham and Midland Counties Daily Express, a liberal newspaper, opposed the title as "ill-judged and revolutionary."<sup>2</sup> The Birmingham Daily Mail, another liberal voice, favoured the idea of recognizing India in the royal style but rejected the title "Empress".<sup>3</sup> It considered the government statement that the title was desired in India as "manufactured for the occasion" and believed that Disraeli had "done more than any other statesman, to unpopulise the Crown and play into the hands of the Republicans."<sup>4</sup> The Carlisle Patriot, a conservative weekly, supported the new title believing it expressed the Queen's position as "the head and mistress of all the feudatory chiefs . . . in her Asiatic empire" better than any other title.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Ponsonby. op. cit. p. 139.

<sup>2</sup> The Nottingham and Midland Counties Daily Express. Nottingham. February 23, 1876.

<sup>3</sup> The Birmingham Daily Mail. Birmingham. February 19, 1876.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. March 15, 1876.

<sup>5</sup> The Carlisle Patriot. Carlisle. March 17, 1876.

In the northeast, The Leeds Mercury, a liberal daily, acquiescent to the idea of a titular recognition of India, however, regretted that Disraeli's own management had led to a general suspicion of his intention "to make the Queen a nominal Empress not in India alone, but at home as well."<sup>1</sup> The Leeds Daily News, a conservative newspaper, supporting the measure denounced the Opposition as "unpatriotic."<sup>2</sup> The conservative Yorkshire Gazette approved<sup>3</sup> of the new title while its liberal contemporary The York Herald condemned the proposed addition as "objectionable", the exclusion of the colonies as "indefensible", and Disraeli's conduct in parliament as "reprehensible."<sup>4</sup> The conservative Sheffield Daily Telegraph reprimanded the Opposition for opposing a "well-timed proposal."<sup>5</sup>

From the northwest The Daily Post, a liberal newspaper from Liverpool, endorsed the party views and submitted to the Queen that she should retire from "an unpopular pretension."<sup>6</sup> On the question of the colonies it urged that if India were to be "counted among the jewels of the English Crown, let not those brighter and purer gems be forgotten."<sup>7</sup> The newspaper disapproved a title carried only by a parlia-

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<sup>1</sup> The Leeds Mercury. Leeds. March 10 and 13, 1876.

<sup>2</sup> The Leeds Daily News. Leeds. March 10, 1876.

<sup>3</sup> The Yorkshire Gazette. York. April 1 and 22, 1876.

<sup>4</sup> The York Herald. York. March 17, 1876.

<sup>5</sup> The Sheffield Daily Telegraph. Sheffield. March 14, 1876.

<sup>6</sup> The Daily Post. Liverpool. February 19, 1876.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.



mentary majority and not by the goodwill and support of the people as well.<sup>1</sup> One Robert Gladstone, a conservative from Liverpool wrote to The Daily Post that many conservative members in parliament had supported the Bill more out of conformity to party discipline than real conviction.<sup>2</sup> The Daily Post felt that the ambiguous presentation of the Bill had increased its unpopularity "until, with those who cared anything about it, a half-hesitating disapproval became positive dislike, and dislike deepened into absolute disgust."<sup>3</sup> Further it charged Disraeli with ignoring the cherished national sentiment "in order to gratify a royal whim and prove that he possessed the power, and the so-called pluck, to pass a bad measure whatever the consequences."<sup>4</sup> The Liverpool Evening Albion, an independent daily, apprehended the protest against the imperial title as "loud and strong" and supported Max Muller's suggestion to adopt a Sanskrit title.<sup>5</sup> Any foreign title, if felt, would be regarded by the Indians as "an invidious distinction."<sup>6</sup> The conservative Liverpool Weekly Courier manifested strong support for the measure.

In the southwest of England the liberal Devon Evening Express observed that India, being an important part of the British empire,

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid. March 17, 1876.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. April 5, 1876.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. April 29, 1876.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> The Liverpool Evening Albion. Liverpool. March 15, 1876.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid. April 3, 1876.

was entitled to a special distinction but it "must not in any way imply degradation to India, nor mock it as being a tributary or vanquished territory."<sup>1</sup> It believed that the imperial title did not "unite India to us, but separates it from us."<sup>2</sup> The conservative Daily Bristol Times and Mirror considered it a "mockery" to apply a constitutional title like "Queen" or "King" to India. It, however, favoured some Indian title to avoid controversy.<sup>3</sup> The leading local liberal newspapers<sup>4</sup> endorsed the national party press.

The Brighton Daily News, an independent daily, attributing the new title to Disraeli's "heraldic nature", feared that it would be regarded in India as "the symbol not of unity, but of division, not of community of feeling and interest, but of our not too well-gotten power."<sup>5</sup> It considered the measure as a culmination of Disraeli's "tawdry and tinsel-loving imagination", and charged him with disregarding public feelings to the exclusion of historical self-aggrandizement.<sup>6</sup> The Brighton Examiner, a liberal weekly, believed that the new title was "a bid for Royal favour by a party which is beginning seriously to realise its waning influence."<sup>7</sup> It admitted

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<sup>1</sup> The Devon Evening Express. Exeter. February 22, 1876.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. March 15, 1876.

<sup>3</sup> The Daily Bristol Times and Mirror. Bristol. March 16, 1876.

<sup>4</sup> e.g. The Daily Bristol Post and The Bristol Observer. weekly.

<sup>5</sup> The Brighton Daily News. Brighton. February 19, 1876.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid. April 1, 1876.

<sup>7</sup> The Brighton Examiner. Brighton. March 28, 1876.

that dislike of the new title was largely confined to the middle and upper classes. The lack of response among the working classes, the weekly explained, was not because they approved of the imperial title but because "they care for no title at all."<sup>1</sup> The conservative Brighton Daily Post largely endorsed the conservative views on the issue. An examination of several other provincial newspapers,<sup>2</sup> both liberal and conservative, confirmed the view that the tone and pattern set by the London party press was largely echoed in the provinces.

In Scotland also the public reaction largely reflected the national pattern and ascribed to the party position set by the metropolis press. The Scotsman, a leading liberal newspaper, came out in strong opposition to the new title. Expressing this dislike in frequent editorials, the newspaper criticised Disraeli's handling of the Bill in parliament.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid. April 25, 1876.

<sup>2</sup> i. The Berwick Advertiser. Berwick. weekly. liberal.  
ii. The Cambridge Express. Cambridge. weekly. liberal.  
iii. The Cambridge Chronicle and University Journal. Cambridge. weekly. conservative.  
iv. The Carlisle Express and Examiner. Carlisle. weekly. liberal.  
v. The Daily Telegram. Exeter. conservative.  
vi. The Leicester Daily Post. Leicester. liberal.  
vii. The Leicester Journal. Leicester. weekly. conservative.  
viii. The Manchester Courier. Manchester. daily. conservative.  
ix. The Manchester Daily Examiner and Times. Manchester. liberal.  
x. The Nottingham Daily Guardian. Nottingham. conservative.  
xi. The Oxford Chronicle and Berks and Bucks Gazette. Oxford. weekly. liberal.  
xii. The Hampshire Advertiser. Southampton. weekly. conservative.  
xiii. The Hampshire Independent. Southampton. weekly. liberal.

<sup>3</sup> The Scotsman. Edinburgh. February 19, March 21, 22 and 25, 1876.

Referring to Disraeli's Russian argument as "a mischievous thing on a large scale", The Scotsman condemned it as "a farce, in which parliament is made to play the part of a stupid, mindless body."<sup>1</sup> It pointed out that the proposition had been hastily pushed through parliament by devious arts and excuses even while its propriety was being questioned, "because delay would demolish every reason given for its adoption."<sup>2</sup> The Edinburgh Evening News, an independent daily, although it supported the idea of recognizing India in the royal titles, preferred the title "Queen."<sup>3</sup> It charged both parties with "flippancy and fallacy" in their arguments and regretted that the issue "was raised at all."<sup>4</sup> While it criticised Disraeli's remarks on the character of the colonists, the newspaper strongly objected to their inclusion in the new title regarding them as "citizens of a Greater Britain."<sup>5</sup> It further took strong exception to Disraeli's Russian argument and condemned it as "impolitic in the extreme, frivolous, dangerous, lowering to the dignity of the nation, and, finally, ridiculous."<sup>6</sup> The Royal Titles Bill, the newspaper believed, had "certainly lowered the estimate of royalty in the mind of the nation, and the mistake of a

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid. March 27, 1876.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. April 28, 1876.

<sup>3</sup> The Edinburgh Evening News. February 19 and March 10, 1876.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. March 17, 1876.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid. March 21, 1876.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid. March 24, 1876.

pliant Ministry has yet to bear its fruit."<sup>1</sup> Its conservative contemporary, the Edinburgh Courant, supported the government.

In Glasgow, the liberal North British Daily Mail vehemently opposed the new title and charged Disraeli with having "deliberately prostituted" the power of his parliamentary majority.<sup>2</sup> It urged the prime minister to withdraw<sup>3</sup> the imperial title which was being "forced down the throats of an unwilling people by the mechanical screw of a party majority", and would be a "dangerous gift for a constitutional Sovereign to accept."<sup>4</sup> The Glasgow News, a conservative daily, supported the new title explaining that since "our eastern possessions were taken by the sword . . . by the sword are they still practically held."<sup>5</sup> It, however, blamed the government for its mysterious attitude and the Opposition for its "disquieting prognostications", which, it believed, had been largely responsible for causing "a feeling of undefined uneasiness and apprehension" in the public mind.<sup>6</sup> It wrote:

The truth of the matter is, that the nation as a whole does not care two pins about the affair . . . The country is certainly not violently in love with the proposed change, but neither has it any violent objection to it.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid. April 19, 1876.

<sup>2</sup> The North British Daily Mail. Glasgow. March 18, 1876.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. April 3, 1876.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. April 5, 1876.

<sup>5</sup> The Glasgow News. Glasgow. February 18, 1876.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid. March 10, 1876.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid. March 18, 1876.

It added:

India will acquiesce with Oriental resignation in any title that may be assumed by the mistress of soldiers who have swept the land from Cashmere to Mysore, and can, if need be, do it again.<sup>1</sup>

Likewise in Wales the public reaction to the imperial title was no different than elsewhere in the country. In Cardiff, while the conservative Western Mail supported the Bill, its liberal contemporary the South Wales Daily News criticised the title as "the hollow mockery of an imposing form."<sup>2</sup> Believing the new title to be the result of Disraeli's "melo-dramatic exploits", the newspaper dismissed it as an "ill-considered, bungling, uncalled for, and mischievous Bill at best."<sup>3</sup> It criticised Disraeli's handling of the Bill in parliament as "defiant and needlessly insulting" to the national feeling.<sup>4</sup> The Cambrian, a liberal weekly from Swansea and The Wrexham Guardian, a conservative bi-weekly, expressed and endorsed the positions of their respective parties.

The fact that the provincial press throughout the country echoed the views and opinions expressed by the national party organs further makes it evident that the measure had become largely a party issue. The Royal Titles Bill, shrouded in mystery from inception, and manoeuvred deviously through parliament and without much convincing

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid. March 21, 1876.

<sup>2</sup> The South Wales Daily News. Cardiff. February 22, 1876.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. March 28, 1876.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

evidence on the part of the government, had provoked strong opposition among the liberal sections of the public. History, however, has disproved the Opposition fears of the title coming into common use in England and of the deleterious effects that its adoption was feared would have on the English loyalty towards the crown. In this respect it may be asserted that the vigorous opposition, both in parliament and outside, was not without avail. It was largely responsible for creating an awareness and concern among the British public which prevented any use of the title at home.

Although opposition to the imperial title was vociferous and loud it did not necessarily represent a general rejection of the new addition. The majority of the people remained indifferent and uninterested. The Spectator wrote:

No one knows the real feeling of the nation about the Royal Titles Bill. Probably the majority are apathetic. We have never felt very much alarmed at the so-called danger of democratic tyranny, but we should feel a great deal of alarm at the danger of Democratic indifference, of the people's complete abdication of the political government, while formally retaining it . . . . If you give, under the name of self-government, to the masses the right to decide on matters on which they entertain no wish and have no intention of expressing a wish, you get none of the advantages of self-government, and you get none of the advantages of arbitrary government. The people, of course, do not decide what they take no interest in, but they have all responsibility of the decision which comes from some other quarter, and so they throw their aegis over those who do decide.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The Spectator. April 15, 1876.

C. Ireland.

Public opinion in Ireland was best symbolized by Isaac Butt whose policy of moderation has been mentioned in the previous chapter. The Fenian movement, having been defeated in 1867, was declining amidst futile conspiracies and internal divisions. Although Parnell was already in the House of Commons he had yet to emerge as a personification of Irish national sentiment. There was probably less contrast between English and Irish opinion at this time than at any other in Irish history. Nevertheless Irish opinion could not follow party lines as it did in England because of the existence of nationalist feeling. And Ulster maintained its unique position in Ireland by reflecting the pattern of British opinion.

The Morning Mail, a conservative daily, expressed disapproval of the new imperial title. The Conservative parliamentary majority, the newspaper observed, was not "good-will" towards the measure itself but "the loyal and kindly desire" to avoid an adverse vote which could create a wrong impression in India.<sup>1</sup> It believed that the proposal was not "loudly condemned out of doors" but was "quietly laughed at as a vulgar caprice" and felt that the necessary could be done by simply adding India to the Queen's existing style.<sup>2</sup> Although it considered the measure "certainly unnecessary and possibly unwise", it

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<sup>1</sup> The Morning Mail. Dublin. daily. March 13, 1876.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.



did not approve of the Opposition's conduct.<sup>1</sup> Speaking in the name of the independent provincial press, The Morning Mail declared that the "nation forbids any change in the style of its Sovereign that may betoken or be supposed to betoken a change from old ways of government . . ."<sup>2</sup> The Dublin Daily Express, an independent conservative organ of the landed gentry, the clergy, and the leading professional and commercial classes and champion of an imperial union, expressed its support for the new title rather mildly. In spite of its criticism of Disraeli's refusal<sup>3</sup> to disclose the new title, the newspaper wrote against the Opposition's attitude on the issue as an "attempt to create distrust and apprehension" in the public mind.<sup>4</sup>

The liberal Evening Telegraph, opposing the imperial title protested against Disraeli's insistence on carrying out the Bill against "popular disfavour."<sup>5</sup> Once the royal proclamation was issued the newspaper hoped that the assumption of the new title would "be accompanied by an act of grace towards the unhappy men who still linger in prison for political offences."<sup>6</sup> It added that assumption of any imperial or royal title in India or England would be immaterial for Ireland so long as she "achieve the one object on which her heart is

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid. March 24, 1876.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. March 27, 1876.

<sup>3</sup> The Dublin Daily Express. Dublin. daily. February 19, 1876.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. March 31, 1876.

<sup>5</sup> The Evening Telegraph. Dublin. daily. March 21, 1876.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid. April 28, 1876.

set — a Native Legislature."<sup>1</sup> The nationalist section of the Dublin press led by the Nation, Home Rule's leading supporter and the Weekly News ignored the issue completely in their editorial comments. The only exception was The Flag of Ireland, a strong nationalist weekly, which vigorously attacked the Bill. It believed that the new title would "neither quell the increasing disaffection in India — which has been stimulated by the Prince of Wales' visit — nor scare the Czar of Russia from advancing towards Hindostan."<sup>2</sup> It added:

It is written that "pride goeth before a fall";  
and as sure as the sun rises in the East, so  
sure will the "Empress of India" become a  
title as empty as that of "King of Great Britain,  
France, and Ireland."<sup>3</sup>

From Limerick The Munster News, a liberal bi-weekly, objected to the new title as it felt that in the future when the empress would be succeeded by an emperor, imperialism might turn into intolerable tyranny, admit the possibility of absolute autocratic domination, and thus, weakening the national loyalty "imperil the existence of the monarchy itself."<sup>4</sup> It added that the title could at best be regarded as "an emblem of folly and vanity, and a symbol of rule to which voluntary allegiance is of no concern. It will be born by no constitu-

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid.

<sup>2</sup> The Flag of Ireland. Dublin. weekly. April 1, 1876.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> The Munster News. Limerick. bi-weekly. March 18, 1876.

tional or inherited right. A Disraelitish donation, it will be regarded as a Tory theft from the treasury of the public liberties, and initiate the dangerous discontent that at any time may generate a revolution fatal to the House of Hanover."<sup>1</sup> The liberal Cork Examiner expressed strong dislike against the new title believing that it was to satisfy his own ambition that Disraeli had taken such a step. Referring to Disraeli's refusal to answer a question in parliament<sup>2</sup> concerning the grant of amnesty or clemency for Irish political prisoners on the assumption of the imperial title, the newspaper resented it as a "dexterous evasion."<sup>3</sup> Further it regarded Disraeli's Russian argument as "an attempt to frighten the English people into acquiescence against their better judgement."<sup>4</sup> As to the Indian feelings on the issue the Cork Examiner challenged whether "a change, which renders their vassalage a thousandfold more conspicuous", could in any way be conceived as welcome to the people and princes of India.<sup>5</sup>

The Wexford Constitution, a conservative bi-weekly, fully supported the new title since it marked an "authoritative declaration of a state of matters already in existence" in India, and expressed surprise at its opposition.<sup>6</sup> The Wexford Independent, a liberal weekly,

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid. April 5, 1876.

<sup>2</sup> Hansard. (Third Ser.) CCXXVII. 1718.

<sup>3</sup> The Cork Examiner. Cork. daily. March 19, 1876.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. March 25, 1876.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> The Wexford Constitution. Wexford. bi-weekly. April 5, 1876.

expressed surprise at the apprehensions of the Opposition towards the Bill and criticised the government for lack of proper evidence in justification of the imperial title.<sup>1</sup> It hoped that the Queen would refuse it in view of strong public dislike.<sup>2</sup> The People, a nationalist weekly, though maintaining an editorial silence on the issue, expressed the Irish nationalist feelings or lack of it on the subject in its comments on the throne speech. It wrote:

It is of utmost importance that the world should know that the Queen is about to assume the title of Empress of India — but of not the slightest importance whether the Irish people are still swept from their homes in tens of thousands — whether landlords trample on their rights, or their deepest and most sacred convictions are outraged in obedience to an English educational theory which the English people themselves will not tolerate.<sup>3</sup>

In Waterford while The Waterford Daily Mail, a conservative newspaper, opposed<sup>4</sup> the new title, its contemporary The Munster Express, a conservative bi-weekly, supported it as its assumption would not give the Queen any increased powers.<sup>5</sup>

In Ulster The Belfast Morning News, an independent daily, opposed the imperial title as it found "an appearance in this gingerbread title of a love of show and glitter unworthy of a strong and stable Empire, an ancient Monarchy, and a powerful Government."<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The Wexford Independent. Wexford. weekly. March 19, 1876.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. April 8, 1876.

<sup>3</sup> The People. Wexford. weekly. February 12, 1876.

<sup>4</sup> The Waterford Daily Mail. Waterford. February 26, 1876.

<sup>5</sup> The Munster Express. Waterford. bi-weekly. May 13 and 20, 1876.

<sup>6</sup> The Belfast Morning News. Belfast. daily. February 19, 1876.

