

Entangled Histories of Reforms: Scottish Radicalism of Joseph and Allen Octavian Hume and Indian Education

I have resolved to oppose tooth and nail, to the last drop of my blood, the last hour of my life (Hume, 1890, p.7)

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Abstract: Thus wrote a retired officer about his opposition to the British elitist policies. This was no anomaly. Hume, like most of the Scottish officers in India, defended Indian interests before the colonial administration since his arrival in 1849. In 1854, as a young officer of Etawah district in North India, Hume countered the Orientalist idea that the people of Etawah were uncivilised. He established schools and interacted with Indians very closely. Unable to tolerate his reformist endeavours, he was transferred out of the district, and his schools were destroyed. His father, Joseph Hume, too had defended Indians on more than one occasion in the House of Commons and attempted to empower them by giving direct representation. This paper looks at the Scottish radicalism carried forward by the father and son duo, which dispels the conventional historical narratives that place all colonial officials as instruments of imperialist oppression.

Keywords: Scottish Radicals; Hume; Indian education; British colonialism.

Received: 12/10/2020

Accepted: 22/01/2021

1. The Radical Background - Joseph Hume (1777-1855)

Joseph Hume was the son of James Hume, who had risen from an ordinary fisherman to a shipmaster of a small vessel in Montrose in Scotland. James died when Joseph was nine years old, and his mother started a small crockery shop to support the family (Huch and Ziegler, 1985, p. 2). He joined the East India Company

as a surgeon and came to India in 1797. Such advancement was possible as the Scottish education system was egalitarian where ‘the laird’s son and ploughman’s boy sat side by side in the same form’ and studied (Edwards, 1884, p. 12). This system may not have benefitted every poor boy, but the fact that poor shepherd boys like Alexander Murrey or John Malcolm could become professors and colonial governors and an orphan like Charles Grant could become the director of the East India Company points out to the uniqueness of this system. Added to this was the way the parish schools in villages were linked to high schools in cities, which were further linked to the universities. Some of the Parish schools taught Greek, Latin, and Mathematics. The students paid a nominal fee, and the fee of poor children was paid by either benevolent landlords or the local church, and a number of hardworking boys could go on to high schools and universities through scholarships. So, even the poorest of the poor like shepherds, cobblers and fishermen could send their children to the universities (Anderson, 1995, pp. 3-20). However, the English poor did not have a similar luxury as England had institutionalised the class system with two distinct parallel school systems, one catered to the elite and the other to the lower classes. The English elite sent their children to Preparatory and Grammar Schools which trained them to proceed to the Universities. The poor children went to Sunday Schools (Gardner, 2004, p. 353). These Sunday Schools charged a fee to give basic literacy (First Annual Report, 1812, p. 36). The quality of education given to the English poor was so low that they could not enter high schools. This education system was disadvantageous to poor Englishmen joining the services of the East India Company as soldiers and clerks. They could not rise like Scots in the administrative hierarchy. So, in the archives, the voices of the Englishmen are those of the elites and the aristocracy which are authoritarian and dismissive of Indian opinions. The voices of dissent were in most cases by Scotsmen who viewed Indians differently and defended them in every possible way (Rao, 2016, pp. 55-70). Thomas Munro and John Malcolm’s defence of peasantry of southern and western India from oppressive zamindari system of governor-general Cornwallis, Robert Grant, Robert Shortread and Thomas Erskine Perry’s opposition to Orientalist educational policies in the Bombay Presidency, Alexander Duncan Campbell’s defence of honesty of Indians before the British Parliamentary Committee, Charles Hay Cameron’s initiative to establish the Calcutta University in the 1840s could be cited as a few of such examples (Rao, 2020).

While working in India, Joseph Hume developed medicine for liver complaint that he could supply throughout the British Indian territories free of freight charge. He also invented a way of keeping gunpowder dry. Through these endeavours, he earned a lot of money. He became fluent in Persian and Hindustani and worked in Bundelkhand in North India as a postmaster from 1805-1808 (Taylor, 2007, p. 288). He left India in 1808 and returned to England. Hume toured every industrial centre to study workers’ condition and the relationship between workers and factory managers. He came to two conclusions; first, he was convinced that the employees had unacceptable power in dealing with labour complaints. So, there was a need for the industrial labour to organise themselves. Secondly, he believed that some form of national education was the only hope for improving those who lived on the edge of poverty (Huch and Ziegler, 1985, p. 6). In order to fight for the cause, he chose,

