

BOOK REVIEWS

ish policy but also presents us with a reinterpretation of Lord Chelmsford's personality, attitude, and role in this process of policy-formulation. Both the central thesis of this book and its vision of Lord Chelmsford may prove controversial to many historians. But, however one may react (and in many cases it will be an emotional reaction), Robb's conclusions must be taken seriously by all professional historians. He has carefully and extensively documented his generalizations. That his sympathy lies with Lord Chelmsford is clear, but he has kept that sympathy restrained. Chelmsford is an imperial administrator, but in Robb's assessment, he is also a man capable of envisioning a new purpose for the British Raj.

Chelmsford began his viceroyalty by asking what was the "goal" of British presence in India; he ended it in the belief that he and Montague had ensured that the goal would be to transfer power to responsible Indian legislatures. (p. 261)

This reinterpretation of Lord Chelmsford underscores another major contribution of this work that is not new but must be stated repeatedly. Robb has shown us once more the loose, almost fragmented structure of the British Raj. Rent with diversity of opinion and clashing administrative styles, policy could only be made and acted upon through a complex interplay of forces at the provincial level, at the center, and between the British in India and the British at home. Too often the Raj has been pictured as a monolith, centralized and acting with a uniformity of purpose and attitude. Paralleling its actual diversity was a similar diversity among the political forces in India, both the forces that supported and those that opposed the Raj. Robb also gives us vivid evidence concerning the gulf which existed between these differing forces and the individuals who led them.

This study is, then, a valuable addition to the historical literature of this period. Well organized and well documented, containing as it does new interpretations and insights, it should both inform and provoke a dialogue on the nature of British government during these crucial years. This is, after all, the highest task of an historian; and it is one of the most serious problems in historical writing on India. Too often there have been controversies surrounding grand generalizations that are both simplistic and unsupported by sound historical research. We need more light and less heat. Professor Robb has moved us in the right direction, pro-

ducing a book that will be mandatory reading for anyone who wishes to understand the policies and politics of the British-Indian empire during these early years of the twentieth century.

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The Crisis of Indian Unity, 1917-1940. By R. J. MOORE. London: Clarendon Press, 1974. xii, 334 pp. Bibliography, Glossary, Index. \$9.00

R. J. Moore begins this study of the constitution-making process in India between the two world wars by admitting that constitutional history is unfashionable. It certainly is. After all the histories concerned with the viceroyalty of Lord x, the administration of Lord y, and the pros and cons of the z reforms, one wonders why it is necessary to have yet another book about the choices of British policy-makers and their constitutional negotiations.

Moore justifies his effort by stating that current studies of the demission of power concentrate on the period 1942-47, but that an earlier stage in the devolution, the period of the Round Table Conferences of 1930-32, has been inadequately studied. It was at this earlier stage that the reconciliation of the principles of freedom and unity became problematic; hence, a detailed analysis of the negotiations leading up to the 1935 Government of India Act is necessary. He pleads that this study of "high politics" can then be placed beside studies of the sociopolitical forces operating in India, or histories "from below"—that in order to get a fuller explanation of the "politics of partition," one must look at the "politics of unity." Having read his work, I remain unconvinced that a historian can separate the one from the other. I had thought that those days were gone forever when one could study British policies toward India in a vacuum without reference to the Indian political context. Apparently not.

In spite of the dates indicated in the title, Moore's work concentrates on the period 1928-33, with a brief introductory chapter covering the period from the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms to the naming of the Simon Commission, and a concluding chapter covering 1933-40. In the core chapters, he discusses the Simon Commission, Irwin's announcement in 1929 promis-

ing dominion status to India, and the parliamentary furor that ensued in England. The Round Table Conferences are discussed in great detail, with due attention being given to British political and administrative considerations, and the positions of Indian liberals and the princes. This, in fact, is the main contribution of the book. It is rare that the liberal nationalists and the princes are given adequate attention. Moore's coverage of the Muslims who supported the Round Table Conferences is less adequate. While he is correct in pointing out that—like the British politicians, the nationalists, and the princes—the Muslim delegation too was far from monolithic, he then proceeds to speak of Muslim views as if they were monolithic, and indeed, largely the behind-the-scenes work of Fazli Husain.

Moore then examines the various formulae for the structuring of an Indian federal government, and follows with a chapter on Gandhi's satyagraha movement in 1930–31 as an attempt to forge Indian unity outside the constitutional process. It is an apt interpretation, but the satyagraha movement fails to come alive in these pages. Moore is handicapped by his "high politics" approach; his interest is elsewhere—the conference table in London is where the action is. After the Gandhi-Irwin pact, the Mahatma comes to the Round Table Conference to represent the Congress; but consultation fails, political repression is reinstated in India, and ultimately the problem of reconciling freedom with unity becomes even more intractable.

Moore's book has some strong points. His research has been painstaking, his approach is chronological and careful, his style readable (given the welter of detail). He quotes the letters of some of the leading British and Indian figures of the period: Irwin and Benn, Willingdon and Hoare, Sapru, Jayakar, and Moonje, which give glimpses of the men and emotions behind the negotiations. In addition to the balanced treatment of the liberals and princes mentioned above, there are several good passages dealing with the economic crises of the 1930s and the desire of Indian nationalists for greater autonomy in fiscal and financial matters—factors that help to explain the alliance between Congress and Indian merchants and industrialists.

The work is (to use the understated double negative of which Moore is fond) not uninformative. But neither is there anything particularly new or startling about his conclusions, which are

all too brief and which basically reiterate his thesis: "Between 1917 and 1940 India advanced steadily towards freedom and, it seems, inexorably towards division. The process of devolution generated the crisis of Indian unity." The process of devolution, it seems, took place in the eye of the storm, while in India the whirlwind raged. I miss some attempt to assess the gravity of that storm.

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Say Not the Struggle: Essays in Honour of A. D. Gorwala. EDITED BY H. M. PATEL. Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1976. xi, 328 pp. Contributors, Index. \$7.25

When A. D. Gorwala reached the age of seventy-five in December 1975, he was presented with a collection of essays written in his honor. By a curious paradox, when a *festschrift* is prepared, the more varied the interests of the man of honor—the more he has made an impact upon diverse scenes and diverse subjects—the less coherent, the less "in focus" the volume is likely to appear.

Mr. Gorwala has been a titan. For twenty-three years he served in the Indian Civil Service, accepting its ideals as his own. Of that experience he has recorded:

However awkward the circumstances, . . . however grave the consequences to oneself, . . . one did not lie. In all emergencies it was one's duty to stand firm. . . . One's work must have preference over all other interests. While one showed deference to one's elders, one was not frightened of them. If one differed, one expressed one's views frankly. (cited in Philip Woodruff (Philip Mason), *The Men Who Ruled India*, Vol. II: *The Guardians* [St. Martin's Press, 1954], pp. 256–57)

Believing that he could not uphold these ideals fully in the post-independence government, he resigned, and adopted a watching brief, covering many fields of public life. A trenchant writer, he found that he could not always get his views published; so he started his own journal, *Opinion*. Doubtless he has made many foes in his life-long crusade against injustice and corruption; but he has acquired numerous friends and admirers, some of whom have combined to produce this volume.

There are twenty-four contributors; it is an awkward problem to deal adequately with them