It further criticised Disraeli for lack of evidence that the title was desired in India and doubted if the Indian princes had expressed "readiness to sink their real independence for a merely nominal one."<sup>1</sup> The Belfast Evening Telegraph, a conservative daily, strongly supported the new title and dismissed the Opposition fears as "a storm in a teapot."<sup>2</sup> It complimented Disraeli for accomplishing "a further stroke of able policy."<sup>3</sup> The Ulster Echo, a liberal supporter, criticised Disraeli for being "disrespectful" to parliament in not disclosing the new title.<sup>4</sup> It believed that any title except "Empress" would have been "readily acceptable to the whole nation",<sup>5</sup> and regretted that the prime minister was willing to sacrifice the national principles and prejudices to "court favour and the gratification of royal whims."<sup>6</sup>

As a glance at Irish history would indicate that this was a surprisingly mild reaction to an occasion which offered so many opportunities for satire and for indignation. It is probably best explained by the absence of a clearly articulated anti-imperial policy, by a pre-occupation with domestic affairs and what was by Irish standards an atmosphere of political indifference.

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid. March 11, 1876.

<sup>2</sup> The Belfast Evening Telegraph. Belfast. February 18, 1876.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> The Ulster Echo. Belfast. March 9, 1876.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid. March 17, 1876.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid. March 31, 1876.

In general public opinion as seen through the press reflected the opinions expressed in parliament. There was really not a great contrast between the attitude of London and the rest of the United Kingdom; even Ireland was hardly an exception. The conservative papers generally accepted the Bill but were inclined to be critical of Disraeli's methods. Although liberal papers favoured a special recognition of the Queen's position in India, they disliked the imperial title and were more vigorous in their criticism of Disraeli's attitude and management of the Bill in parliament. The radical press as a matter of course was opposed to the Bill but did not consider that there was much possibility of arousing popular indignation on the issue. It can be said that Disraeli enjoyed much the same kind of victory in the press as he enjoyed in parliament. Although there was no applause, neither was there any serious effort to use the power of the press to prevent the passage of the Bill.

## CHAPTER V

### INDIAN REACTION TO THE ROYAL TITLES BILL

To understand the Indian reaction to the assumption of the imperial title "Empress of India" by the Queen and its consequent proclamation at the durbar in Delhi, it is essential to reflect on the social and political atmosphere prevailing in India at the time. India was still living in the shadow of the uprising of 1857, the ruthless suppression of which had wrought havoc and seriously damaged the traditional fabric of the Indian society and further intensified the racial discrimination of the rulers against the ruled. This depressing situation was further complicated by the additional burden of rising imperial sentiment among British and Europeans generally, which was often reflected in ideologies which questioned the capacity of non-Europeans for self government. This came at a time when the progress of western-type education in India had increased the numbers of native aspirants able and anxious to play a greater role in the leadership of their own society. These aspirations had arisen in the face of growing oppression on the part of the British rulers in the post-1857 period and led the Indian intelligentsia to fall back on their ancient historic and cultural values for moral sustenance and support under the trying circumstances. Thus fortified they turned to examine the causes and motives of the uprising and interpret it as an expression of their desire to be independent of

the foreign rule. This enquiry manifested itself in the form of a rising national sentiment which was consistently concerned about the rights of the Indian public as well as princes. However, the educated class was inclined to view most matters in terms of their own position in society and in particular their future prospects in government service. Consequently the emerging national sentiment as voiced by this class was concerned largely with administrative reforms such as simultaneous examinations in India and England for the Indian civil service, fixation of minimum age for these examinations and the recognition of civil equality between the British and Indians as promised in the Queen's proclamation of 1858. The promises of the Queen's proclamation were, therefore, of great interest to those who formulated these demands and whose opinions tended to dominate the Indian press, particularly when the assumption of the imperial title was officially declared as intended to draw Indians closer to the British throne. Thus the proposed durbar, in giving rise to hopes of an implementation of the Queen's promises, symbolised to the native intelligentsia the possibility of changes in British policies favourable to Indian demands.

It was announced<sup>1</sup> on August 18, 1876 by the viceroy, Lord Lytton, that the new title would be proclaimed publicly in an imperial assemblage on New Year's Day, 1877. Accordingly magnificent prepa-

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<sup>1</sup> J. Talboys Wheeler. The History of the Imperial Assemblage at Delhi 1877. London 1877. p. xiii-xiv.



rations were started and "a city of tents and pavilions"<sup>1</sup>, said to have been the largest ever formed in India, sprang up outside the city of Delhi, covering an area of "not less than twenty square miles".<sup>2</sup> The Indian princes representing the flower of Indian nobility were invited to the assemblage. The viceroy, after visiting various parts of the country, made a public entry into Delhi on December 23, 1876 and led a three mile long procession on a magnificently arrayed elephant forming "a most brilliant spectacle" to the durbar site.<sup>3</sup> The procession consisting of more than 1,000 elephants, winding its way through the various parts of the city, reached the site of the imperial assemblage in a matter of four hours. Some Indian chiefs along with their retinues were stationed at intervals along the six mile long route which was lined by "all available British troops at Delhi."<sup>4</sup> The splendour and magnificence of the native chiefs in their gorgeous robes was heightened by warriors atop howdahs, which appeared like "thrones of gold and silver" armed to the teeth like hindu heroes of the past, and bands of horsemen in medieval garb who presented a spectacle of "knights and squires of the days of chivalry."<sup>5</sup> The week before the proclamation day the viceroy exchanged official visits with native princes and other important guests present for the occasion.

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid. p. 46.

<sup>2</sup> The Illustrated London News. December 30, 1876. p. 622.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Wheeler. op. cit. p. 50.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid. pp. 50-1.

In addition to the 63 ruling princes and many nobles of the empire, the governor-general of the Portuguese settlements in India, the khan of Kalat, a deputation from the sultan of Muscat, ambassadors from the kings of Siam and Nepal and the envoy from the Amir of Kashgar were present at the assemblage.<sup>1</sup> Each chief was presented with a commemorative medal and the more important ones also received banners emblazoned with the arms of their respective houses.

The culminating event came on January 1, 1877. A 'Throne Pavilion' for the viceroy flanked by "an Amphitheatre for the High Officials and Ruling Chiefs, and blocks for Representatives of Foreign Governments and spectators" was set up and the entire assemblage, attended by some one hundred thousand people,<sup>2</sup> was encircled by "an unbroken line of elephants."<sup>3</sup> According to the contemporary accounts "nothing had been spared to make the ceremony as complete and as imposing as possible."<sup>4</sup> At noon amidst "a pageant of unexampled splendour"<sup>5</sup> and "unprecedented brilliancy"<sup>6</sup> the viceroy's arrival was announced by a fanfare of trumpets from military bands of the various regiments. The viceroy arrayed in his robes as Grand Master of the Star of India ascended the throne. The chief herald, Major Barnes, read the proclamation of the assumption of the imperial

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid. p. 69.

<sup>2</sup> Annual Register. 1877. p. 85.

<sup>3</sup> The Illustrated London News. January 6, 1877. p. 18.

<sup>4</sup> The Graphic. London. January 27, 1877. p. 75.

<sup>5</sup> Annual Register. 1877. p. 2.

<sup>6</sup> The Illustrated London News. January 6, 1876. p. 18.

title by the Queen, in a "loud voice, which was heard by the whole Assemblage."<sup>1</sup> The proclamation was then read aloud in Urdu by E.P. Thornton, the officiating foreign secretary to the government of India. After the proclamation the imperial standard of the Empress was hoisted and a grand salute of 101 salvoes was fired.

The "simple and impressive"<sup>2</sup> ceremony was followed by Lord Lytton's address to the assemblage in which he proceeded to explain the reasons for the assumption of the new title by the Queen, intended to represent "to all the princes and peoples of India the permanent symbol of its union with their interests, and its claim upon their loyal allegiance."<sup>3</sup> Addressing himself generally to the assemblage, Lytton made the British determination to maintain its supremacy over the sub-continent amply clear in expressing the Queen's estimation of India "as a glorious inheritance to be maintained and transmitted intact to Her descendants"<sup>4</sup>, for which purpose she desired to "perpetuate the intimacy of the relations . . . uniting the British Crown and its feudatories and allies"<sup>5</sup> through the assumption of the imperial title. But to the "native subjects of the Empress of India" came the rude shock of ambiguity in the Queen's recognition, on the one hand, of their "claim to share largely with your English subjects, according

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<sup>1</sup> Wheeler, op. cit. p. 76.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. p. 75.

<sup>3</sup> cit. Ibid. p. 80.

<sup>4</sup> cit. Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> cit. Ibid. p. 84.

to your capacity for the task, in the administration of the country you inhabit", and, on the other hand, the assertion that the "permanent interests of this Empire demand the supreme supervision and direction of their administration by English officers trained in the principles of that polity whose assertion is necessary to preserve the continuity of Imperial rule."<sup>1</sup> Moreover all hopes and aspirations of the new educated class were dimmed in view of the viceroy's emphasis on "social superiority" and "birth, rank, and hereditary influence"<sup>2</sup> as prime requisites for entry into the higher ranks of government service.

After the conclusion of Lytton's speech, several princes offered brief expressions of gratification and the assembly broke up. On the same day durbars were held in each district and division throughout the country for the reading of the proclamation to which public spectacle was added by military parades and gun salutes. The durbar celebrations officially concluded on January 5, 1877 with a review of troops by the viceroy.

The imperial title and the proposed Delhi durbar soon became a burning issue in the Indian press. This reaction represented a new political awareness among the Indian educated classes who were beginning to seek strength by political organization. Although by the

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<sup>1</sup> cit. Ibid. p. 84.

<sup>2</sup> cit. Ibid. p. 85.

seventies some Indians were thinking in political terms and demanding rights, Indian nationalism had not yet become an effective force. Since this emerging national sentiment varied regionally in proportion to the length of British occupation, there are obvious difficulties in making an overall assessment of Indian reaction to the assumption of the imperial title by the Queen. It is, therefore, more convenient to consider each presidency separately in analysing the reaction to the new title.

The first stirrings of political life were detected in Bengal as it was the first to be exposed to western influence and political ideology. The emergence of a large number of native newspapers and journals by 1876 had played an important<sup>1</sup> part in spreading the seed of national sentiment. A large number of these newspapers were edited by men who were well acquainted with British political writings of the age. The Amrita Bazar Patrika, a leading newspaper, enjoying considerable influence among the educated class, immediately reacted to the new title with disfavour. It remarked that by assuming the imperial title once borne by the emperors of Delhi, the British government was hoping to win respect and loyalty with which the Indian people had regarded their muslim rulers. But it doubted if a foreign government could ever hope to win from its subjects the affection enjoyed by a ruler whose home and interests lay in the country itself.<sup>2</sup> This led

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<sup>1</sup> N.S. Bose. The Indian Awakening and Bengal. Calcutta. 1960. p. 242.

<sup>2</sup> The Amrita Bazar Patrika. March 2, 1876. Bengal Reports. no. 11. (1876). p. 3.

to the feeling that such an encroachment of British paramountcy would dissolve the last vestiges of nominal independence held by the native princes.<sup>1</sup> Suspecting that the new title was an outcome of the Prince of Wales' visit, the newspaper speculated as to whether its assumption would be beneficial or injurious to India, confessing that since the news of the Queen's determination to assume the new title had reached India, "our hearts have become uneasy."<sup>2</sup>

The newspaper further took strong exception to Disraeli's announcement in parliament that the Indian princes and people had desired the new title. Dismissing such a claim as "entirely false", the newspaper wrote:

The titles are but inflictions on a people who are crying for bread. A people who tremble with fear at the name of the Queen will very probably die of fear at the name of the "Empress" . . . . We, however, regard it with suspicion, which it behoved Mr. Disraeli to remove, if the assumption of the title was determined on only from a love to the people of India. We dread the British more when they are in a quiet mood than when their frowns are visible. Against the latter we can provide, the other takes us at unawares. Mr. Disraeli is now in this quiet mood.<sup>3</sup>

The newspaper believed that the assumption of the imperial title was the culmination of a long cherished desire by the British to enjoy

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. May 4, 1876. Bengal Reports. no. 20 (1876). p. 2.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. p. 3.

in India the same prestige and honour associated with the emperors of Delhi and claimed that the Prince of Wales' visit, Lord Northbrook's anxiety to secure attendance of all Indian princes at Delhi,<sup>1</sup> and the new title were all different expressions of the same imperial ambition.<sup>2</sup> The attitude of the newspaper, however, softened somewhat as hopes sprang of benefits for India as a result of the assumption of the new title, and it ventured to anticipate that the new title would bridge the gap between the Queen and India whereby "grievances will now be listened to and redressed."<sup>3</sup> It even went to the extent of manifesting strong support for Disraeli in the hope that "he may possibly remember our support and do us some good in future."<sup>4</sup> This seemingly pendulant attitude of the Amrita Bazar Patrika invites inquiry about its editor's participation in contemporary political affairs. Sisikumar Ghose, the editor, was one of the founders of the India League, established in 1875 by a circle of leading men associated with vested interests. Under the auspices of the League, they hailed the new title as formally defining "the position of this country as constituting with its princes and people an integral member of the British

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<sup>1</sup> In April 1875 Lord Northbrook had held a durbar at Delhi and again a much larger one at Calcutta for the investiture of the Star of India during the Prince of Wales' visit. See Bernard Mallet, Thomas George Earl of Northbrook. London 1908. pp. 115-6.

<sup>2</sup> The Amrita Bazar Patrika. May 11, 1876. Bengal Reports. no. 21 (1876). p. 4.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. May 25, 1876. Bengal Reports. no. 23 (1876). p. 5.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

Empire . . . and thus drawing the people of India nearer to her throne than ever before."<sup>1</sup> In another resolution the League aimed to express feelings of loyalty to the Queen, but more important to voice "those hopes and aspirations for the future of India which the occasion is calculated to evoke."<sup>2</sup>

Thus it may be assumed that the influence of the India League led to the altered tone of the Amrita Bazar Patrika, which met with strong censure from its contemporary, the Soma Prakash, for marring its "long career of persistent opposition to Government" by being led to support the new measure through the "instrumentality of the League". It also took the League to task for its "gushing and overflowing loyalty".<sup>3</sup> As such the latter views of the Amrita Bazar Patrika cannot be regarded as unconditional support for the new title except as a means of furthering its demands for India. It felt that no hopes of closer relations between England and India could be entertained unless Indian representatives were admitted to the British parliament and discussions on Indian affairs commanded greater attention.<sup>4</sup> Questioning Disraeli's contention in a lengthy editorial written on the eve of the Delhi durbar, that the assumption of the new title was designed

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<sup>1</sup> The journal of the National Indian Association. London. no. 69. September 1876. p. 285.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> The Soma Prakash. Bhowanipore. Bengali weekly. June 5, 1876. Bengal Reports. no. 24 (1876). p. 10.

<sup>4</sup> The Amrita Bazar Patrika. June 8, 1876. Bengal Reports. no. 25 (1876). p. 4.



to create greater attachment among the natives for the British sovereign, the newspaper claimed that this measure was being affected by realisation of the fact that the future of British rule in India depended largely on this attachment. It emphasized that no rapport between the Queen and her Indian subjects could be established, until her "disinterested sympathy" and concern for their welfare was proved. As such, it doubted the accuracy of Disraeli's calculations that British power in India would be consolidated through the assumption of the imperial title by the Queen, observing that "the assumption of the Imperial title by a sovereign has been almost always precursor to the downfall of his kingdom."<sup>1</sup> It went on to warn Disraeli that a mere façade of superficial interest would ultimately lead him to realize that he had "committed one more error in making the Queen an Empress."<sup>2</sup>

The title was further criticized as a symbol of despotic power, indicating "the possession of arbitrary power in its bearer", by the Soma Prakash<sup>3</sup>, another important<sup>4</sup> newspaper in Bengal. Asserting that the British government in India was despotic, the newspaper did not deem the public manifestation of this fact "desirable".<sup>5</sup> It strongly

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid. December 7, 1876. Bengal Reports. no. 51 (1876). pp. 3-5.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> The Soma Prakash. April 24, 1876. Bengal Reports. no. 18 (1876). p. 7.

<sup>4</sup> Bose. op. cit. p. 238.

<sup>5</sup> The Soma Prakash. June 5, 1876. Bengal Reports. no. 24 (1876). p. 10.

disapproved of holding the imperial durbar in view of the various financial problems the country was beset with and particularly the famine in south India. Remembering that durbars of the past few years had brought the native princes to the "verge of insolvency"<sup>1</sup> and had sunk many chiefs in heavy debts, it urged the government to cease preparations for the Delhi durbar. It noted that their impoverished state led the princes to oppress their subjects thus furnishing "the British government with a handle for interference in the affairs of their states" and dooming them to a sorry fate such as shared by the Nawab of Tonk or the Gaekwar of Baroda.<sup>2</sup> Thus it viewed durbars as effective means of draining the native princes of their wealth and thereby accomplishing what Lord Dalhousie, by the prohibition of the practice of adoption and several other artifices, had failed to do.<sup>3</sup> It exhorted the people of India to make representations against the durbar as it affected their lot too.<sup>4</sup> The only justification that the Soma Prakash saw for durbars was that they should be aimed not to display military might but to provide occasion for discussions of important problems, which would be helpful both to the government and to the people.<sup>5</sup> On a similar note it urged the

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid. November 6, 1876. Bengal Reports. no. 47 (1876). pp. 3-4.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. November 13, 1876. Bengal Reports. no. 47 (1876). p. 8.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid. December 25, 1876. Bengal Reports. no. 53 (1876). pp. 5-6.

government to effect administrative reforms long overdue such as the appointment of natives to higher cadres of civil and military service, conferring on them the same privileges and powers as enjoyed by the Europeans, and admitting Bengalis into the army.<sup>1</sup>

Much surprise was expressed by the Dacca Prakash, another influential Bengali weekly, over the Queen's remarks from the throne that the Indian public was happy under her rule and observed that although Indians were known for their loyalty it was not true, as the Queen had been informed, that their reception of the Prince of Wales was "spontaneous". Clarifying the erroneous impression of the Queen's informants, the newspaper explained that the Prince's reception in India had been "arranged" by the government and that natives had had no hand in it.<sup>2</sup> This was indicative of the formidable hiatus between the crown representatives and the people, and the newspaper, therefore, was led to hope that the reference to India among the royal titles would result in closer association between the British crown and India, leading to "a deeper interest in its glory or disgrace."<sup>3</sup> In anticipation of such an outcome it felt that Indian representatives would be admitted into the British Parliament.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid. December 18, 1876. Bengal Reports. no. 52 (1876). p. 6.