he needed to be in the House of Commons. In a political world controlled by the landed gentry, it was not easy for a Scottish commoner with radical ideas to become a member of parliament. Hume bought the parliamentary seat of Weymouth and Melcombe-Regis in Dorsetshire from the Duke of Cumberland for a sum exceeding 10,000 pounds in 1812 (Huch and Ziegler, 1985, pp. 2-6). He later entered the parliament in 1818 as an independent member from Montrose in Scotland. James Mill and Joseph Hume studied in the same school, and Hume was four years his junior. Hume supported James Mill and Francis Place on several issues like Free Trade and Combination Laws. However, Hume questioned Mill's utilitarianism by stating that «if 29 people want to roast and eat the 30th person, would the "greatest happiness principle" work?» (Huch and Ziegler, 1985, p. 16). Hume was aware of the adverse consequences of brute majority controlling the power. It also shows that Hume did not support every cause that James Mill and the utilitarians promoted.

Hume saw India as analogous to Greece, a country of antique culture and civilisation which had thrown off religious and monarchic oppression and embraced liberal development. He refused to accept the axiom that India could only be governed by despotism (Taylor, p. 292). Hume became a spokesman for mixed races and Hindu reformers and with his friends, pushed for the reform of the Indian government. Within a year of becoming a member of parliament, Hume began the campaign for judicial reforms for India. He argued that 'poor policing, expensive litigation, long delays between arrest and trial and lack of uniformity between the presidencies meant that, he argued, «the administration of justice in the whole of Europe, did not cost so much as ...» in the British dominions in India (Taylor, p. 289). In order to give voice to Indians, Hume in 1831 proposed that four Indian members of parliament should be added to the House of Commons, elected by all those Indians eligible for jury service. Indian reformers like Rammohan Roy eagerly awaited the possibility of direct representation, and protest meetings were held in Calcutta when the proposal was defeated in the House of Lords (Taylor, pp. 285-86). Hume also campaigned for the inclusion of people of mixed race and Indians on grand juries in India (Hansard, 1825, pp. 586-89). During the debate on the Jewish Emancipation Bill, Hume supporting Robert Grant, and T.B. Macaulay, argued that «the Hindoos and Parsees are as intelligent as many members of the parliament» (Hume Tracts, 1833, pp. 27-29).

In supporting the freedom of the press, Hume made no distinction between Britain and India. A free press was essential to check the British Parliament's despotic tendencies and the government of India. He gave the example of Barrackpore mutiny of 1824, wherein the Indian soldiers had revolted against the order to fight in Burma as crossing the sea would compromise their caste status. This Mutiny was ruthlessly suppressed (Bandyopadhyay, 2008, p. 3). Hume castigated Governor-general Amherst for not looking into the grievances of the soldiers and ordering high handed action. He campaigned for the dismissal of Amherst. He also held the absence of free press as one of the essential causes for the revolt. Hume argued that the freedom of the press was crucial for Indians fighting social evils and gave the example of Rammohan Roy's newspaper which was campaigning for social and religious reform in Bengal (Taylor, pp. 295-297). Hume raised several times, the issue of the Raja of Satara, a descendent of Shivaji, who had been unjustly deposed

by the British (Hansard, 1847, p. 1236). For over twenty years, Hume was one of the leading voices of reform in Indian administration (Taylor, p. 286).

For thirty-seven years, Hume, as an independent member, attacked the privileges of the aristocracy and the landed gentry. He supported religious toleration and parliamentary reforms. His criticisms were not rhetoric but were backed with facts and figures. In 1824, he moved a resolution in the House of Commons against «combination laws» which prevented the workers from forming trade unions. His campaign led to the legalisation of trade unions (Evans, 2008, p. 55). Hume often exposed the pretensions of the landed aristocracy to be extraordinarily humane. He told the parliament that «five millions of industrious classes had no voice in the House of Commons, hence the unequal and unjust manner in which the people are taxed by the landed aristocracy whose influence ruled both the houses of parliament» (Hume, 1841, p. 12). Hume held the landed aristocracy as oppressors and recommended reducing the allowance of Prince Albert from 50,000 pounds to 21,000 pounds. He also pointed out that Queen's civil list subsidy of 385,000 pounds could provide eighteen thousand families (Huch and Ziegler, 1985, p. 118). Hume also supported the working-class movement called Chartism to secure political and economic concessions (Huch, 1983, pp. 501-507).