<sup>2</sup> The Dacca Prakash. Dacca weekly. February 20, 1876. Bengal Reports. no. 9 (1876). pp. 5-6.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. April 9, 1876. Bengal Reports. no. 16 (1876). p. 6.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

Reflecting on the immediate public reaction the newspaper admitted that, while the mass of the people were gratified at the assumption of the new title, it had created some degree of "uneasiness" among the educated and initiated few who resented it on the grounds that instead of receiving instruction in self-government, and securing political representation, "they are now to be subject to a sway similar to that of the despotic Emperors of Delhi."<sup>1</sup> The newspaper considered the new title "Empress of India" undesirable in contrast to the Queen's title in England, believing that her imperial status in India would reduce the native princes to an inferior position and the juxtaposition of the two titles would tend to imply two different attitudes of the British crown towards England and India, much to the latter's "deep humiliation" and subjection.<sup>2</sup> Therefore, to give the occasion a practical orientation, it emphasized that a new policy towards India should be an essential feature of the assumption of any new title, marked by a promotion of education and admission to government services with no distinction of colour or creed.<sup>3</sup>

The sad fact of increasing loss under foreign domination was sorrowfully noted by the Bharat Mihir viewing the slight to Indian loyalty in the total subjection of their country, and regretted that

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid. April 30, 1876. Bengal Reports. no. 19 (1876). pp. 4-5.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. June 25, 1876. Bengal Reports. no. 27 (1876). p. 5.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. December 17, 1876. Bengal Reports. no. 52 (1876). p. 5.

although "India had lost her liberty long ago, still there was the name left; but now she has lost both."<sup>1</sup> Referring to Disraeli's justification of the imperial title as a symbol of prestige and power to forestall any Russian designs of expansion, the newspaper dismissed it as "a mighty and serious mistake."<sup>2</sup> In spite of its sonority, the newspaper regarded the new title void of any practical value or constructive effects for India when earlier promises made in the proclamation of 1858 still remained unhonoured. As such, it did not see any point in "exciting new hopes" in Indian minds when even the nominal liberty of the Indian princes would cease to exist.<sup>3</sup> The newspaper attributed the absence of warm response of the people towards the durbar to their bitter experience in the past of the futility of indulging in any sanguine anticipations of benefits for the Indian people from any such celebrations.<sup>4</sup> In a lengthy editorial entitled "Durbar at Delhi", the newspaper accused Disraeli's administration of trying to "conceal the internal weakness of England" by creating grandiose images of her foreign sway and domination. It felt that the aim of the duke of Edinburgh's visit to India was to accomplish this object and that the Prince of Wales came with similar designs. Likewise

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<sup>1</sup> The Bharat Mihir. Mymensingh weekly. May 25, 1876. Bengal Reports. no. 23 (1876). p. 3.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. June 1, 1876. Bengal Reports. no. 24 (1876). p. 5.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. June 15, 1876. Bengal Reports. no. 26 (1876). p. 2.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. August 31, 1876. Bengal Reports. no. 37 (1876). p. 3.

the assumption of the title, "Empress of India" by Queen Victoria "in defiance of the almost all-powerful public opinion of England", and finally a grand imperial assemblage at Delhi were the different stages of this process of "throwing dust into the eyes of the world by means of outward glitter and pomp" on foreign soil.<sup>1</sup> The Bharat Mihir, like most of its contemporaries, urged the government to abandon the idea of the durbar in view of the severe famine in the south, the poor financial conditions of the country and finally the expense and hardships that would be entailed on the native princes. It believed that unless the British administration in India was formed on a more liberal basis and Indian interests were consulted any imperial title would be but an "empty title".<sup>2</sup> It feared that if the maltreatment of the natives at the hands of the Europeans continued after the Delhi durbar, the new title would be a "sad misnomer."<sup>3</sup>

The Grambarta Prakashika expressed similar concern over the prevailing "high-handedness" of British officials in its apprehension that "the miseries of the people will rather increase than disappear" as the new title would increase the powers of the English officers.<sup>4</sup> Nevertheless it supported the new title and wished that a member of

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid. November 9, 1876. Bengal Reports. no. 47 (1876). p. 6.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. December 14, 1876. Bengal Reports. no. 52 (1876). p. 3.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. December 28, 1876. Bengal Reports. no. 1 (1877). p. 3.

<sup>4</sup> The Grambarta Prakashika. Kumarkhali weekly. April 8, 1876. Bengal Reports. no. 16 (1876). p. 5.

the royal family be appointed viceroy of India,<sup>1</sup> but did not favour the holding of the Delhi durbar as it would lead to "extravagance and waste."<sup>2</sup> Instead it demanded the promotion of agriculture and industry for the economic welfare of the country. The Bharat Sangskarak shared the warm concern of the Grambarta Prakashika for national development in its hope that the new title would keep India and its problems "constantly before the British public."<sup>3</sup>

In sharp contrast to the relatively complimentary tone of its preceding contemporaries, the Hindu Hitoishini, a hindu orthodox<sup>4</sup> newspaper, looked upon the new title as "a matter of disgrace to the people of India" when it had been rejected by the people of England.<sup>5</sup> On a similar note the Sadharani also opposed the new title and its proclamation in the proposed assemblage at Delhi as it would heap a sense of disgrace and infliction on the Indian mind in its recollection of the many historical associations built around the city of Delhi, laying in juxtaposition the entire spectrum of Indian grandeur of the past with the present fallen state under foreign subjection. Such an experience, the newspaper argued, would be "painful" and difficult

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid. April 29, 1876. Bengal Reports. no. 19 (1876). p. 4.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. December 16, 1876. Bengal Reports. no. 52 (1876). p. 4.

<sup>3</sup> The Bharat Sangskarak. Twenty-four Parganas weekly. March 10, 1876. Bengal Reports. no. 12 (1876). p. 6.

<sup>4</sup> Bose. op. cit. p. 241.

<sup>5</sup> The Hindu Hitoishini. Chinsura weekly. May 13, 1876. Bengal Reports. no. 21 (1876). p. 9.

to remove from the Indian mind.<sup>1</sup> The Behar Bundhu compared the approaching durbar at Delhi with similar occasions in ancient times under the hindus<sup>2</sup> when a triumphant ruler would summon his vanquished opponents to a ceremony marking his overlordship.<sup>3</sup> As such it considered the holding of the durbar inopportune, particularly when the national scene was fraught with calamities.<sup>4</sup> The Hindu Ranjika, though opposed to any new title, suggested that if the Queen was intent on taking one it should be in Sanskrit which was the language of the majority of her subjects in India.<sup>5</sup> It demanded that in view of the "closer bond of union" between England and India resulting from the assumption of the imperial title, India should be given a responsible government. It, thus, exhorted the Indian people to agitate for this goal.<sup>6</sup>

Next to Bengal the western influence was more marked in Bombay than in any other part of the sub-continent. Bombay's position as a strong and clear voice of national demands was fortified by its

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<sup>1</sup> The Sadharani. Chinsura weekly. December 17, 1876. Bengal Reports. no. 52 (1876). p. 5.

<sup>2</sup> See above Chapter I. p. 3.

<sup>3</sup> The Behar Bandhu. Bankipur, Patna weekly. November 1, 1876. Bengal Reports. no. 45 (1876). p. 6.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. December 20, 1876. Bengal Reports. no. 53 (1876). p. 6.

<sup>5</sup> The Hindu Ranjika. Rajshahi weekly. March 8, 1876. Bengal Reports. no. 12 (1876). p. 1.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid. December 20, 1876. Bengal Reports. no. 53 (1876). pp. 2-3. The Sambad Bhaskar. Calcutta weekly. Also expressed similar views. Bengal Reports. no. 1 (1877). p. 1.



sixty-six<sup>1</sup> vernacular newspapers which at the time of the assumption of the imperial title were largely occupied with the severe famine in southern India on which public opinion was focused with equal concern. Preceding this calamity in the area the people in 1875 had witnessed with sorrow and slighted national feelings the deposition of the Gaekwar of Baroda which had led to great agitation among the native population. However, in spite of these local pressures the immediate reaction favoured the imperial title as hopes grew high of harvesting great new benefits from this new addition to the royal titles.

The Bombay Samachar, the first newspaper in Gujrati<sup>2</sup>, responded favourably towards the new title, but was much disconcerted over the extravagant expenditure on the proposed durbar at Delhi. It argued that such a profuse expense would be ruinous to the already debilitated economy of the country and would in no way be conducive to the increase of native loyalty for the Queen. It observed that in their anxiety to obtain some advantages for themselves from the event, the people would not be inclined to engage naively in "any grand tamasha."<sup>3</sup> It also feared that in view of the lavish preparations for the durbar, the famine in south India would not receive proper

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<sup>1</sup> Statement exhibiting the moral and material progress and condition of India for the year 1876-77. Parliamentary Papers 1877. LVII. 618. p. 98.

<sup>2</sup> A.S. Khurshid, Sahafat Pakistan-o-Hind men. Lahore 1963. p. 56.

<sup>3</sup> The Bombay Samachar. Bombay, Gujrati daily. October 16, 1876. Bombay Reports. (October 24, 1876). p. 5.

attention from the government and urged that in view of the strained financial condition of several native princes occasioned by the prodigious display of wealth during the Prince of Wales' visit, no obligations should be imposed on the local authorities and native princes affected by the famine to attend the durbar.<sup>1</sup>

The Rast Guftar, an influential parsee<sup>2</sup> newspaper, expressed outright indignation and dislike for the title "Empress of India" when she was only to be Queen in England. Questioning the hesitation of the British nation to grant to the Queen the same status on constitutional grounds, the newspaper queried: "Why should India tamely submit to the innovation? Why should Mr. Disraeli ride the high horse with India, unless it be that he means to triumph over her prostrate condition."<sup>3</sup> Thus in its subjugated condition the only alternative open to native opinion was the feeling of irrepressible hope that the dawn would bring an end to their outstanding grievances. On the eve of the Delhi durbar the newspaper wrote:

To-morrow will show what return England makes for this great and valuable present. The public is not ignorant of the expectations of India in this matter. Before anything else She demands an admission into the British Parliament to her sons . . . . England has

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid. October 25, 1876. Bombay Reports (October 31, 1876). p. 13.

<sup>2</sup> The parsee community in India was generally regarded "loyal and devoted to the British sovereign and nation; there is no class more contented than they are." Richard Temple. India in 1880. London 1880. p. 114.

<sup>3</sup> The Rast Guftar. Bombay. Gujrati weekly. cit. The Examiner. London. April 22, 1876. p. 450.

seen how very loyal India is, and She ought not to evade any longer doing justice to her.<sup>1</sup>

It further asked the British government to redeem her promises to admit natives into the higher grades of service of their own country. Recounting the many times this promise, originally made under earl Grey's ministry in the reign of king William IV, had been given, the newspaper observed that the grand durbar was the most "fitting" occasion to redeem them.<sup>2</sup> Another parsee daily, the Jamé-Jamshéd, expressed joy over the new title in the hope that at the durbar the government would follow the time honoured custom of the Indian rulers of granting new rights, of distributing honours, and bestowing high offices on the Indian nobility.<sup>3</sup>

In contrast the Marathi press was more vociferous in its expression of the nationalistic sentiment and vigorously opposed the new title as characterising a complete subservience of the Indian people to British domination. The Nasik Writt commenting editorially regarded the new title as a culmination of the persistent attempts of English statesmen to "make Her Majesty the Empress of India in spite of all opposition" which it considered "reprehensible perverseness and obstinacy".<sup>4</sup> It held Disraeli's justification of the imperial

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid. December 31, 1876. Bombay Reports (January 9, 1877). p. 6.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> The Jamé-Jamshéd. Bombay. Gujrati daily. December 9, 1876. Bombay Reports. (December 19, 1876). p. 6.

<sup>4</sup> The Nasik Writt. Nasik. Marathi weekly. December 30, 1876. Bombay Reports. (January 9, 1877). p. 4.

title as a deterrent to Russian advances in central Asia "a blunder" which would alienate the native princes from the British government and convert them, "the old allies of government, into its dependents and slaves."<sup>1</sup> Such a relationship, it felt, would in no way be conducive to growing cohesiveness between the two.<sup>2</sup> The newspaper regarded the comparison drawn by some of its contemporaries between the ancient imperial ceremony of "Rajasuya" and the forthcoming Delhi durbar erroneous and incomplete. The only point of similarity it saw was the humiliated and subordinate position of lesser princes in both instances and pointed out the conspicuous absence of "the unparalleled munificence and the real popular joy displayed on older occasions."<sup>3</sup>

The Shiwaji criticised the title and the durbar, emphasizing that no genuine need justified such an assemblage since British paramountcy had already been made excessively manifest in India.<sup>4</sup> However, it hoped that the government would make important concessions to the princes and people of India to commemorate the 'grand' event. The Arunodaya did not think it "wise or graceful" for the government to hold the durbar in the face of the "aweful and extensive" famine

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> The Shiwaji. Poona Marathi weekly. October 27, 1876. Bombay Reports. (November 7, 1876). pp. 3-4.

in south India and urged the government to devote all its "energy and resources to the urgent and imperative work of saving the millions of its subjects . . . before it can think of grand tamashas and pompous rejoicings." <sup>1</sup> As such the newspaper along with "some others" <sup>2</sup> reproved the government for wasting the much-needed sum of one hundred thousand rupees from the Indian treasury simply for preparing a painting of the imperial durbar to gratify the "fancy of the English people." <sup>3</sup> The Hindu Prakash responded to the new title and the durbar at Delhi with mixed feelings. The princes and people of India already sorrowing over the loss of their past greatness and national independence would, it felt, be made more acutely conscious of their deprived position under the "declared foreign subjection". <sup>4</sup> They would view the occasion with joy only if assured of "future blessings which attend a strong but generous and enlightened, though foreign, rule" <sup>5</sup> and expressed hope that the British government would adopt a more tolerant policy towards the Indian people to render the union "a blessing to both countries." <sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The Arunodaya. Tanna. Anglo-Marathi weekly. October 22, 1876. Bombay Reports. (October 31, 1876.) p. 3.

<sup>2</sup> Bombay Reports. (November 28, 1876). p. 3.

<sup>3</sup> The Arunodaya. November 19, 1876. Bombay Reports. (November 28, 1876). pp. 3-4.

<sup>4</sup> The Hindu Prakash. Bombay. Anglo-Marathi weekly. December 25, 1876. Bombay Reports. (December 30, 1876). p. 3.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

The Native Opinion, an influential weekly of Bombay, opined that instead of seeking to sustain the British empire in India on mere titles, the government would be wise to address itself to "the affection of the people and the trust they have in the good intentions of their rulers."<sup>1</sup> But it regretfully concluded that the assumption of the new title was aimed "to strengthen the already overwhelming strength of the governing", rather than "increase the affection and confidence of the governed."<sup>2</sup> It was equally keen in its reproach of local authorities and native chiefs for ignoring the crying distress of the famine-stricken people in their preoccupation over preparations for attending the Delhi durbar.<sup>3</sup>

The distress, alarm and concern, occasioned by the new title in Bengal and Bombay was also heard in the north-western provinces although its expression was rendered cautiously subdued by the memory of the circumstances of its annexation by the British a few decades earlier. It was here that the uprising of 1857 had gathered its greatest intensity and its ruthless suppression consequently numbed the local fervour for ridding itself of the foreign yoke. Thus realising their weakness against the British power, the people became resigned

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<sup>1</sup> The Native Opinion. Bombay. Anglo-Marathi weekly. Reported in The Daily News. London. April 27, 1876. p. 6.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. October 29, 1876. Bombay Reports (November 7, 1876). p. 8.

to the British supremacy. Their traditional centres of culture — Lukhnow, Delhi, Meerut and Kanpur — had witnessed the horrors of 1857 too closely to venture forth any political expression. The native press, particularly the muslim section, in these areas, had been virtually stamped out<sup>1</sup> and it was only years later that a revival was brought on mainly through the reconciliatory efforts<sup>2</sup> of Syed Ahmad Khan.<sup>3</sup> As such, its background compelled the press in the north-western provinces to be highly restrained and cautious in its political utterances.<sup>4</sup> As an additional safeguard, most newspapers resorted to an unduly complimentary and affirmative tone in reference to government policies.

The announcement of the new title was greeted by The Aligarh Institute Gazette, a leading muslim newspaper in northern India. Its editor, Syed Ahmad Khan, was a figure of great perception and understanding, known for his deep and sincere commitment to the cause of better relations between the British government and its subjects,

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<sup>1</sup> From a total of 35 Urdu newspapers in 1853 only 12 survived at the end of 1858 and out of these only one was edited by a muslim. S. Natarajan. A History of the Press in India. Bombay 1962. p. 54.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. p. 103.

<sup>3</sup> Sir Syed Ahmad Khan. 1817-88. joined East India Company as a clerk 1839; became munsif 1841; visited England 1869-70; founded Aligarh school 1875 which later became Muhammadan Anglo-Oriental College and finally Aligarh Muslim University; appointed member of public service commission 1878; member viceroy's council 1878-82; knighted 1888; one of the greatest social, educational and political leaders of Indo-Pakistan sub-continent.

<sup>4</sup> Khurshid. op. cit. p. 179.

particularly the muslim minority, which had critically fallen in the estimation of the government for its alleged leading role in the 'revolt' of 1857. His favourable response to the new title was expressed in long articles of support which also refuted criticism of the title both in England and in India. He dismissed all fears that the title of Empress would in any way confer any absolute powers on the Queen or even enhance the powers of the viceroy of India. On the contrary, he argued, the new title would entitle Indians to the same rights as enjoyed by the Queen's English subjects. The Indian people would "no longer be the slaves of an absolute power but subjects of a constitutional government" under whom their grievances could be publicly presented and considered.<sup>1</sup> As such he welcomed the announcement of the Delhi durbar and exhorted the Indian chiefs and people to show more than usual enthusiasm on the occasion.<sup>2</sup> He, however, was deeply apprehensive that the Indian public and purse would not be overjoyed over the enormous expenditure of seventy-five lakhs of rupees "simply to signify joy at the assumption of the title of Empress by Her Majesty", particularly when the people feared that after the formal assumption of the imperial title India would have to pay an equivalent sum to England "to give significance to the day"<sup>3</sup>, adding

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<sup>1</sup> The Aligarh Institute Gazette. Aligarh. Urdu and English weekly. March 24, 1876 and May 5, 1876. Both these editorials are reprinted in Ahmad Khan, Sir Syed. Maqalat. ed. Ismail Panipati. Lahore 1962. ix. 20-6 and 38-43, respectively.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. August 25, 1876. N.W.P. Reports (1876). p. 441.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. November 10, 1876. N.W.P. Reports (1876). p. 656.



that "had India been fortunate enough to have its own parliament, its government wouldn't have dared to ask for such an amount."<sup>1</sup> Nevertheless Syed Ahmad Khan believed that an imperial assemblage would produce a "good political result" and would impress Russia "with a great idea of the power and resources at the command of England."<sup>2</sup>

The Vakil-i-Hindustan, writing from Amritsar, was happy to note that the Queen should receive a title from India "the most honoured of all her colonies" and dismissed Gladstone's objections as "unfounded and weak."<sup>3</sup> It further suggested that the title "King of Delhi" be conferred upon the Prince of Wales to maintain the decorum of the occasion.<sup>4</sup> Despite its clamorous support, the newspaper, like most of its contemporaries, expressed deep resentment over the maltreatment of natives by the Europeans and felt that the comparison between the English rulers and their Mughal predecessors "fully convinced them [Indians] of the difference between the two." Whereas the Mughals were "distinguished for politeness, benevolence, and sympathy for their subjects", the overbearing and discriminatory attitude of the British seemed "calculated to exhibit the English as oppressors and the natives as a downtrodden race."<sup>5</sup> Such a state of affairs, it

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> The Vakil-i-Hindustan. Amritsar Urdu weekly. March 25, 1876. N.W.P. Reports (1876). p. 142.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid. July 1, 1876. N.W.P. Reports (1876). p. 348.

observed, had made the country "restless and uneasy."<sup>1</sup> In view of the commonly held English opinion that England's greatness among the world powers was largely due to her occupation of India, from which the Queen derived her highest title of "Empress", the newspaper found the conduct of English officers towards Indians "exceedingly puzzling and unaccountable".<sup>2</sup> The newspaper heartily endorsed the views of its contemporaries on the prodigious expenditure to be incurred on the approaching Delhi durbar, bitterly complaining that the visit of the Prince of Wales had dragged native princes into very heavy debt; therefore, to prepare for another durbar on a still grander scale would be a crippling blow to their remaining resources.<sup>3</sup> Admitting that the grandeur of the Delhi durbar would have political advantage for the government in impressing upon its enemies with its resources, it strongly doubted if it held any promise of any good for the natives. As such it held appropriate that the government confer the title of "Shah" on the leading Indian chiefs "to bear out the significance of the newly-assumed title",<sup>4</sup> and cheer the hearts of the masses through "kingly generosity and charity" by abolishing taxes which affected all classes.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. October 14, 1876. N.W.P. Reports (1876). pp. 583-4.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid. December 30, 1876. N.W.P. Reports (1876). pp. 753-4.

A correspondent, writing in a Lukhnow newspaper,<sup>1</sup> attacked the very basis of the title "Empress" and saw no justification for it since there were no "Shahs" in India. Amazed at the irony of the situation seeing that "Delhi has been laid waste; Madras spoiled of its splendour; Oudh, Guzerat and the Panjab . . . ruined; Nagpur and Mysore deprived of their sovereigns; Holker's outcries amaze the Welkin; the Nizam has been extensively plundered, calumnies have crushed Baroda; the Mahratta name has perished with the last Peshwa", the writer contended that if the title was to have any meaning or justification, the scions of these ancient houses should be restored to their ancestral thrones. This would be real justice; but till this was effected, there would be no sense in "an empty sound."<sup>2</sup>

The Oudh Akhbar, one of the finest newspapers in northern India,<sup>3</sup> held the imperial title justified on grounds of the enormity of the Indian empire and the splendour of its feudatory chiefs, who were in no way less than kings, but felt that the fulness of its import could only be realised if the Queen conferred the title of "badshah" on the chief native princes.<sup>4</sup> In accord with its favourable response to the

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<sup>1</sup> The Karnamah. Lukhnow Urdu-Marathi weekly. December 25, 1876. N.W.P. Reports (1876). p. 754.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Parliamentary Papers 1877. LVII. 618. pp. 96-7.

<sup>4</sup> The Oudh Akhbar. Lukhnow. Urdu tri-weekly. March 1, 1876. N.W.P. Reports (1876). p. 94; also August 30, 1876. N.W.P. Reports (1876). pp. 444-5.

title, it endorsed the idea of the imperial assemblage at Delhi as a fit occasion for its proclamation, decrying the Liberal Opposition in the British parliament for their "useless and unbecoming"<sup>1</sup> discussions discounting the significance of the title. Despite its verbal warmth towards the new title, the newspaper did not lose sight of the fact that native hopes for an improved and progressive future heavily depended on the revival of the indigenous custom of "liberality and generosity", and of bestowing dignities and rewards on the deserving on such a significant occasion, failing which the people would take "little interest in mere rejoicing."<sup>2</sup> Nevertheless it urged the people to "let slip no opportunity" in making the occasion a complete success remembering that it would "afford an opportunity to the Governor-General to make a public confession as to how far the Government loves its Indian subjects."<sup>3</sup> Thus, in view of possible good ensuing from the occasion, it believed that the enormous expenditures on the durbar could not be called "a waste of public money."<sup>4</sup> It was led to the hope that the British government would gratify Indian minds in every way at the Delhi durbar and address itself to their grievances failing which Indian people "must be supposed to be doomed to distress for ever."<sup>5</sup> The newspaper felt

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid. June 11, 1876. N.W.P. Reports (1876). p. 271.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. June 14, 1876. N.W.P. Reports (1876). p. 289.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. August 25, 1876. N.W.P. Reports (1876). p. 431.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid. August 30, 1876. N.W.P. Reports (1876). pp. 444-5.

that in order to create greater understanding between the rulers and the ruled it would be most commendable for the British rulers in India to settle in the country permanently and to entrust native aspirants with positions of responsibility in larger number, and suggested that in view of historical associations, sacred to the local populace, Delhi, instead of Calcutta, be made the metropolis of the empire.<sup>1</sup>

The Kavi Vachan Sudha shared with equal warmth the views of the Oudh Akhbar towards the new title and likewise condemned the opposition of the title in England. It expressed joy at Disraeli's declaration of the determination of the British government to "preserve her mighty and splendid empire in the East."<sup>2</sup> However, it expressed doubt that the holding of a grand durbar to proclaim the assumption of the new title would be a wise step and suggested, as an alternative, that the same procedure be followed as in 1858.<sup>3</sup> Like most of its contemporaries, the newspaper advocated that the title of "Shah" be conferred on certain leading chiefs so that "the significance of the title of Shah-in-Shah or Empress, assumed by Her Majesty may be deeply impressed on the minds of the people."<sup>4</sup> Further, in place of

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid. October 4, 1876. N.W.P. Reports (1876). pp. 531-2.

<sup>2</sup> The Kavi Vachan Sudha. Benares. Hindi and English weekly. April 10, 1876. N.W.P. Reports (1876). pp. 292-3.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. September 11, 1876. N.W.P. Reports (1876). pp. 480-1. The assumption of the government of India by the crown in 1858 was marked by no ceremonial durbars; but the proclamation was read in all Indian languages and copies were sent to all the Indian princes.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. October 23, 1876. N.W.P. Reports (1876). p. 599.

the title "Empress of India", it expressed preference for the Sanskrit title of "Rajrajeshwari" in view of its greater significance and endearing association to the Indian mind.<sup>1</sup> The Samaya Vinod expressed a similar sentiment in its preference for the Sanskrit version "Rajrajeshwari" to the official translation "Qaisar-i-Hind", and manifested annoyance over the Queen's "total disregard"<sup>2</sup> for the affection of the majority of her subjects.

The Rahbar-i-Hind of Lahore expressed outright opposition to the holding of durbars finding their recent frequency and crippling expenditure alarming. It took the native chiefs to task for their ruinous extravagance and stressed upon the government the necessity to ensure strict rules for the observance of economy by the chiefs.<sup>3</sup> In its appeal on behalf of national interests, it urged the government to establish a parliament for India and open all government offices to Indians since such "measures of substantial good to the natives" would be highly conducive to procuring their willing contributions "towards the estimated expenditure of seven crores of rupees."<sup>4</sup> The Urdu Akhbar, referring to many and widely publicized cases such as the

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid. January 1, 1876. N.W.P. Reports (1877). pp. 17-8.

<sup>2</sup> The Samaya Vinod. Nainital. Hindi bimonthly. December 15, 1876. N.W.P. Reports (1876). p. 745.

<sup>3</sup> The Rahbar-i-Hind. Lahore. Urdu weekly. September 9, 1876. N.W.P. Reports (1876). p. 479.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. December 9, 1876. N.W.P. Reports (1876). pp. 721-3.

'Allahabad Mukhtar's case'<sup>1</sup>, expressed strong fears of an increase in the servile treatment of Indians by the British officials, fearing that when prior to the Queen's assumption of the title of Empress "such Mogali acts are committed, we cannot say what will occur after she receives her title."<sup>2</sup>

Thus the announcement of the title was received in India with mixed feelings of grave mistrust and cautious expectancy, the bitterly realistic attitude of one giving way to the thin and tarnished veneer of vague hope of the other. For some it marked an apex of hope; for others, it meant another draught from the cup of national humiliation and subservience. For most, it was a confusing mixture of both, leaning towards either extreme as the passage of time brought either a whiff of hope of some possible benefit, or the general feeling of subjection became accentuated by some new account of discrimination and oppression. However, the new title was favoured at first for it was generally thought that it would inaugurate an era of equality, justice, participation in national administration and greater respect for the dignity of Indians in which their grievances would be listened

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<sup>1</sup> The case involved an incident which occurred when a native 'Mukhtar' (procurator, solicitor) accompanied by his 'Muharrir' (a clerical assistant), went into the court of an English magistrate in Allahabad on official business. They did not take their shoes off in the courtroom, as was generally demanded by British officials, and suffered the deep humiliation of being ordered to stand in a corner of the courtroom for one hour with their shoes on their heads. For details see N.W.P. Reports (1876). pp. 113-6; 133-4; 149-52, and 162-4.

<sup>2</sup> The Urdu Akhbar. Akola. Urdu and Marathi weekly. March 25, 1876. N.W.P. Reports (1876). p. 152.

to and redressed. Unfortunately this subdued excitement of new hopes was frustrated by the meagre attention given to native problems and demands on the occasion, as reflected in the tone of Lord Lytton's speech, which made it abundantly clear that the British government had no intentions of making provisions for improvement in prospects of entry into government service by Indians. Dejected by the viceroy's speech and doubting the willingness of the government to honour the commitments of 1858, the educated classes would have found little comfort in the confidential communication of Lord Lytton.<sup>1</sup> He wrote:

We all know that these claims and expectations never can or will be fulfilled. We have had to choose between prohibiting them (the natives of India) and cheating them, and we have chosen the least straightforward course . . . . Since I am writing confidentially, I do not hesitate to say that both the Governments of England and India appear to me up to the present moment unable to answer satisfactorily the charge of having taken every means in their power of breaking to the heart the words of promise they had uttered to the ear.

Thus the outcome of the durbar produced a wave of exasperation and discouragement among the native intelligentsia which was articulated with much force and concern for the future by the Indian press.

The Soma Prakash termed the Delhi durbar a "gigantic failure" and in a strong editorial denounced<sup>2</sup> the assumption of the imperial title as a cause of great general dissatisfaction among the princes

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<sup>1</sup> cit. B. Pattabhi Sitaramayya. The History of the Indian National Congress. 1885-1935. Madras. 1935. p. 150.

<sup>2</sup> The Soma Prakash. January 20, 1877. Bengal Reports. no. 5. (1877). p. 6.



and people of India since its declared purpose of strengthening the attachment of the Queen to her Indian subjects was in no way apparent. Referring to Disraeli's statement in parliament that assumption of the imperial title would have a sobering effect on Russian advances in central Asia, the newspaper ridiculed the contention since the Russians had not been "struck with terror."<sup>1</sup> The Dacca Prakash expressed deep disappointment over Lord Lytton's speech at the durbar which had "blighted the hopes of the educated natives"<sup>2</sup> through its low estimation of the ability of Indians to hold administrative positions. To the Bharat Mihir the entire affair was "demoralising" inasmuch as it confirmed the truth of Gladstone's remarks that the assumption of the imperial title would compromise the dignity and position of the independent native princes.<sup>3</sup> Criticising Lord Lytton's speech, the newspaper considered the viceroy "a tool in the hands of the Marquis of Salisbury"<sup>4</sup> and charged that his appointment as viceroy of India was "an outcome of the morbid Russophobia, which rules in the mind of Lord Beaconsfield."<sup>5</sup> The Grambarta Prakashika expressed much

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid. March 1, 1877. Bengal Reports. no. 11 (1877). p. 7.

<sup>2</sup> The Dacca Prakash. February 18, 1877. Bengal Reports. no. 8 (1877). p. 6.

<sup>3</sup> The Bharat Mihir. January 11, 1877. Bengal Reports. no. 3 (1877). p. 2. Similar remarks on January 18, 1877. Bengal Reports. no. 4 (1877). p. 3.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. March 8, 1877. Bengal Reports. no. 12 (1877). p. 1.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid. March 1, 1877. Bengal Reports. no. 10 (1877). p. 5.

disappointment when the durbar at Delhi failed to fulfil popular expectations and warned that the people of India were gradually losing faith in government assurances.<sup>1</sup>

The general disappointment over the failure of the durbar to provide any substantial benefits for India, was likewise shared by the Bharat Sangskarak. It called it "a political error and a solemn farce . . . held not to conciliate the natives, but rather to exhibit the wealth and the paramount influence of the British nation in India."<sup>2</sup> It further reproved the Indian educated classes for their indifference to their own interests and cried shame on their "learning and intelligence" which had failed "to attain to a comprehension of the policy of the British Government."<sup>3</sup>

The Sadharani commented on several basic problems facing the people of India as related to contemporary events which led to grave discontentment and mistrust towards the government. In a strong editorial entitled " "Bhik Nehi Mangthe ham, ehi dushman bolai le" meaning "Call back this malicious brute, I do not want any alms" "<sup>4</sup>, it criticised Lytton's speech for its hollowness and its demeaning treatment of native aspirations, which amply indicated that "the

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<sup>1</sup> The Grambarta Prakashika. February 3, 1877. Bengal Reports. no. 6 (1877). p. 4.

<sup>2</sup> The Bharat Sangskarak. January 15, 1877. Bengal Reports. no. 4 (1877) pp. 1-2.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> The Sadharani. January 1, 1877. cit. B.C. Pall. Memories of my Life and Times in the Days of my Youth. Calcutta. 1932. p. 275.

Government has no sympathy with the feelings of the natives, and is so indifferent to their condition, that it rejoices when they weep. A Government of love is not known to our rulers, and foundations of the British power in India rest on the point of sword."<sup>1</sup> Writing a few days after the durbar, it reported an incident in which one Miraj Elahi Bux, a descendant of the imperial Mughal family, "a poor and emaciated old man", was brought to the durbar and when he tried to speak, he was forcibly drawn aside.<sup>2</sup> In another editorial entitled "Spurious Loyalty",<sup>3</sup> the newspaper believed it to be the general feeling among Indians that the Queen's proclamation of 1858 had been "nullified to a considerable extent" by the viceroy's speech at the durbar and, in yet another editorial entitled "Russophobia of the Government and our ruin", it charged the government with ignoring the basic issues affecting the common lot of the people in order to impress Russia with its power and influence in India.<sup>4</sup> The Behar Bandhu struck a note of tragic realism in its inevitable conclusion that "Hindustan may now be said to have been swallowed up."<sup>5</sup> Sounding a similar note of despair, the Samaj Darpan wrote that India had

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<sup>1</sup> The Sadharani. January 14, 1877. Bengal Reports. no. 3 (1877). p. 4.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. January 7, 1877. Bengal Reports. no. 2 (1877). p. 5.

<sup>3</sup> Pall. op. cit. pp. 277-8.

<sup>4</sup> The Sadharani. February 18, 1877. Bengal Reports. no. 9 (1877). p. 1.

<sup>5</sup> The Behar Bandhu. January 3, 1877. Bengal Reports. no. 2 (1877). p. 5.

"never seen the Queen manifest her pleasure by a more hollow and meaningless device."<sup>1</sup>

From Bombay the Rast Guftar wrote editorially that the Delhi durbar was aimed to exhibit "the greatness and mightiness of the British Indian government; and in this respect the exhibition has proved a complete success."<sup>2</sup> It felt that genuine interest in Indian affairs would have been best expressed "by opening an Indian parliament; by bestowing high and responsible places in the administration on competent natives; by conceding other rights to the subjects",<sup>3</sup> but, instead, as the Bombay Samachar noted, it had "occasioned a great disappointment."<sup>4</sup> The Arunodya expressed grief that no antidote by way of any practical benefits had been dispensed to alleviate the blow sustained by the Indian economy and dignity as a result of the "tamasha at Delhi."<sup>5</sup> Writing on the sad state of affairs, The Native Opinion expressed what it believed to be the opinion of the native intelligentsia, according to which the "late grand affair" had, in all probability fulfilled all expectations of grandeur of the English

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<sup>1</sup> The Samaj Darpan. Calcutta weekly. January 5, 1877. Bengal Reports. no. 2. (1877). p. 3.

<sup>2</sup> The Rast Guftar. February 4, 1877. Bombay Reports (February 13, 1877). p. 7.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> The Bombay Samachar. January 12, 1877. Bombay Reports (January 16, 1877). pp. 5-6.

<sup>5</sup> The Arunodya. January 14, 1877. Bombay Reports (January 23, 1877). p. 3.

people; it questioned if the same could be said of the people of the soil, who had thereby "sustained even a greater disappointment than they did in 1858."<sup>1</sup> It further felt that this reduced the position of native princes to "formal vassalage" which had gradually but systematically been brought about by an utter negation of the "expressly and solemnly assured . . . rights and liberties, secured to them by the treaties between themselves and the English Government."<sup>2</sup> Presenting further what it held to be the public opinion on the issue, the newspaper considered the deposition of the Gaekwar of Baroda and the visit of the Prince of Wales as necessary steps leading to the assumption of the imperial title "Empress of India", which formally confirmed the Queen's total domination over the land.<sup>3</sup> Voicing popular expectations that such a historic occasion would bring political advantages and popular privileges "enjoyed by their fellow subjects" in England, it observed that the Indian public had been "sorely disappointed" in its step-motherly treatment by the British government.<sup>4</sup>

Although its support of the imperial title was conspicuously inflated and excessive, the disillusionment of the Vakil-i-Hindustan over the Delhi durbar followed equal measure, so that even the boom of

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<sup>1</sup> The Native Opinion. January 21, 1877. Bombay Reports (January 30, 1877) p. 3.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. January 28, 1877. Bombay Reports (February 6, 1877). pp. 3-4.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

cannons "banged off to apprise not only India but the angels in heaven"<sup>1</sup> of the new title could not overshadow its proportion. It lamented "the vain and sanguine hopes which found expression in the vernacular press" for their erroneous estimation of English intentions towards the Indian nobility, most vividly characterised in the viceroy's presentation to each prince "a banner . . . the cloth of which was made of Chinese silk but whence the bamboo staff was procured, we do not know."<sup>2</sup> The newspaper expressed bitterness about the sorrowful and neglected people for whom "nothing has yet been done" and whose only hope lay in "God as their sole guardian and protector."<sup>3</sup> Further commenting on the servile state to which the ordinary people had been reduced by this painful indifference, it revealed that the "congratulatory addresses abounding with praises of European officers, prepared by some persons for presentation in their name, do not represent their real feelings." Therefore, it emphasized that it will be totally unrealistic and inaccurate to judge the actual condition of the people "from the outward tinsel pomp of India."<sup>4</sup> The Samaya Vinod charged that the government had sought "to please and conciliate our silly Rajas and Maharajas, just as we humour children by pet names and

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<sup>1</sup> The Vakil-i-Hindustan. February 3, 1877. N.W.P. Reports (1877). pp. 81-2.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

toys" to pave the way for stripping off "what little show of independence hitherto belonged to these chiefs" who, in their powerless position, would have no other alternative but "to contribute their quota of money and troops in time of difficulty."<sup>1</sup>

To the Rahbar-i-Hind of Lahore, Lord Lytton's speech at the durbar seemed detrimental to the mutual relations of the rulers and the ruled and unbecoming of "the experienced administrator of the state to think natives unfit in any respect."<sup>2</sup> But the Urdu Akhbar heard the death-knell ring over the hopes and aspirations of the Indian people.<sup>3</sup>

A large number of smaller newspapers, hoping for greater benefits and changes in government policy had favoured the new title. As soon as the durbar was over and having failed to fulfil any of the much cherished hopes of the people, there was complete unanimity among the native press in expressing deep national disappointment.

Finally the reaction of the Anglo-Indian press, representing the multitudinous English interests, was one of nigh unanimity in favour of the new title. The Times of India considered it an "honour" for India that the Queen should take "her Imperial and most sonorous"<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The Samaya Vinod. February 1, 1877. N.W.P. Reports (1877). pp. 84-5.

<sup>2</sup> The Rahbar-i-Hind. February 10, 1877. N.W.P. Reports (1877). p. 100.

<sup>3</sup> The Urdu Akhbar. February 3, 1877. N.W.P. Reports (1877). p. 84.

<sup>4</sup> The Times of India. Bombay. cit. The Pall Mall Gazette. London. March 6, 1876.

title from her and found it "strictly suitable to the circumstances of the country."<sup>1</sup> The Indian Daily News congratulated the British government for providing what was "strangely neglected"<sup>2</sup> in 1858. The Pioneer felt that no other title expressed the position of the Queen "more accurately" than the title of 'Empress' and considered its assumption by the Queen the best political result of the Prince of Wales' visit.<sup>3</sup> Further, it believed that the assumption of the title of sovereignty was a "public and solemn recognition" of the consolidation of the country under one ruler, "an unknown thing in ancient Hindoo times" but "familiar through the long days of Mussalman rule."<sup>4</sup>

The Madras Standard wrote that the title of Empress, "though associated unpleasantly in the mind of liberal Europe", expressed better than any other "the mild despotic relationship which the Crown bears to this country."<sup>5</sup> The Madras Times contended that since "India is well accustomed to the name of Emperor . . . native princes will feel less alarmed by submission to the modern representative of the Great Mogul than by submission to one whose titular greatness is no more than their own."<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid. March 11, 1876. cit. The Globe. London. May 1, 1876.