In 1843, Hume introduced a Bill to create a national system of education at the public expense. Though an Anglican, he did not support the initiative of the Church of England, which aimed to establish separate schools for poor children on religious lines (First Annual Report, 1812, pp. 5-6). Hume insisted on a secular and modern curriculum devoid of religious instructions (Hansard, 1843, pp. 1330-31) To him, the schools should be strictly secular and «the schoolmaster could inculcate moral and secular, but not religious, instruction». Hume also opposed a very limited curriculum of the existing schools for the poor children by arguing that «reading, writing, and arithmetic did not constitute knowledge, but were the means by which knowledge could be acquired» (Hansard, 1843, pp. 1329-1348). The Bill was defeated. Joseph Hume fought for the rights of the poor in Britain and the rights of Indians against the colonial state. He tried to make Indians members of the British Parliament at a time they had only access to the lowest jobs in India, like that of a soldier or a servant. Indeed, as Miles Taylor states, Joseph Hume was «a radical reformer of legend» (Taylor, 2007, p. 302).

2. Allan Octavian Hume (1829-1912)

Allan Octavian Hume was born on 4 June 1829 as the eighth child of Joseph Hume and carried forward his father's radical ideas. Though born and raised in England, Hume admired the Scottish radicalism and declared, «I still cling to the political creed of my father. ... like my father before me, I am a radical» (Hume, 1890, pp. 3-4). Hume wrote,

When early in this century, my father commenced his work, matters were widely different; only a very a few years previously Muir and Palmer, our Scottish Martyrs, had been transported for preaching those doctrines in regard to the rights of subjects and the duties of rulers, and the supremacy of the claims of

the masses over the privileges of the classes, which constituted the basis of his political creed, and I have heard him tell, how often in those early days he was privately threatened with prosecution and how year after year efforts were made to close his mouth—now by intimidation, now by the offer of a peerage and other similar bribes (Hume, 1890, p. 5).

Hume's reference to «Muir and Palmer, our Scottish Martyrs» shows how deeply he felt Scottish though he was born and raised in London. Thomas Muir (1765-1799) was a Scottish political reformer who was charged with sedition, arrested and transported to Australia. Thomas Fyshe Palmer (1747-1802) was an Englishman who embraced Scottish radicalism. He, too, was imprisoned and sent to Australia. Muir and Palmer were regarded as «Scottish Martyrs». Hume admired his father's uncompromising struggle to represent the voices of the people as his «father never turned his back on people». Hume defined his father's politics as

An unselfish and persistent effort to secure the amelioration of a lot of our less fortunate fellows, to raise and comfort the downtrodden, the oppressed and the suffering, to root out and redress those evils and those wrongs still entailed upon so many of our brethren, by grievous defects in our system of administration, to ensure to every child born into the country, the amplest opportunity for the fullest development—physical, mental, moral of which it is capable....This is the radical creed (Hume, 1890, p. 6).

Joseph Hume, during the 1830s and 40s, vigorously campaigned for commemorating the Scottish Martyrs (Pentland, 2008, p. 159). So the younger Hume was exposed to Scottish radicalism in his childhood. With this background, Hume came to India in 1849 at the age of twenty. The Scottish radicalism coupled with his own father's radical fight against the English elitism formed the basis of his approach in India.

3. Establishment of schools by Hume in Etawah District (1854-1867)

Hume was appointed as a magistrate and collector of Etawah in the North-Western Provinces in 1854. The Etawah District, with an area of 1,693 square miles, with a population of 722,000, was economically less prosperous. As soon as Hume came to Etawah, he found enthusiasm among the people for the establishment of schools. Before Hume assumed the charge of the district, the Orientalist British officers were hostile to the idea of establishing the schools. In 1852, the Visitor-General of Schools Henry Stuart Reid had reported that the people of Etawah were extraordinarily ignorant and were not ready to send their children to school.

The people of India cling with unreflecting reverence to the *bap dada ka dustur*, (tradition handed down from generations) with whom «custom serves for a reason», have always regarded with blind distrust and suspicion, every scheme set on foot by the government for their amelioration...people are suspicious of

the government intentions. In parts of Etawah, people thought that the children in schools would be offered up as «a propitiatory sacrifice» after the completion of the Ganga canal...Educational officers were thought of as the emissaries of missionaries (General Report, 1850-51, pp. 3-6).

Reid declared that «our (education) work is obstructed by unfounded prejudices of the people». He told the government not to appoint teachers from Agra and Bareilly colleges who «possessed of high scholastic attainments», but appoint «men of local influence, though not possessed of the same store of information and intellectual acquisition, would carry greater weight with the people» (General Report, 1850-51, pp. 3-6). If Hume had not come to this district as an officer within two years, historians relying on Reid’s report would have believed the people of Etawah to be indeed backward and superstitious.