<sup>2</sup> The Indian Daily News. Bombay. cit. The Pall Mall Gazette. March 6, 1876.

<sup>3</sup> The Pioneer. Allahabad. cit. The Globe. May 1, 1876.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> The Madras Standard. Madras. March 20, 1876. cit. The Globe. May 1, 1876.

<sup>6</sup> The Madras Times. March 23, 1876. cit. The Globe. May 1, 1876.



A major criticism of the title was expressed by The Bombay Gazette. Refuting Disraeli's claim that the new title was desired in India, it considered it "a frightful example of the degeneracy of the age" and "the most impudent and mendacious declaration ever made by an English minister in the British parliament."<sup>1</sup> The newspaper argued that the new title "summarily degraded" the Indian subjects of the Queen to "second class subjects"<sup>2</sup> and warned that "one great evil of the introduction of Imperialism will be the increase of the arrogant pretensions of Indian officials, and the widening of the gulf that even now separated them from all classes of people, European and native. We shall have a Great Mogul at Calcutta, and little Great Moguls in every district and municipality", thus dooming all hopes of the ultimate introduction of liberal institutions into the country.<sup>3</sup> Further the newspaper considered the repeated emphasis on British paramountcy over the Indian princes unnecessary as their demonstrations of loyalty had been extracted on several previous occasions. Moreover, it was rendered all the more superfluous as the Queen's government in India already enjoyed the prestige and respect due to the government of an Empress. As such The Bombay Gazette pleaded that the Queen should decline to assume such a title and particularly

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<sup>1</sup> The Bombay Gazette. cit. The Examiner. London. April 29, 1876. p. 475.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. April 3, 1876. cit. The Daily News. London. April 27, 1876.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. cit. The Examiner. April 29, 1876. p. 475.

when it was not the "free and spontaneous gift" of the whole English nation.<sup>1</sup>

Lord Lytton's political sensitivities divined a shift of attitude in the Anglo-Indian press<sup>2</sup> and inasmuch as he regarded any such grand preparation as "parts of an animal which are of no use at all for butcher's meat", he realised their immense significance as symbols "from which augurs draw the omens that move armies and influence princes."<sup>3</sup> These thoughts were not mere ramblings of a poet turned administrator, but a reflection on an avowed policy that English interests would be best advanced by drawing closer the ties between the paramount power and the Indian princes. The conspicuous absence of any reference to the Indian people was accounted for by Lytton's feeling that "If we have with us the princes, we shall have with us the people."<sup>4</sup> To this end he planned in detail, on a feudal pattern, "the concept of an Imperial throne supported by an Indian nobility"<sup>5</sup>, and even suggested the crea-

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid. cit. The Times. London. April 12, 1876.

<sup>2</sup> Lord Lytton to Queen Victoria. September 4, 1876. cit. Balfour. op. cit. pp. 113-4. He wrote: "Even those Anglo-Indian journals which, as habitual supporters of the opposition at home, were most hostile in their antagonism to the Titles Bill, have completely changed their tone, and now write in warmly approving terms of the policy of giving to the announcement of Your Majesty's Imperial title in this country the utmost possible splendour and importance."

<sup>3</sup> Lord Lytton to Disraeli. October 3, 1876. cit. Ibid. p. 114; also Hughenden Papers. B/XX/LY/235.

<sup>4</sup> Lord Lytton to Queen Victoria. May 4, 1876. cit. S. Gopal. British policy in India 1858-1905. Cambridge University Press. 1965. pp. 113-4.

<sup>5</sup> Gopal. op. cit. p. 114.

tion of an Indian Privy Council as well as a native peerage.<sup>1</sup> His schemes, however, were overruled by the India council<sup>2</sup> in England.

The official interpretation depicting the Indian response as favourable, however, was a typical example of indifference towards Indian opinion as expressed in the native press. It ignored the fact that the new title met with a mixed reaction in India ranging from sycophantic eulogies to open resentment over fears of systemised domination and suppression. The fact that the new title failed to excite any genuine enthusiasm among the Indian people, even several months after its announcement in February 1876, was noted by Lord Lytton in a letter to the Queen in May of that year that its popularity remained "still a passive, not to say a latent sentiment."<sup>3</sup> In his insistence that a favourable native reaction be "judiciously stimulated into active expression"<sup>4</sup>, he saw a lavishly prepared durbar "to give as much theatrical effect and political significance as possible to the publication of the new title"<sup>5</sup> as a fit stimulant, particularly when the "predominant sentiment" was "a vague hopefulness that the new title may inaugurate a

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<sup>1</sup> Lord Lytton to Disraeli. April 30, 1876. Hughenden Papers. B/XX/LY/231. see Appendix C.

<sup>2</sup> Dispatch of Secretary of State. November 20, 1876. cit. Gopal. op. cit. p. 115.

<sup>3</sup> Lord Lytton to Queen Victoria. May 4, 1876. Victoria's Letters. ii. 461.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Lord Lytton to Disraeli. April 20, 1876. Hughenden Papers. B/XX/LY/228.

new era favourable to native feelings and interests."<sup>1</sup> Further, disturbed by "the Opposition speeches", Lytton wanted to make the event "an immense and startling success in India, which will immediately react on public opinion at home."<sup>2</sup> The hopes that the new title would mark a change in British policy towards India by drawing the two countries together, turned to new fears and suspicions of the British intentions in the sub-continent. Hopes of more rights for Indians and greater participation in administrative responsibilities remained unredeemed, and, it is possible, that the princes in their own manner shared the uneasiness of the intelligentsia. This led to suspicion that the imperial title was an expression of Disraeli's intention of depriving the Indian princes of their rights and privileges and even Lord Lytton admitted that "suspicions of some meditated attack upon the the rights of the native princes"<sup>3</sup> were rife.

While engaged in the controversy over the imperial title and its future implications in Indian political life, little was it realised that the reaction occasioned by the assumption of the imperial title was to accelerate the awakening political consciousness largely through

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<sup>1</sup> Lord Lytton to Disraeli. April 30, 1876. cit. Lady Balfour. Personal and literary letters of first Earl of Lytton. London 1906. ii. 18; also Hughenden Papers. B/XX/LY/231.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid; Burne also expressed similar views. op. cit. p. 17.

the efforts of the educated Indians. Their attitude was reflected in the memoirs of the contemporary B.C. Pall who insisted that the new title "practically repudiated" all native claims "to rights of equal citizenship with Her Majesty's subjects."<sup>1</sup> This provided an impetus to the developing Indian nationalism by impressing upon the Indian population the idea of India as a political entity which would cater to native needs. Surendranath Banerjea's<sup>2</sup> acknowledgment that "the idea of National conference . . . originated on the occasion of the Delhi Assemblage, when the princes and the rulers of the land met for the purpose of a great show" is a revealing statement on the vital encouragement and assistance received by the nationalist movement from the idea of such a congregation which "suggested itself to the minds of many that the representatives of the people might also meet, if not for the purpose of show, at least for the consideration of questions of national importance."<sup>3</sup>

The fact that such an awareness grew largely from a continuing dissatisfaction with and distrust of British policies in India, is exemplified, in its germinal state, in a deputation of the Indian Press Association which approached the viceroy during the durbar period to

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<sup>1</sup> Pall. op. cit. pp. 275-6.

<sup>2</sup> Surendranath Banerjea. 1848-1925. Entered Indian Civil Service 1871; services terminated 1874; leader of nationalist opinion in Bengal; twice president of Indian National Congress.

<sup>3</sup> cit. R.C. Majumdar. History of the Freedom Movement in India. Calcutta 1963. i. 378; also mentioned by Sitaramayya. op. cit. p. 14.

ascertain the truth of "the report about the coming restrictions on the press", but "the Viceroy, as might have been expected, was reticent and said nothing in reply . . ."<sup>1</sup> This interview ensued from the general fears that the criticism of government policies would lead to some repercussions against it. Such fears were confirmed when within less than fifteen months of the durbar the native press was "muzzled" by the Vernacular Press Act, thus depriving the Indian public for the time of one of the most effective means of voicing its outstanding grievances against the government.

Thus it may be concluded that the assumption of the imperial title and its proclamation at the Delhi durbar evoked different reaction from different sections of Indian society, but it was only the reaction of the educated classes which was of first importance. The princes, who were certainly in no position to resist, accepted the imperial title with at least the external manifestations of approval, perhaps regarding it as further infringement of their status and perhaps regarding it a guarantee of their continued role in Indian society. About the people it is difficult to generalise, certainly many of them could not be aware of the significance of the change. While they undoubtedly enjoyed the elaborate ceremonials accompanying the proclamation which must have left them with an impression of the greatness and magnificence of the British power, it cannot be assumed that it did much to increase their affection for British rule. The intelligentsia who had

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<sup>1</sup> Surendranath Banerjea. A Nation in Making. Calcutta 1963. pp. 54-5.

not been conciliated in any way and as a class were not inclined to favour pomp and display, were undoubtedly critical and, in most cases, hostile to the title and to the durbar. As a pre-durbar promise, it raised, in some, new hopes and aspirations for an improved future; as a post-durbar reality it drowned in distress and dismay all vestiges of optimism its announcement had evoked in the hearts of Indians suffering under foreign rule.

## CHAPTER VI

### CANADIAN ATTITUDE TOWARDS THE ROYAL TITLES BILL

The controversy in England over the proposed addition of "Empress of India" to the royal style raised a number of questions relating to British subjects in other parts of the empire. According to the Liberal Opposition in England, the new title would be incomplete and unjust, unless reference to Canada and other colonies was included in it. As such, the issue was bound to affect the feelings in Canada. The Canadian press immediately took up the issue in its editorials as soon as the Royal Titles Bill was introduced in the British parliament. In addition to their editorial comments, the English-Canadian press, in particular, carried detailed accounts of the progress of the Bill and the controversy surrounding it in England.

Confederation had been only nine years in existence and Canadians, being the first nation to emerge from the British colonial system, were fresh in their excitement over the newly acquired pride of having set forth on the path of national identity. The Liberal administration under Alexander Mackenzie was in power at the time with Lord Dufferin as the governor-general. The Fenian menace had subsided; Canada stood between the two North West rebellions, and while French Canada was pressing for the release of Lépine and Riel, English Canada was determined that there was to be no pardon for them.



The "Canada First" movement, though shortlived, had made its contribution in stimulating Canadian national sentiment. The imperial links began to be struck off both by the Liberal and the Conservative administrations.<sup>1</sup> Moreover, the westward extension "even more than the original confederation, was a factor of profound importance in stimulating the growth of Canadian national feeling."<sup>2</sup> There was, however, at this stage vagueness and uncertainty over the form that Canadian nationalism would take. The more conservative section of English-Canadian society, strongly aware of their association to British traditions, made known their desire for the appointment of one of the Queen's sons as governor-general of Canada, which "precipitated controversy between the Imperialists and the nationalists."<sup>3</sup> Some sections of society desired political autonomy for Canada, while others favoured economic independence only; still others merely wanted a greater share in the management of their own national affairs under some form of imperial federation. The concept of the "Imperial Federation", though discussed in general outline in the seventies, was more fully defined in the eighties.<sup>4</sup> Thus Canada was still "a nation projected rather than a nation formed."<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> e.g. under the Mackenzie administration the supreme court of Canada was set up in 1875; powers of the governor-general were reduced in 1878, and in 1874 the Royal Military College was established at Kingston. Under Sir John A. Macdonald the "national policy" was launched.

<sup>2</sup> W.S. Wallace. The Growth of Canadian National feeling. Toronto 1927. p. 39.

<sup>3</sup> A.R.M. Lower. Canadians in the Making. Toronto 1960. p. 315.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> W.L. Morton. The Canadian Identity. Toronto 1961. p. 46.

The Canadian press, though influential in moulding public opinion, had not yet acquired a national character. It was still provincial, both in outlook and circulation, which limited its representation of national opinion. As such it seems appropriate to assess the Canadian reaction to the Royal Titles Bill on a provincial rather than the national level.

Ottawa, although the federal capital, was still a small town and the local newspapers<sup>1</sup>, more concerned with national issues, were quite indifferent to the controversy over the imperial title. In the province of Ontario, Toronto was the centre of journalistic activity. Among the leading newspapers published from Toronto, The Mail supported the new addition to the royal titles. The Mail, "organ of the Conservative party"<sup>2</sup> in Ontario, saw "great appropriateness" in the new title and considered it opportune as the Prince of Wales' visit had given "a personal character"<sup>3</sup> to the connection between the British throne and the Indian princes. Further finding it "a wise and politic"<sup>4</sup> measure, the newspaper believed that it would prove to be "the sign and symbol of a grave political reality"<sup>5</sup> which would establish "the

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<sup>1</sup> Both The Citizen and The Free Press did not make any editorial comments on the Bill and printed rather brief reports on its progress in England.

<sup>2</sup> T.F. Wood and Co. Canadian Newspaper Directory 1876. Montreal 1876. p. 15.

<sup>3</sup> The Mail. Toronto. March 9, 1876.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. March 22, 1876.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

important historical precedent" that "although the Queen or King of Great Britain might before have governed India for British interests, the Empress or Emperor of India must govern it for the people of India in great part, though not wholly."<sup>1</sup> The Mail was highly critical of the British press and the Liberal Opposition for opposing the new title which, it thought, expressed the true nature of the Queen's sway over "the magnificent oriental nation." Defending Disraeli's policy, the newspaper wrote: "People may talk glibly of Mr. Disraeli's Jewish blood and waking dreams of eastern glory; but no man has sounded deeper than he the depths of the English heart or felt more surely the pulse of the English people."<sup>2</sup>

However, opposing the demand of the British Liberal Opposition for the extension of the new title to other colonies, The Mail contested that such a proposal by "some self-constituted defenders of colonial rights is not likely to commend itself to Canadians" who would be "quite willing to be considered British subjects in a sense different from that in which the natives of India are so regarded."<sup>3</sup> Stressing its concern for the economic development of the various parts of the empire, the newspaper emphasized that the assumption of the imperial title should ensure the Queen's impartial and consistent interest in

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. May 13, 1876.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. April 5, 1876.

encouraging the extension of industry in all parts of her foreign domain. It urged upon the statesmen, both in England and the colonies, to enlarge their horizon and look after the interests of the empire as a whole and not Yorkshire or Lancashire only. It was of the opinion that "the extension of manufactures in India and the colonies may yet be looked upon, not as a weakening but as a strengthening of the empire."<sup>1</sup> It believed that only "when sovereign and ministers alike realize that it is a great empire and not merely three little kingdoms that they have to govern", that "an Imperial will be substituted for an insular policy."<sup>2</sup>

The Globe, "the prince of newspapers"<sup>3</sup> in Canada and mouth-piece of the reform party, voiced opposition to the proposed assumption of the imperial title which it considered a "pet scheme" of Disraeli and "quite in accordance with his well-known love for Oriental magnificence and high sounding titles."<sup>4</sup> It further argued that the Queen's imperial title would in no way be suggestive of enhanced magnificence or power to the people of India than her ordinary title and felt it "absurd . . . to fancy that any name, however lofty",<sup>5</sup> would

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid. May 18, 1876.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Wood and Co. op. cit. p. 13.

<sup>4</sup> The Globe. Toronto. March 17, 1876.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

do much to either inspire fear or awaken love for the crown. Voicing concern over the possible extension of the imperial title to other colonies, The Globe emphasized that they would in no way be "aggrieved" over such an exclusion. It made clear that "Canadians and the same may be said of the inhabitants of all the colonies — are anxious of no change in their own style or title, or in that of their Sovereign. They are British subjects. This is all they wish . . . and to them it would neither be honour nor privilege to be called upon to drop the "Queen" and adopt "Empress".<sup>1</sup> It further felt that the new title had "a Brummagem ring" about it which would in no likelihood gain favour with "citizens of a free state."<sup>2</sup> In a later editorial, the newspaper severely condemned the measure as a whole and hoped that the people of England would "do their best to forget about this new title" and that it would cause no "practical evil."<sup>3</sup> It further added a note of warning that "multiplication of high-sounding titles has always been one of the symptoms of a receding, not of a progressive state." It concluded that the Bill was passed "not without protest and murmuring, and with the aroused conviction that the gain has been a loss, and that the imagined dignity cannot rank even so high as the proverbial "feather in the cap".<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. April 3, 1876.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

The Nation, a weekly founded in 1874 and soon to become the organ of the "Canada First" movement,<sup>1</sup> vigorously opposed the Bill in its characteristic radical outlook. Commenting on the Opposition demand for the inclusion of other colonies in the new title, the newspaper thanked Forster and Lowe for not forgetting Canadians "when it is proposed to assure our fellow-subjects in India that Queen Victoria is the Queen of India as well as the rest of the empire, and to suggest that Canada might also like to see its name amongst the royal titles"; but it strongly emphasized that "we understand our position perfectly and feelings will not be hurt if India obtains a prominence in the royal appellation denied to Canada."<sup>2</sup> Contending that it was "humiliating" for the sovereign of a vast empire to be "eager" to assume a title which was "neither English nor Oriental" but essentially "local to Europe", The Nation maintained that it would support the new measure only if the imperial title was of oriental origin.<sup>3</sup> In another editorial it suggested that if Disraeli should insist on affecting change in the royal style, it was incumbent upon him to also change, through an Act of parliament, the status of all dependencies enjoying responsible government and include them in the designation of "Great Britain." Such an Act, it explained, would "give Canada

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<sup>1</sup> Frank H. Underhill. The Image of Confederation. Toronto 1965. p. 18.

<sup>2</sup> The Nation. Toronto weekly. March 10, 1876. p. 110.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. March 17, 1876. p. 122. It suggested oriental titles like "Raees-ul-Mulk", "Shah-in-Shah" and "Padishah".

and the Australian Colonies de jure that equality with the United Kingdom which they already possess de facto." <sup>1</sup> By the same token, it observed, crown colonies obtaining responsible government would be included in this general designation. It continued that for Canada, at least, "dependency" was "a hated designation", the elimination of which, the people would greatly appreciate. <sup>2</sup> Further referring to Lord Salisbury's argument that the title 'Empress' described the true relation of the crown to India, The Nation retorted that it could be asserted with equal force that an alternate title "Queen of Great Britain . . . equally represents Her Majesty's relation to all those countries under her sway which govern themselves subject only to Imperial considerations." <sup>3</sup>

The Canadian Monthly and National Review, the product of rising Canadian national sentiment <sup>4</sup>, claimed that colonies, especially Canada, regarded the matter "with supremest indifference", and the new title was "a reflex of the repugnance of their brethren in England." <sup>5</sup> Therefore, "the only apprehension likely to arise in their minds at present is not that they may be neglected in the Royal title, but that they may be unnecessarily meddled with by the Colonial Office." <sup>6</sup> However, it

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid. March 31, 1876. p. 145.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Underhill. op. cit. p. 18.

<sup>5</sup> The Canadian Monthly and National Review. Toronto. May 1876. p. 445.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

went on to warn that not jealousy over Indian prominence in the royal titles, but "want of appreciation, negligence in enforcing treaty obligations, and a supercilious indifference to colonial interests will, if persisted in, have bitter fruit in the not remote future."<sup>1</sup>

From St. Catharines The Daily News believed that Canadians were "quite indifferent"<sup>2</sup> to the new addition and expressed much surprise at its opposition in England as it felt that the new title would not make any change in the constitutional powers of the crown. It was of the opinion that "should Victoria or any of her successors attempt to rule in the same arbitrary style" as some of the European monarchs, "it will then be time enough to kick against the title."<sup>3</sup> It felt assured that in the event of such an emergency the British parliament could be relied upon to meet it effectively. Therefore, "for the present at least, we cheerfully exclaim — "long live the Empress."<sup>4</sup>

From Hamilton The Daily Spectator opined that a formal assumption of titular greatness through parliamentary legislation was unnecessary for "a lady who rules an Empire."<sup>5</sup> On the question of the inclusion of the colonies in the new imperial title the newspaper felt assured that Canadians "have too much good sense to enter into com-

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid.

<sup>2</sup> The Daily News. St. Catharines. May 16, 1876.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> The Daily Spectator. Hamilton. April 10, 1876.



petition with the Hindoos of India for the empty honour of being the subjects of a titular Empress", since any addition to her titles would not enhance the Queen's traditional stature in the eyes of her Canadian subjects.<sup>1</sup> As such it strongly criticised the Opposition for taking "the unwarrantable liberty" of pressing for the inclusion of the colonies about which "they knew nothing", thereby being miscarried in opinion through the resulting "misrepresentation of facts."<sup>2</sup>

The London Advertiser expressed alarm over the larger implications of the proposed imperial title, firmly declaring that it could only be "tolerated" if it were "kept out" of general usage, since, it feared, the new title would "corrupt the signification of the good old word."<sup>3</sup> Concerning the possible extension of the new title to the colonies, the newspaper emphasized that Canada's willingness to remain a part of the British empire depended not on any appellatory distinctions, but on "the same right of self government that the inhabitants of England claim and enforce for themselves." It concluded: "She expects nothing more and will accept nothing less."<sup>4</sup> In a later issue The London Advertiser attributed the idea of the new title to the Queen's "personal ambition", emphasizing that although at its announcement the "common people applauded", such "ephemeral" acclaim would, in no way, assist

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> The London Advertiser. London (Ont.). March 11, 1876.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

Disraeli's steadily declining position.<sup>1</sup> The Stratford Herald supported the new title in the hope that it would lead to "a wider, more liberal and truly national policy" which would help to put all inhabitants of the empire on an equal footing.<sup>2</sup> The Cobourg Sentinel came forward with the idea that the imperial title was being assumed to accommodate the royal family which had suffered "humiliation" over the precedence, given to their relatives from Prussia and Russia, according to court etiquette, on account of their imperial status. However, the newspaper shrugged off the issue firmly assured in the belief that any new title would not bring about a change in the powers of the crown.<sup>3</sup>

An examination of twelve other newspapers<sup>4</sup> from the province of Ontario revealed no other editorial comments on the Royal Titles Bill indicating limited interest in smaller towns.

It will be noted that whatever views the newspapers in Ontario

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid. March 22, 1876.

<sup>2</sup> The Stratford Herald. Stratford (Ont.) weekly. April 12, 1876.

<sup>3</sup> The Cobourg Sentinel. Cobourg weekly. April 1, 1876.

<sup>4</sup> i. The Galt Reporter. Galt weekly.  
ii. The Guelph Mercury. Guelph daily.  
iii. The Newmarket Era. Newmarket weekly.  
iv. The North Ontario Observer. Port Perry weekly.  
v. The Stratford Times. Stratford weekly.  
vi. The Weekly Dispatch. St. Thomas weekly.  
vii. The Dundas True Banner. Dundas weekly.  
viii. The Sarnia Observer. Sarnia weekly.

There were probably comments in the Kingston newspapers but the only newspaper available to the writer, The British Whig, at the Provincial Archives in Toronto, had the relevant issues missing. The necessary issues are not available at the National archives either.

held on the imperial title for India they manifested unanimous disfavour over its proposed extension to Canada or other colonies. Both the conservative and the liberal newspapers made it very clear that Canada was not interested in any new title that might bracket Canadians with their "fellow-subjects" in India. Although valuing their sentimental ties with the English crown they expected equal consideration for their growing sense of national independence and identity.

Although a note of affirmation for the Queen's assumption of the proposed imperial title for India could be detected in the province of Ontario, the issue was greeted in a somewhat indifferent way in the province of Quebec where the French majority obviously had no sentimental ties, whatsoever, with the English monarchy. Thus, it is not surprising that a significant number of French-Canadian newspapers<sup>1</sup> showed complete indifference to the entire issue in their editorial comments. Unlike its English counterpart, both within and outside the province of Quebec, the French-Canadian press in general gave very sketchy attention to the progress of the Bill in England. Furthermore, even those French-Canadian newspapers which expressed

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- i. L'Evènement. Quebec City daily.
  - ii. Le Canadien. Quebec City daily.
  - iii. Le Nouveau Monde. Montreal daily.
  - iv. Le Bien Publique. Montreal daily.
  - v. Le Franc Parleur. Montreal semi-weekly.
  - vi. Le Courier de Montréal. Montreal weekly.
  - vii. Le Courier de St. Hyacinthe. St. Hyacinthe tri-weekly.
  - viii. L'Union des Cantons de L'Est. Arthabaskaville weekly.

any views on the subject ignored completely the issue of the possible extension of the imperial title to other colonies. It is significant to note that Le Bien Publique, an advanced liberal newspaper from Montreal, was the only Canadian newspaper to publish extracts<sup>1</sup> from the Indian native press opposing the new title.

Le National, a leading liberal newspaper, opposed the Bill in its only editorial on the issue. The newspaper blamed Disraeli for being "imprudent" in not dissuading the Queen from a "caprice gros de conséquences funestes". The newspaper wrote:

Car, il ne faut pas s'y tromper, elle se compromet grandement. La reine était une reine établie, incontestée, indiscutable; elle devient une impératrice parvenue. Elle était reine légitime, elle sera impératrice élue ou élective.<sup>2</sup>

It added:

Les conseillers de la reine, ou plutôt ceux qui aiment mieux la flatter que la conseiller, ont ils bien compris la gravité de la question? Il est permis d'en douter en voyant la légèreté avec laquelle, pour satisfaire un caprice, ils sont allés jeter un brûlot dans leur politique étrangère, en même temps qu'ils ont livré à la discussion et à la controverse des traditions et des personnes sacrées pour tous les Anglais. Jamais, nous le répétons, on n'avait vu la Reine ainsi discutée.<sup>3</sup>

The newspaper blamed the Queen for the unpleasant controversy.

La voici qui tout à coup fait, qu'on nous pardonne le mot, sa rentrée par un acte profondément antipathique à son peuple, et c'est elle qui la première porte la

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<sup>1</sup> Le Bien Publique. Montreal. March 13, 1876.

<sup>2</sup> Le National. Montreal daily. April 21, 1876.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

main sur cette tranquille, solide, séculaire et populaire couronne à laquelle nul ne songeait à toucher! <sup>1</sup>

Le National concluded:

Quieta movere est la pire des politiques, et nous ne pouvons nous empêcher de penser que le dernier acte du gouvernement anglais est une des plus grandes fautes qui aient été comises par aucun gouvernement depuis six ans. <sup>2</sup>

Le Journal des Trois-Rivières, a conservative provincial newspaper, considered it "une de ces ironies dont l'histoire a le secret" that a conservative ministry, committed to preserve the traditions and institutions of the kingdom, should try to introduce an innovation in "la pierre angulaire de la constitution anglaise." <sup>3</sup> The newspaper feared that the proverbial loyalty of the English people for their constitution would reduce their loyalty for the Queen, and that "Disraeli regrettera peut-être un jour d'avoir placé l'Angleterre entre ces deux loyautés-là." <sup>4</sup> The newspaper added:

Espérons, pour nos voisins, qu'une impératrice de plus ne leur vaudra pas une reine de moins. <sup>5</sup>

La Minerve, a "leading organ of French conservatism" <sup>6</sup> in Quebec, was the only French Canadian newspaper which supported the new

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Le Journal des Trois-Rivières. Trois-Rivières semi-weekly. May 22, 1876.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> Wood and Co. op. cit. p. 12.

title for India. La Minerve considered the Royal Titles Bill a "complementary" measure to the purchase of Suez Canal shares and the royal visit to India. The newspaper wrote:

Par ce bill l'Inde est formellement incorporée dans l'empire britannique; l'Angleterre affirme en même temps à la face des autres nations, et spécialement de la Russie, dont les empiètements en Asie ont motivé, ou du moins hâté, cet évènement, ses droits inaliénables à l'empire de l'Inde et sa résolution de défendre le territoire indien comme le territoire même des Iles Britanniques. Elle affermit en même temps son empire en Asie, en y augmentant son prestige et celui de sa Couronne. Le voyage récent du Prince de Galles aux Indes faisait partie du programme de M. Disraéli, et était une préparation à la démarché qu'il projetait.<sup>1</sup>

The newspaper implored the royal clemency "pour des personnes que n'ont été coupables que de trop d'attachement aux droits dont le citoyen anglais est jaloux et qu'il défendrait au prix de son sang!"<sup>2</sup> The newspaper pleaded with the Queen to grant full pardon to Riel<sup>3</sup> and Lépine<sup>4</sup> and

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<sup>1</sup> La Minerve. Montreal daily. April 20, 1876.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. May 4, 1876.

<sup>3</sup> Louis Riel. 1844-85; educated at the College of Montreal; leader of the resistance offered by the Métis at Red River 1869-70; secretary national committee; declared an outlaw in 1875; admitted into mental hospital; released in 1878; settled in Montana; returned in 1885 to champion the cause of his countrymen; captured, tried at Regina for high treason and executed.

<sup>4</sup> Ambroise Dydime Lépine. 1840-1923; one of the most distinguished of the Red River patriots; adjutant-general in the provisional government of Louis Riel; president of the court which tried Thomas Scott; withdrew to United States in 1870 and returned next year; opposed the Fenian menace; under pressure of sectional and sectarian resentment in Ontario Lépine was compelled to withdraw from the country in 1872; returned to Canada 1873; arrested on a charge of complicity in the murder of Thomas Scott; tried and sentenced to death which was commuted by Lord Dufferin to two years imprisonment and loss of political rights; died at St. Boniface 1923.

all others involved in the North West rebellion of 1869-70 since such an act, on the part of the Queen, would put an end to the discontent caused by those events.

In another editorial La Minerve criticised the English Liberal Opposition for attacking the new title and believed that the new title would enhance the prestige of the British crown which had been seriously damaged under Gladstone. It wrote:

M. Disraeli a réussi à réparer les fautes commises par M. Gladstone, qui avait détruit le prestige de l'Angleterre en Europe, et qui travaillait pour lui faire perdre ses colonies en Asie comme en Amérique. Ce n'est pas à lui maintenant de venir reprocher à M. Disraeli sa conduite et de l'accuser même de porter atteinte à la grandeur de l'Angleterre.<sup>1</sup>

It thus becomes clear that whether they supported the imperial title for India or opposed it, the French-Canadian newspapers were conspicuously silent on the question of its extension to Canada or other colonies. Such a possibility failed to excite the French-Canadian mind. Their attitude towards England was well described by a writer in the late nineteenth century.

Upon all Imperial affairs, at home or abroad, the French-Canadians look with the eyes of Gallio. The army of England may be a hollow sham and her navy a broken reed, the Russians may be thundering at the gates of India, and the Irish triumphant on College Green, but the French-Canadian, supremely indifferent to the tie of Imperial citizenship, strive only to make their

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<sup>1</sup> La Minerve. May 16, 1876.

province more completely their own and to maintain a controlling power in the councils of the Dominion.<sup>1</sup>

Other than the French newspapers there were some influential English ones in Quebec as well. The Gazette, known for its "unbending advocacy of conservatism and monarchy in their most pronounced phases",<sup>2</sup> welcomed the new title. Commenting on the throne speech and its reference to the proposed addition, The Gazette endorsed the "determination" of the British government to preserve her empire in the east against all hazards so that "England, and England alone, will remain mistress and Queen of its future destiny."<sup>3</sup> Acclaiming the new title as a "master stroke" of Disraeli's political career, the newspaper felt that though there was little value in conjecturing on the extent of its effect on other nations, it would not fail to convey to them the fact that "Britain is determined that British rule in India will be paramount, no matter how Russia, or any other power, may object to that determination."<sup>4</sup>

The Gazette, however, took strong exception to Disraeli's

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<sup>1</sup> Charles J. Binmore. The Canadian Nationality. Montreal 1888. p. 8.

<sup>2</sup> Wood and Co. op. cit. p. 9.

<sup>3</sup> The Gazette. Montreal daily. March 2, 1876.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. April 11, 1876.



remarks<sup>1</sup> on the character of the colonies and their inhabitants of English origin, emphasizing that "Canadian colonists are no more Englishmen than the Right Honourable Benjamin Disraeli is a Spanish Jew." Accepting the fact that many Canadians were still associated to England by the circumstances of their birth, their sentiment, and their devotion to the crown, the old country and its sovereign, it pointed out that "every succeeding generation is becoming less English and more unmistakably Canadian" which had rendered "undivided loyalty

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<sup>1</sup> Disraeli had stated in parliament: "The condition of India and the condition of the colonies have no similarity. In the colonies you have, first of all, a fluctuating population — a man is Member of Parliament, it may be, for Melbourne this year, and next year he is Member of Parliament for Westminster. A colonist finds a nugget, or he fleeces a thousand flocks. He makes a fortune, he returns to England, he buys an estate, he becomes a magistrate, he represents Majesty, he becomes High Sheriff; he has a magnificent house near Hyde Park; he goes to Court, to levées, to drawing rooms; he has an opportunity of plighting his troth personally to his Sovereign, he is in frequent and direct communication with her. But that is not the case with the inhabitant of India. The condition of colonial society is of a fluctuating character. Its political and social elements change. I remember 20 years ago a distinguished statesman who willingly would have seen a Dukedom of Canada. But Canada has now no separate existence. It is called the "Dominion", and includes several other Provinces. There is no similarity between the circumstances of our colonial fellow-subjects and those of our fellow-subjects in India. Our colonists are English; they come, they go, they are careful to make fortunes, to invest their money in England; their interests in this country are immense, ramified, complicated, and they have constant opportunities of improving and enjoying the relations which exist between themselves and their countrymen in the metropolis. Their relations to the Sovereign are ample; they satisfy them, the colonists are proud of these relations, they are interested in the titles of the Queen, they look forward to return when they leave England, they do return — in short, they are Englishmen." Hansard. (Third Ser.) CCXXVIII. 1726.

a thing of the past."<sup>1</sup> It added that Canadians were "fast learning to love Canada more, and the more we lavish our devotion on the land of our birth and adoption, the better in every way for the old home of our forefathers."<sup>2</sup>

The Montreal Star, an "independent"<sup>3</sup> newspaper, was much in favour of the imperial title for India, and decried all opposition in England to the issue. It felt that the warm reception accorded to the Prince of Wales by the English people on his return from India demonstrated their loyalty for the crown and proved that "the hostile movement had no grounding in the popular heart."<sup>4</sup> The newspaper, however, totally ignored the question of the possible extension of the new title to the colonies. The Montreal Herald, "organ-in-chief" of the English speaking section of the extreme liberal party in the province of Quebec,<sup>5</sup> strongly opposed any imperial title. It noted:

If indeed, an empire be something really greater and more dignified than a kingdom — if established political situations and events could be altered by the tricks of language, the intention which must be implied from the distinction between the Indian and other parts of the empire, and bestowal on India of a superior rank, would be that of placing the subject above the dominant country; or else that of

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid. April 3, 1876.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Wood and Co. op. cit. p. 14.

<sup>4</sup> The Montreal Star. Montreal daily. May 23, 1876.

<sup>5</sup> Wood and Co. op. cit. p. 11.

intimating a personal rule in India independent of the nation, such as no British Sovereign pretends to.<sup>1</sup>

The newspaper echoed the views of the Toronto Globe that any imperial title indicated decline of political power such as Disraeli might be feeling "slipping from his grasp"; to counter which, he was desperately trying to "waken up the people to a sense of the great things which he is doing for the country."<sup>2</sup> Such theatricality of Disraeli's political disposition, it felt, created suspicion of a weakening within his party ranks indicative of political bankruptcy. The newspaper maintained complete silence on any extension of the new title to the colonies.

The Montreal Witness, an "independent"<sup>3</sup> newspaper, opposed the new measure and frowned upon its proposed extension to the colonies as "mischievous" which would tend "to increase the former gulf between the two branches of the Anglo-Saxon race, which are really very near each other in sentiment."<sup>4</sup> However, it expressed willingness to support such an extension only if it would "signify a closer union" between the colonies and the mother country. It further raised objection to the term "colonist" and its "universal use in England with regard to all English dependencies of colonial origin" as a "decided

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<sup>1</sup> The Montreal Herald. Montreal daily. March 29, 1876.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> A. McKim and Co. The Canadian Newspaper Directory 1892. Montreal 1892. p. 142.

<sup>4</sup> The Montreal Witness. Montreal daily. March 29, 1876.

anachronism" to "our present national condition".<sup>1</sup> The only mention that the entire issue received from The Quebec Morning Chronicle, a liberal-conservative newspaper from Quebec City, was in its editorial on the Queen's birthday, wherein the newspaper referred to the new title as an "empty name."<sup>2</sup> The Canadian Gleaner, a "liberal"<sup>3</sup> organ, voiced disfavour towards the new title and regretted "to hear the British Crown mentioned in the same breath with the despotic dynasties of the continent", hoping that the Queen, "with her customary good sense", would in view of growing opposition in England, refuse it.<sup>4</sup>

The Canadian Illustrated News from Montreal favoured a separate title for India in the belief that it would "naturally include the idea of a more vigorous government in that country" and would be desirable "were it only as a warning to Russia."<sup>5</sup>

Thus it is evident that the cultural and historical background of the people of the province of Quebec largely influenced their attitude towards the issue. For the French-Canadian press, the issue held little interest beyond nominal coverage. Therefore, with a few exceptions, French-Canadian newspapers manifested their total silence

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid. April 8, 1876.

<sup>2</sup> The Quebec Morning Chronicle. Quebec City daily. May 25, 1876.

<sup>3</sup> A. McKim and Co. op. cit. pp. 136-7.

<sup>4</sup> The Canadian Gleaner. Huntingdon weekly. March 30, 1876.

<sup>5</sup> The Canadian Illustrated News. Montreal weekly. March 25, 1876. p. 445.

or complete indifference, even towards the possible implications of the imperial title for Canada and other colonies. On the other hand, the English press in Quebec extended support for the new title only to the extent of its reference to India, and firmly opposed any possible extension to colonies, least of all Canada.

Moving further east to the Maritime provinces one finds somewhat greater interest in the issue among the local newspapers. The Daily Acadian Recorder, a "liberal"<sup>1</sup> newspaper from Nova Scotia, expressed amazement over, what it called, a "very silly"<sup>2</sup> controversy which had arisen in England around "the most innocent bill in the world."<sup>3</sup> It urged the Queen "to enlarge her title as to embrace in it all dependencies" as it would have the dual effect of "making the colonists feel that there was a tie binding them to the mother country" as well as "curb the haughty airs of supercilious Englishmen, who assume that their little island is all the world."<sup>4</sup> Therefore, the newspaper resented "the policy of elevating one portion of the British empire above the others" as seen in the prominence given to India.<sup>5</sup>

The Citizen, also from Halifax, struck a similar note of resentment, warning Disraeli that he could be helping "to sever the bond

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<sup>1</sup> A. McKim and Co. op. cit. p. 159.

<sup>2</sup> The Daily Acadian Recorder. Halifax. April 25, 1876.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. May 5, 1876.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. April 25, 1876.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

that binds half of this continent to the little islands between the Atlantic and the German oceans, if he exalts India at our expense."<sup>1</sup> It observed that the marked hostility to the new title would prove it to be "the most unpopular act"<sup>2</sup> of Disraeli's government, and was critical of the Queen for not using her influence to restrain her "Israelitish Prime Minister" from experimenting with her royal titles.<sup>3</sup> The Morning Herald, a "liberal-conservative"<sup>4</sup> newspaper casually opposed the new title and attributed its passage in the British parliament to the "predominant influence"<sup>5</sup> of the crown. Although the newspaper did not see any constitutional danger in the new title as it involved no constitutional changes,<sup>6</sup> it did see a trend towards increase of power of the royal prerogative.<sup>7</sup> The Daily Reporter and Times, however, believed that any new title for India would not cause any dissatisfaction in Canada, since "we recognise the very great difference between India and Canada. We consider ourselves British, and would not like to be thought under a more autocratic form of government than our fellow subjects in the United Kingdom."<sup>8</sup> Thus it was

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<sup>1</sup> The Citizen. Halifax tri-weekly. April 1, 1876.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. April 4, 1876.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. May 4, 1876.

<sup>4</sup> A. McKim and Co. op. cit. p. 160.

<sup>5</sup> The Morning Herald. Halifax. May 4, 1876.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid. May 6, 1876.

<sup>8</sup> The Daily Reporter and Times. Halifax. March 13, 1876.

gratified to note "evident anxiety of members of both great political parties to please us and to consult our wishes" and supported the new title for India which, it thought, would be "more suited to the traditions, the circumstances and prospects" of the country.<sup>1</sup>

In New Brunswick The Daily Telegraph, a "liberal"<sup>2</sup> newspaper, wrote very approvingly of the new title and supported Disraeli's government for "acting wisely in striving to consolidate and secure"<sup>3</sup> the British empire in India. Regarding the new title "a pleasing proof of the increasing consideration" for the colonies in the mother country,<sup>4</sup> it strongly criticised the Liberal Opposition in England and accused Gladstone of "overlooking the moral force" of the new title.<sup>5</sup> It assured the Opposition that its fears over causing any offence to Canada by giving India a prominent title were "wholly imaginary."<sup>6</sup> However, on the question of recognition of colonies in the imperial title, the newspaper sharply reacted to the "looseness and inaccuracy"<sup>7</sup> of Disraeli's remarks on the colonies. It severely attacked the "exhibition of ignorance or mental imbecility" on Disraeli's part which had weak-

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid.

<sup>2</sup> A. McKim and Co. op. cit. p. 172.

<sup>3</sup> The Daily Telegraph. St. John, N.B. March 11, 1876. The entire editorial was reproduced by The Yarmouth Tribune. Yarmouth, N.S. March 15, 1876.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid. March 25, 1876.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

ened his own party and alarmed the whole country of "the possible dangers into which he may lead the British people."<sup>1</sup>

The New Brunswick Reporter and Fredericton Advertiser, a "conservative"<sup>2</sup> weekly, was glad to note that "the nation of shopkeepers" had assumed a more decided attitude, and manifested a determination "to be true to her traditions."<sup>3</sup> Thus it felt encouraged that "there is life in the old land still."<sup>4</sup> It believed that the purchase of shares in the Suez Canal, the visit of the Prince of Wales to India, and the Royal Titles Bill, had duly warned all nations of England's determination to maintain "her supremacy in the East . . . at all hazards and at whatever cost."<sup>5</sup> It congratulated Disraeli for his "far seeing sagacity, and enlightened patriotism", and felt that his conduct of eastern affairs would "cover a multitude of minor sins."<sup>6</sup> The Morning Freeman<sup>7</sup> and The New Dominion<sup>8</sup> made no reference to the issue in their editorials. There was no comment on the Bill in the Prince Edward Island Examiner<sup>9</sup> and none in the two Newfound-

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid. April 7, 1876.

<sup>2</sup> A. McKim and Co. op. cit. p. 169.

<sup>3</sup> The New Brunswick Reporter and Fredericton Advertiser. Fredericton. April 12, 1876.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> The Morning Freeman. St. John (N.B.) tri-weekly.

<sup>8</sup> The New Dominion and The True Humourist. St. John (N.B.) weekly.

<sup>9</sup> The Examiner. Charlottetown (P.E.I.) weekly.



land newspapers considered, The Newfoundlander<sup>1</sup> and The North Star and St. John's, Newfoundland, News.<sup>2</sup>

In the western regions, the reaction to the issue was lukewarm, to say the least of its indifference and lack of interest. From British Columbia The British Colonist,<sup>3</sup> publishing large reports on the subject from its correspondent in London, ignored it completely in its editorials. The Mainland Guardian<sup>4</sup> also displayed its indifference similarly. In Manitoba Le Métis simply reproduced editorials from La Minerve of Montreal and endorsed the clemency plea of its contemporary for Riel and his followers.<sup>5</sup> The situation in Manitoba was desperate and Le Métis, in order to achieve release of the leaders of the North West rebellion, followed a conciliatory attitude. It reflected clerical rather than the liberal point of view. They were more in need of better relations with the British as there was something to be gained.

In the higher circles of Canadian politics the Royal Titles Bill produced no noticeable controversy. The dominion parliament made no mention, whatsoever, of the issue in parliamentary discussions. Hence it appears that the overwhelming rejection by the Canadian press of any recognition of Canada in the imperial title was indicative

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<sup>1</sup> The Newfoundlander. St. John's (Nfld.) bi-weekly.

<sup>2</sup> The North Star and St. John's, Newfoundland, News. St. John's (Nfld.) weekly.

<sup>3</sup> The British Colonist. Victoria daily.

<sup>4</sup> The Mainland Guardian. New Westminster weekly.

<sup>5</sup> Le Métis. St. Boniface. May 18, 1876 and June 8, 1876; both these editorials were taken from La Minerve, Montreal. May 4 and 16, 1876.

enough for the parliament of the national feeling on the subject. The only official mention of the issue came much later and that too when formally intimated by the colonial office after the Bill had been enacted in England. On the question of the use of the new title in Canada, the colonial secretary, Lord Carnarvon, referred a copy of the royal proclamation to the governor-general adding that he was "advised" that it would not appear necessary or convenient for the new style to be adopted "in framing such instruments as are issued in a colony for operation within it"; but he expressed his willingness "to consider any opinion to the contrary effect" which could be advised by the Canadian government.<sup>1</sup> The matter was referred to the justice minister, Edward Blake, who, viewing the issue from the expressed opinion of the colonial secretary pertaining to the convenience of the adoption of the new style, recommended that "the addition be not adopted in Canada."<sup>2</sup> Finally, when the cabinet was informed of the recom-

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<sup>1</sup> Lord Carnarvon to Lord Dufferin; colonial office dispatch no. 805, dated June 6, 1876. P.C.O. (R.G. 2, series 1. vol. 134). C.P.A.

<sup>2</sup> Justice Minister's report to the governor-general. December 16, 1876. B-1946, C.O. 323, vol. 326. pp. 392-3. C.P.A.

mendation from the justice department it simply endorsed and acquiesced<sup>1</sup> in the views of the justice minister, and the colonial secretary was informed accordingly.<sup>2</sup>

Thus even a cursory glance at the Canadian reaction to the issue of the imperial title, as determined largely by the views of the Canadian press, would show that while the English press in Canada generally displayed considerable interest in the new title, the French-Canadian press largely displayed indifference towards the issue. Among the English-Canadian press the conservative section favoured the imperial title for India, while the liberal group was somewhat divided in its views on the same. The French-Canadian press was largely indifferent and reflected the liberal point of view more than the conservative. Though far removed in distance and tradition there are certain parallels in the French-Canadian and the Indian attitudes towards the British empire. While the French-Canadians could not be greatly concerned with Indian or any other imperial problems, they viewed with suspicion any move which seemed to suggest pompous circumstance or increase in imperial power. The views of La Minerve reflected the alliance of clerical conservatives with the English Tories which at that time was being strained by the circumstances of the North West rebellion. Like Isaac Butt in Ireland<sup>3</sup> and sections of the muslim

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<sup>1</sup> December 19, 1876. B-1946, C.O. 323, vol. 326. pp. 392-3. C.P.A.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. pp. 390-1. December 21, 1876.

<sup>3</sup> see above Chapter III, pp. 95-6 and Chapter IV, p. 187.

community in India as seen in the attitude of Syed Ahmad Khan,<sup>1</sup> they sought to advance the interest of their community by support rather than opposition to the Royal Titles Bill.

Regarding any possible recognition of Canada in the imperial title the Canadian press, as a whole, rejected the idea. Whereas French Canada obviously had no sentimental attachment to the English monarchy, the rejection of the new title by English Canada should not be taken as simple indifference to monarchy. They valued this institution and clearly expressed their love for it. What they rejected was the extension of the imperial title to Canada which they, in view of the growing awareness of their own national identity, considered a step backward and not forward in their national development. In fact the words "dependency" and "colony" were no longer acceptable to Canadians; they asserted their new identity and expected a full recognition of it.

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<sup>1</sup> see above Chapter V, pp. 218-20.

## CONCLUSION

British power in India was the result of economic and political forces which had little to do with tradition and symbols and as long as the company could rule behind the façade of the Mughal emperor the problem of symbols could be evaded. Yet as the company itself, by degrees, became a façade, Anglo-Indians began to speculate about the changing of the form to suit the fact of British rule. Among the first to consider the problem was James Mill who proposed, surprisingly, that India be governed by a resident British prince. This idea, which had at least one advocate besides Mill, seems romantic from the point of view of the twentieth century yet it cannot be dismissed altogether as Sarawak was ruled on these lines until the end of the second world war.

Although placing an alien monarch on the Indian throne presented difficulties it did not run into religious obstacles: the necessity of ruling a multi-religious society had transformed the Indian monarchy into an authority which, if not secular, had ruled without establishing a religious ascendancy. It was not the decay of Mughal power which caused impatient Anglo-Indian officials to think of adopting a more direct form of rule but the irritating survival of Mughal prestige which they saw as an obstacle to British authority. At the same time educated Indians, typified by Rammohan Roy, were coming under the influence of western political thought and saw little value in the

preservation of the Mughal empire.

Lord Ellenborough was the first of his rank and position to suggest the abolition of the titular power of the Mughals and adoption of the title of Empress of India by the Queen. Yet there is no evidence that these opinions went much beyond official circles and it is probable that Disraeli in Tancred arrived at the same idea independently and was responsible for its presentation to the public.

The Mughals, like the company, survived largely by inertia until the uprising of 1857 demonstrated the incapacity of the company rule and convinced officialdom that the survival of Mughal prestige constituted a threat to British sovereignty. In the generation that followed the crisis of 1857 India was ruled without symbolic recognition of the existence of an Indian state unless such a symbol can be seen in the office of the viceroy. The assumption of a new title by the Queen would clearly be inappropriate while the memory of the uprising of 1857 was still vivid. However, the idea of assuming an imperial title gained popularity among Anglo-Indian officialdom, with Conservative support at home, as a means of relating the British rule in India to the Indian tradition. After 1858, Lord Canning vigorously tried to strengthen British rule in his efforts to woo the support of Indian princes and nobility. This tendency grew stronger in the next two decades and found fuller expression under Lord Lytton. The Indian princes and aristocracy were supported as the "natural leaders" of Indian society. Anglo-Indian officials were confident that with the

help of the upper classes they would be able to appeal to the Indian feeling for tradition. New emphasis was placed on symbols: ceremonials like durbars became a regular feature of the British government in India after 1858. In this manner Indian pageantry was used to impress the Indian princes and people. The British effort to associate the Indian princes with the government was facilitated by the fact that the princes welcomed these gestures since this apparent support provided the princes with an added security. It was mutually helpful to both parties.

While Indian officialdom pursued this policy the British monarchy was being adapted to the needs of overseas territories and the possibilities opened by revolutionary advances in the means of transport. The Prince of Wales' visit to Canada, followed by the more spectacular visit to India, set the stage for a new policy of royal visits, adding another dimension to the relations between the crown and the overseas territories.

The royal visit to India coincided with the policy of Indianizing the appearance of the Indian government. As a consequence of this step, the British Prince, in the course of his visit, participated in ceremonials which bore the semblance of a blend of British and Indian traditions, strongly flavoured by the latter. The adoption of a title signifying the existence of a separate crown for India would, in a sense, carry this attempt of blending Anglo-Indian ceremonials to its obvious conclusion. In spite of Ellenborough and Disraeli, it is

not clear that an imperial title would have been adopted. The decision seems to have been made by the Queen herself, and once having been made, was accepted by Disraeli since it found accord with his temperamental affinities and perhaps because he was attracted by the opportunity of using his parliamentary ingenuity to fulfil the wishes of his sovereign. In short, the time now seemed ripe to Disraeli and the Queen to satisfy their common ambition of imperial grandeur which had fascinated them both for a long time.

The Royal Titles Bill was received in parliament with irritation because of the manner in which Disraeli presented the Bill. He further antagonized the Opposition, who were otherwise willing to recognize India in the royal titles, by his refusal to specify the proposed title in spite of strong demands. Difficulties arose over the use of the imperial title because of its classical and historic association with autocratic rule. Although the Opposition leaders undoubtedly understood that there was no danger of a resurgence of the royal prerogative through the assumption of the new title, they could hardly resist the temptation to make a gesture against the shadow of the crown's authority as represented by the Bill. It was generally recognized by all that some new way of presenting British power in India had to be devised since it was too large a country to become a mere crown colony. The opposition was largely to the title 'Empress' although it must be recognized that many of them might, on other grounds, have objected to a less imaginative suggestion. Most Radicals



would, as a matter of course, make a protest against any measure designed to exalt the institution of monarchy.

The Royal Titles Bill, as a means of capturing the imagination of the British public, was not an immediate success. It provoked more criticism than praise in the press and was received with suspicion among the higher class generally whose sympathy for the proposal was qualified by suspicion of any innovation. Yet this kind of opposition did not matter. While irritation and indifference might characterise the attitude of large sections of the public as well as of the upper class, this attitude would change when they became accustomed to the idea. Meanwhile the title "Empress" did arouse some positive response in emerging imperial circles and while it was less than what Disraeli might have hoped for, it had some influence on the press and was good enough for his purpose at that time. It was a Bill which he, in view of his strong parliamentary majority, could impose on the Opposition even though his own party lacked enthusiasm for the measure.

In Ireland, largely preoccupied with domestic problems, the Bill failed to create much response. The Home Rulers, divided as they were, were willing to support the title to win the imperial favours and release of political prisoners. The more radical nationalists generally showed no interest in the issue.

It is perhaps curious that the idea of making the Bill an occasion for the release of political prisoners was echoed by the clerical

conservatives in Quebec who hoped that the Queen would take the opportunity to pardon Louis Riel. Apart from this the Canadian reaction is of interest because of Canada's independent relation to the crown. If Indian conditions seemed to demand that India be more than a kingdom, the North American situation suggested that Canada be a little less. Consequently the monarchical aspects of Confederation had been deliberately understated by styling Canada a dominion. Whatever wisdom in this decision, which was British rather than Canadian, the adoption of the imperial title for India does not seem to have aroused Canadian jealousies. Although English Canada, as reflected in the press, approved of the title for India, any possible extension of it to Canada was rejected. French Canada, with little interest in the amplification of English titles, largely displayed indifference towards it apart from the above noted attempt to effect the release of Riel. What is perhaps most curious, in view of later developments, is that no one at the time considered the adoption of the imperial title as a possible step towards dominion status for India.

In India Disraeli found in Lord Lytton, a viceroy who was more than willing to implement Conservative imperial policies. Yet, both Lytton and his "Chief", neglected the emerging national sentiment in India — a fact voiced by the Liberals in their speeches on the Bill in parliament. The British government was more intent in creating a romantic picture of Indian society, with the princely classes as the only natural leaders of the people, in the belief that its hold on India

depended largely on the extent of its influence with the aristocracy. Among the various methods adopted towards maintaining such a hold on the princes was to ensure their participation in the pageantry of state ceremonials. Treated with conspicuous attention amid the grandeur of the Delhi durbar, the nominated leaders of India were accorded the recognition that was now their due.

The people understood little or nothing at all of the significance of the new title beyond the show of power and magnificence displayed in the lavish public entertainment at the durbar.

While the new title gave assurance to the princes, the educated classes received it with caution and a vague hope that it might lead to a more positive government attitude towards their demands. They hoped that the new title would forge closer ties between India and Britain, thereby affecting a liberalization of British rule in India, and bringing about realization of their long neglected aspirations. Their attitude to the new title, thus, remained suspended in cautious anticipation as they waited to see what their share, if any, would be in the new measure.

Their hopes were, however, soon disappointed when the proclamation of the imperial title was not accompanied by any concessions. The viceroy's speech in which "social superiority" and "birth, rank, and hereditary influence" were stressed as qualifications for government service, seemed to announce as a policy what had hitherto been a practice. Deprived of the hope that they might look forward to a

greater share in the administration of their country this class, in a mood of resentment and disappointment, turned more towards the idea of political action. The pageantry of the durbar in which they did not share, was less attractive to this class than others and in no sense a consolation for the absence of more tangible benefits.

While British officialdom did not foresee the potentialities of the educated classes as leaders of Indian nationalism, the forces of technology which made the Prince of Wales' visit practical, were changing the attitudes of Anglo-Indians. As they were henceforth able to keep in closer touch with the mother country, they had less need and less interest in Indian society. This further widened the gulf between them and the people.

Moreover, the Conservatives had underestimated the difference between the Mughal and British supremacy. It must be realised that the social and cultural patterns of the Mughals, drawn as they were from western Asian society, were not so far removed from those of India. Their political and administrative forms blended easily with those of India which enabled them to weave their system into the fabric of Indian society and culture and in the course of doing so becoming themselves Indianized. What arose from this was the splendid Mughal culture, whose influence on Indian life gave a new dimension to Indian society. In fact the arrival and settlement of the Mughals marked an important step forward in the evolution of the Indian society, which greatly benefited in all fields from this impact.

The British contribution was of another order. It brought India in contact with an advanced technology and an advanced secular philosophy. With this came an inevitable Anglicising process, in many instances as in the case of language deliberately pursued. The Royal Titles Bill was a continuation of the British policy of adopting the externals of Indian traditions. Although it had little appeal for the educated classes, it was better than having no policy towards symbols and was certainly wiser than making war on tradition. Yet the British policy of continuing and reviving Mughal forms and ceremonials with the hope of rousing the same sentiments of affection and respect towards the imperial symbols of the Mughals had limited possibilities. They overlooked the historical, cultural and social differences which distinguished the two imperial systems.

As the contemporary Japanese monarchy, like the Mughal empire, had survived in suspended animation to be subsequently restored, it may be asked why the British policy of Indianizing symbols was not extended to the preservation or even restoration of the Mughals. Such a policy would have been acceptable to the princes and people but probably not to the British public which remained for a long time under the impression of the events of 1857. It would hardly have found much favour with the intellectuals whose attitude had not changed much since the days of Rammohan Roy. Moreover, the continuation or restoration of the Mughals would have implied an ultimate severance of the British connection with India which was regarded by the

prevailing school of political thought as permanent.

In spite of the cool reception in parliament and the press the Royal Titles Bill was generally acceptable to the British public as a long term solution and was acceptable to the Canadians as a solution to Indian problems but not for their own. In India it had the effect of reminding Indians of the existence of a historic Indian state and at the same time reminded Indian intellectuals that they had little share in its government.

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### INTRODUCTION

The Hughenden Manor Papers include a vast collection of Disraeli's political and private correspondence, speeches, notes and memoranda. These papers are listed under various heads of special subjects. The section of relevance to this study is the one marked "Political" which is sub-divided into various volumes dealing with material pertaining to home affairs, copies of Disraeli's speeches, foreign affairs, royal correspondence and general correspondence. The last four subjects contained in volumes XV to XXI

are related to this dissertation, particularly volume XIX, section F, which deals with the Royal Titles Bill. Disraeli's papers are particularly important as they show that the Queen, and not Disraeli, took the initiative on the Bill. The papers also provide negative evidence as the absence of any reference to Ellenborough during Disraeli's Tancred period suggests that the ideas expressed in the novel were independent of similar ideas held by the governor-general. The other manuscript sources consulted, the Sir John A. Macdonald papers and Alexander Mackenzie papers in the Public Archives of Canada, and the Edward Blake papers in the Ontario Provincial Archives, were useful in that they indicated want of interest in the Bill among these Canadian statesmen.

The value of Hansard's parliamentary debates on the Bill and the Prince of Wales' visit to India is self evident. Yet there is also a good deal of useful background material in the debates of 1857-58, during which Disraeli elaborated the ideas he had already expressed in Tancred and was to develop more fully in 1876. The debates on the renewal of the company's charter in 1813, 1833 and 1853 provide additional material. The matter was not discussed in Canadian parliamentary debates. The British parliamentary papers, particularly reports of the select committees, volumes XXVII - XXXIII, LXIX of the 1852-53 session, and volumes II, XLIII - XLIV (parts I - IV) of the 1857-58 session throw an important light on British attitudes towards the Mughal empire and the problem of relating Indian tradition to British rule. The yearly statements "exhibiting the moral and



material progress and condition of India", although primarily concerned with facts and figures, provide some useful information related to the subject.

There is a good deal of valuable information scattered amongst the memoirs, diaries and contemporary histories which cannot be discussed in detail. However, Lady Balfour's The History of Lord Lytton's Indian Administration, 1876-80, and Personal and Literary Letters of First Earl of Lytton, which contain letters showing Lord Lytton's attitude towards the Bill, deserve special attention. The same can be said of Lord Colchester's History of the Indian Administration of Lord Ellenborough which contains letters that indicate that Ellenborough had favoured the adoption of the title as early as 1843. Disraeli's Tancred, which shows his thinking on the Indian question in 1847, is, of course, essential to understanding the policy behind the Bill, while the Queen's interest in the title, but not her decision to adopt it, is revealed in The Letters of Queen Victoria, second series, edited by G.E. Buckle.

Newspapers and periodicals provide a wealth of material in the form of articles, diaries, journals, editorials, letters and eye-witness reports, the importance of which cannot be over-emphasized, particularly in their reflection of public opinion. Of these the collection of newspapers at the British Museum Newspaper Library at Colindale provides the most important body of provincial newspapers. The leading London and national newspapers are generally available

in North America. The collection of Canadian newspapers of this period at the Public Archives of Canada, Ottawa, is reasonably complete as far as English Canada is concerned, but a more extensive collection of Quebec newspapers is to be found at the Bibliothèque Nationale du Québec in Montreal. The examination of smaller newspapers in the United Kingdom and Canada was necessary to establish that there was no interest in the Bill in many rural areas. There is no collection of contemporary Indian newspapers which corresponds to the collection of British newspapers at Colindale or the collection of Canadian newspapers at the Public Archives of Canada. Consequently, it was necessary to make use of the Indian Native Press Reports preserved at the India Office Library, London, England. These reports are extracts from newspaper editorial comments and reportage compiled by the Department of Public Instruction in each presidency. These compilations are a mine of valuable information which provide insight into Indian feelings and sentiments during this period.

The Royal Titles Bill itself is not discussed extensively in secondary sources. It receives little attention, for example, in such recent works as Robert Blake's Disraeli and A.P. Thornton's Imperial Idea and its Enemies. Earlier histories seldom give it more than a paragraph or a page. There is, however, much valuable secondary material on the development of British attitudes towards India which contains material useful to understanding the background of the Bill. Of particular interest are Eric Stokes, The English

Utilitarians and India; George D. Bearce, British Attitudes towards India, 1784-1858; Thomas R. Metcalf, The Aftermath of Revolt: India, 1857-1870; S. Gopal, British Policy in India, 1858-1905; and Francis G. Hutchins, The Illusion of Permanence, British Imperialism in India. For the later period of the Mughals which must be considered to understand the survival of Indian monarchical tradition in the nineteenth century, a good discussion is provided by T.G.P. Spear, Twilight of the Mughals and Edward Thompson, The Making of the Indian Princes.

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**APPENDIX A**

A  
B I L L

TO

Enable Her most Gracious Majesty to make an addition to the Royal Style and Titles appertaining to the Imperial Crown of the United Kingdom and its Dependencies. A.D. 1876.

**W**HEREAS by the Act for the Union of Great Britain and Ireland passed in the fortieth year of the reign of His late Majesty King George the Third, chapter sixty-seven, it was provided that after such Union as aforesaid the royal style and titles appertaining to the Imperial Crown of the United Kingdom and its Dependencies should be such as His Majesty by his Royal Proclamation under the Great Seal of the United Kingdom should be pleased to appoint: 40 G. 3. c. 67.  
A.D. 1800.

And whereas by virtue of the said Act and of a Royal Proclamation under the Great Seal, dated the first day of January one thousand eight hundred and one, the present style and titles of Her Majesty are “Victoria by the Grace of God of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, Queen, Defender of the Faith”:

And whereas by the Act for the better government of India, passed in the session of the twenty-first and twenty-second years of the reign of Her present Majesty, chapter one hundred and six, it was enacted that the government of India, theretofore vested in the East India Company in trust for Her Majesty, should become vested in Her Majesty, and that India should thenceforth be governed by and in the name of Her Majesty, and it is expedient that there should be a recognition of the transfer of government so made by means of an addition to be made to the style and titles of Her Majesty: 21 & 22 Vict.  
c. 106.

Be it therefore enacted by the Queen’s most Excellent Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Lords Spiritual and [Bill 83.]

A.D. 1876. Temporal, and Commons, in this present Parliament assembled, and  
— by the authority of the same, as follows :

Power to Her  
Majesty to  
make addi-  
tion to style  
and titles of  
Crown.

It shall be lawful for Her most gracious Majesty with a view to  
such recognition as aforesaid of the transfer of the government of  
India, by Her Royal Proclamation under the Great Seal of the United 5  
Kingdom, to make such addition to the style and titles at present  
appertaining to the Imperial Crown of the United Kingdom and its  
Dependencies as to Her Majesty may seem meet.



## **APPENDIX B**

**By the courtesy of the Public Archives of Canada, Ottawa.**



# By the QUEEN. A PROCLAMATION.

VICTORIA R.

**W**HEREAS an Act has been passed in the present Session of Parliament, intituled "An Act to enable Her Most Gracious Majesty to make an Addition to the Royal Style and Titles appertaining to the Imperial Crown of the United Kingdom and its Dependencies," which Act recites that, by the Act for the Union of Great Britain and Ireland, it was provided that after such Union the Royal Style and Titles appertaining to the Imperial Crown of the United Kingdom and its Dependencies should be such as His Majesty by His Royal Proclamation under the Great Seal of the United Kingdom should be pleased to appoint: and which Act also recites that, by virtue of the said Act and of a Royal Proclamation under the Great Seal, dated the 1st day of January, 1801, Our present Style and Titles are "Victoria, by the Grace of God of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, Queen, Defender of the Faith:" and which Act also recites that, by the Act for the better government of India, it was enacted that the government of India, theretofore vested in the East India Company in trust for Us, should become vested in Us, and that India should thenceforth be governed by Us and in Our name, and that it is expedient that there should be a recognition of the transfer of government so made by means of an addition to be made to Our Style and Titles: And which Act, after the said recitals, enacts that it shall be lawful for Us, with a view to such recognition as aforesaid of the transfer of the government of India, by Our Royal Proclamation under the Great Seal of the United Kingdom, to make such addition to the Style and Titles at present appertaining to the Imperial Crown of the United Kingdom and its Dependencies as to Us may seem meet; We have thought fit, by and with the advice of Our Privy Council, to appoint and declare, and We do hereby, by and with the said advice, appoint and declare that henceforth, so far as conveniently may be, on all occasions and in all instruments wherein Our Style and Titles are used, save and except all Charters, Commissions, Letters Patent, Grants, Writs, Appointments, and other like instruments not extending in their operation beyond the United Kingdom, the following addition shall be made to the Style and Titles at present appertaining to the Imperial Crown of the United Kingdom and its Dependencies: that is to say, in the Latin tongue in these words, "Indiæ Imperatrix;" and in the English tongue in these words, "Empress of India."

And Our will and pleasure further is, that the said addition shall not be made in the Commissions, Charters, Letters Patent, Grants, Writs, Appointments, and other like instruments herein-before specially excepted.

And Our will and pleasure further is, that all gold, silver, and copper moneys, now current and lawful moneys of the United Kingdom, and all gold, silver, and copper moneys which shall, on or after this day, be coined by Our authority with the like impressions, shall, notwithstanding such addition to Our Style and Titles, be deemed and taken to be current and lawful moneys of the said United Kingdom; and further that all moneys coined for and issued in any of the Dependencies of the said United Kingdom, and declared by Our Proclamation to be current and lawful money of such Dependencies, respectively bearing Our Style or Titles, or any part or parts thereof, and all moneys which shall hereafter be coined and issued according to such Proclamation, shall, notwithstanding such addition, continue to be lawful and current money of such Dependencies respectively, until Our pleasure shall be further declared thereupon.

Given at Our Court at Windsor, the twenty-eighth day of April, one thousand eight hundred and seventy-six, in the thirty-ninth year of Our reign.

## GOD SAVE THE QUEEN.

**APPENDIX C**

By the courtesy of the National Trust,  
Hughenden Manor Archives

No thing exceeds the success:  
and such a success I think I  
can secure if my present  
proposals are sanctioned.

nothing

B/Xx/Ly/231

accusing & making  
an accusation

8  
 3/4 am over, so record  
 1/2 of and this disease.

and a 1/2 Cond. Surf.

Amela. 30 April  
1896

My dear Mr. Swinole

I said in my last  
letter, that we did not to  
inconvenience the Royal Forces  
so shortly after the numerous  
ceremonies incident on the visit  
of the D. Charles induced me  
not to prepare a general  
order for the arrangements  
of the Queen's visit. The  
The Rt. Hon<sup>ble</sup> Langmuir  
B. Bernadine. W. P.  
in  
in  
in

language, however, of the  
Opposition speaks on the  
Royal Tatter Ball (asked  
I have since read) has led  
me to a different conclusion:  
and the paper bought  
sketched out in the printed  
Memorandum which I forward  
confidentially to some Saturday  
by this mail, has been very  
carefully considered by me,  
after due consultation with  
the head of our secret police,  
and other persons well  
acquainted with native  
characters & feeling.  
For this reason I attach  
your friendly attention to  
it. The proclamation of  
the

the new little can, I think, be  
made an immense success and  
starting success in India, asked  
well immediately reach on public  
opinion at home. But this  
entirely depends upon the way  
the thing is done. Whether the  
little itself, nor the simple  
announcement of it, with have  
any appreciable effect upon  
the native population in India.  
And in that case a measure  
pregnant with beneficent and  
most important consequences,  
will be a failure - like a gun  
which makes fire, though  
lightly aimed, and absolutely  
wounded. So the circumstances  
under which so unscrupulously  
directed against the new  
the

of a life, which as you have  
correctly pointed out, the Queen's  
Indian subjects have always  
accustomed to see, and of  
the year ends without raising  
any of the foreseeable  
expectations with which it  
opens, then there may be  
a dangerous reaction of  
disappointed desire. For it  
must be remembered that  
in connection with the Queen's  
visit, our English Press at home,  
has been depicting a Queen  
advancing the wretched &  
most impracticable schemes  
for governing India by  
means of Indian Administrators  
we see. But on the  
other

2/ Nothing can be done <sup>8/15/14 12/15/14</sup> than don't  
take any question, except of the  
Tough Rule, that the native  
population of India is  
politically dumb.

I said in my last letter that the  
prospect of the new life was  
popular with the natives. But  
I sought to explain that its  
popularity is at present (for all  
practical purposes) only potential.

The actual state of the  
native feeling on this subject  
is still very undeveloped, and  
very inarticulate.

The visit of the R. of Wales,  
followed by the Queen's expected  
intention of adding to her title  
one specially connected with  
India, has set the whole  
native population on the fire they

They think it impossible that the Prince should have come to India, or that the Queen should have adopted his title, without any political purpose attached. They are therefore asking and wondering what the purpose of it is, and whether it will benefit or injure them. The prevailing sentiment, in short, is one of anxious curiosity with a little flutter of hope rather than of definite apprehension or dissatisfaction. The Opposition speaks of some harm done some harm (though as yet no serious mischief) by suggesting suspicion of some meditated attack



attack upon the rights of the Native Princes. But on the whole the predominant sentiment is, I think, a vague hopefulness that the new title may inaugurate a new era favorable to Native feelings and interests. To ride the balance between hope and fear, a grain may turn it one way or other. If we leave the balance quite alone in oscillation with ~~the balance~~ the sentiment they are accented half of mind: if we leave nothing more to put into the scale than the official assumption of

and after Mr. Reuter has  
informed the state of  
India by telegraph that  
it has been approved by  
the Emperor of Russia.

(Consider what Reuter  
was paid for this telegram?)

On the other hand  
of the great shifts and  
reverses of opinion are such  
to trouble and expense  
seriously for the purpose  
of informing them that  
the Queen has approved  
a little about the dignity  
& her government upon  
as a mere expediency of  
not



3/ other than nothing is easier  
later, or on the whole  
more mischievous, at the  
present moment, than to  
satisfy expectations so trivial  
and mischievous as these.  
which have been raised in  
the native mind by recent  
events; and, in so doing, to  
convert popular satisfaction  
into a national enthusiasm  
the force of which will  
be felt far beyond our  
frontiers, and more  
than justify every  
argument by which you  
have defended the  
proposed expediency of  
the scheme, as preparing  
this measure.



do come, then, to the  
practical details of my  
project. You will find  
them in my printed <sup>Memorandum</sup>  
of Lord Salisbury's views  
concerning education.

I propose to announce  
the new little orally, and  
with great solemnity on  
a special Sunday, at least  
on account of the climate,  
and the necessity of careful  
preparation, cannot be  
held before the 1<sup>st</sup> of  
January next.

But what I particularly  
wish to say upon your  
considerations is this —  
W. H. W. H.

Whether we now tell the  
announcement in Sudan or  
otherwise, it is more <sup>announced</sup>  
- of unaccompanied by certain  
acts of a nature as to  
satisfy public expectation,  
& secure national enthusiasm  
with no good at all.  
That, if it does no good, it  
will do harm.

Announced in the ordinary  
way by official Circulars,  
its effect in India will be  
as salutary as that of the  
Mountain-born message in  
the present - especially now  
that such a step has been  
made about it in England,  
and



This enthusiasm will in the meanwhile have been secretly but carefully prepared to explode at the right moment in the right direction. For I must repeat that active enthusiasm, though by no means immense, is never spontaneous. —

The details of all these arrangements you will find in my memorandum. They have been dictated by a careful study of native character.

The presentation of  
guns and banners, as  
suggested

suggested in the Memo. will not cost the Govt much, and I believe it will be much more effective than any political conception. The students' college for an Indian Prince or, with I am convinced that it is an expense, and even become a source of revenue in the course of a few years.

Nothing has struck me more, in my intercourse thus far, with ~~the~~ Indian Rajas and Maharajas, than the importance they attach to their family pedigrees  
and



in reality it will act at  
the effect the force of our  
administration, or from the  
best and honest & the  
native chiefs, but I will  
pleather their answers, &  
please the whole nation  
population, - and upon  
I anticipate that  
the necessary measures  
on certain occasions  
should be taken, & the  
the most, even up to  
the most, & the most  
plastic & the most  
the most, & the most  
the most, & the most  
the most, & the most

Remember. I have however  
another notice for advertising  
their conception which is the  
condition mentioned in  
my memorandum. It will  
be with  
furnish

5/ They themselves as published  
at their own expense. Several  
of these pamphlets are composed  
& printed in English. But  
what is worthy of special  
notice is that in all of them  
I find evidence that small  
pamphlets & books of honour  
bestowed from time to time  
by the British folk on the  
head of the family (- such  
as an additional grant to  
the family, the right of a return  
back from the country, or a  
more honorable place in  
the family (see) - are given as  
highly prized & appreciated  
as the more substantial  
benefits (of agricultural  
country or revenue) conferred  
in earlier times upon the

family, by an unwilling  
or an obedient?

I believe that at  
the present moment, our  
Indian population would  
do anything, or pay anything,  
to obtain an additional  
penn to his table; and  
there are not such numbers  
he might be this case  
to make all our teachers  
with resources their hands.

On the subject of my  
proposal to admit Peat  
and in Proportions to ~~amount~~<sup>amount</sup>  
of Porcelain, Laverie and  
conditions specified in  
the

The Memorial was, "very"  
 sold open words of explanation  
 I have the strongest reasons for  
 believing that this conception  
 will be highly appreciated  
 by them, & on no wise  
 inconvenient to ourselves.

It is the only practical effect which, so far as I see, can safely be given to the general suspension of the English paper, that the present opportunity should be seized for spreading the native elements more largely with our abundance.



be worth nothing less  
try and try. And in this  
sense the presentation  
of the new title with opportunity  
to hear & order the Central  
As can function in the most  
perfect & satisfactory  
manner. In ~~of~~ the  
paraph of a policy however  
the second step is so much  
more important ~~that~~ the  
first, that it is rather  
odd to take the first  
unless the second be  
reversed: and for  
this reason I speak my  
project entirely secret  
from

German can induce even attack  
the Russian Empire also not  
now perhaps, for visiting  
the Vice Legation in London & saying  
their respects to the German  
Representation. Also such  
words are judicial acts of  
obedience to the Supremacy  
of the British Power (or  
Supremacy generally implied  
by the new title) and as  
they will offend the Nations  
of Fortitude now barely  
shred him, to exercise as  
personal influence over  
the Russian Chiefs, I think  
they ought to be encouraged.  
Bath

But <sup>we</sup> cannot command  
them we can only coax  
them.

If the negotiations  
I hope to open with these  
Alioussat, their leaders  
at which his presence  
must be secured, will

be the fitting occasion  
on which to place in  
their hands. If my



proposals are adopted  
is effectually carried  
out, I am confident  
that they will identify  
yours

Yours administration with  
a great & salutary shock  
in the history of Indian  
policy. But their adoption  
with cash money, though  
not much. The case is  
one in which I think  
the Imperial Treasury  
ought, on behalf of  
Imperial interests, to  
stand as a helping hand;  
for a few thousands  
appropriately spent on  
such an occasion may  
be

from Junction until  
I know where you are is  
apparent for repeated  
at home. If you really  
know that my Junctions  
are all different - that is  
to say non-mutual  
persons; and also practical  
men, or, in other words,  
practical people giving  
practical effect to an idea.  
I begin with London  
the unconceivable length of  
the letter in the construction  
of the importance which  
the subject of it may  
perfectly assume, and  
believe





believe me dear  
Mr. Sumner, very  
sincerely yours

Wm

Wm. May 1896.

His letter was

written a week or

two I have obtained

it for further

consideration of the

Memorandum

Wm. May 1896.