As soon as Hume assumed charge of the district, he called for a public meeting which was attended by most of the landlords or zamindars of the Taluka. Hume proposed for the establishment of schools in every village and a high school in Etawah town. Ajeet Singh a leading zamindar, and Lachman Singh, a local official (Tahsildar) of Etawah, supported Hume. Hume ‘asked the zamindars to contribute one per cent of their land tax as Education Cess (tax) to fund these schools and sign a formal agreement binding themselves and their heirs. Every zamindar except one signed the contract, and many paid the first instalment on the spot and others paid within a few days.’ Within two months, 32 schools were opened in the Taluka. ‘By the end of the year, all the landholders in the district except 10 of them supported the schools through the voluntary contribution of education cess, and 181 schools were opened.’ These schools taught reading and writing in Hindi or Urdu, Arithmetic, Geography and Indian History. In some schools where the teachers had better competency Algebra, Geometry, rudiments of Natural Sciences, Book Keeping according to the native method, Mensuration, Surveying with plane tables were taught. All these schools had libraries containing textbooks for those children who could not afford to purchase them as well as general books (Education, 1859, No.121). These schools were so popular that men attended the public examination of their sons to monitor their progress. There was a considerable rise in the enrolment of boys during the next four months and on the 1 May 1857, nine days before the outbreak of the revolt the number of boys exceeded 7,000 (Mehrotra and Moulton, 2004, p. 324). Hume aimed to «put within the reach of every talented lad, however poor, the attainment of a first-rate education» (Mehrotra and Moulton, 2004, p. 83).

Castes of children in Hume’s Schools

Castes	No of boys in schools	No of inhabitants in the district	Percentage of former to the latter
Upper Castes			
Brahmin	1,799	88,845	0.2
Thakoor	892	58,800	0.15

Bania	602	22,326	0.27
Mahajan	315	10,002	0.3
Kayasth	46	11,130	0.004
Artisanal castes			
Sonar	125	2655	0.47
Tailor	27	1,089	0.25
Baree	23	1, 142	0.2
Bourjee	55	3,248	0.17
Telee	73	7,206	0.1
Iron smith	90	9,511	0.09
Naiee	105	12,610	0.08
Lower Castes			
Kahar	46	11,130	0.004
Kachee	47	13,671	0.034
Lodhee	43	23,837	0.018
Gudherea	22	14,083	0.015
Dhanook	87	97,315	0.009
Chamar	1	18,017	0.0005
Muslims	188	26,849	0.07
Others	3	64,606	0.0004

Table 1, Compiled from S. R. Mehrotra and Edward C. Moulton, *Selected Writings of Allen Octavian Hume, Vol I 1829-1867, New Delhi, Oxford University Press, 2004, 82.*

The caste wise list of students (Table 1) also points out to the fact that boys from almost all castes attended the schools and studied together. Teachers came from equally varied castes, from Brahmins to Ahirs. Hume personally visited every school once a year and evaluated the performance of the students. Hume established a Central School in 1856 at Etawah with 104 students. In spite of the massive revolt during 10 May 1857-October 1858, the number of students increased to 250 in 1859. This school taught English, Urdu, Hindi, Sanskrit, Arabic, Persian, Mathematics, Surveying, Geography, History and Natural Sciences. It had a library with 2,000 books. The students paid a nominal fee and Hume, and the people of the town contributed a monthly subscription. The school also had a teacher training class (Education, 1859, No. 121).

Sub-dis-tricts (Talukas)	Schools	No of enrolled	No present
Etawah	32	803	789
Phuppoond	26	609	588
Oreyrah	32	934	785
Beylah	36	1,147	1,118
Beebamow	9	247	247
Lucknah	23	857	857
Rowayn	23	589	589
Total	181	5,186	4,973

Table -2 Letter from Hume to Harvey, the Commissioner of Agra 25 January 1859, Mehrotra and Moulton, Selected Writings, 78.

Towards the end of 1859, along with Lutchman Singh, Hume started a monthly newspaper. It was published in three languages. In English, it was titled *The People's Friend*, in Hindi, *Prajahit* (People's Welfare) and Urdu, *Muhibb-i-Riaya*. The paper communicated information about the world in the form of short articles. The cost of the paper was kept so low that «it was accessible to the poorest of the village youth». It was initially intended for the students and alumnus of Etawah schools, but soon people from other districts began to subscribe to it. By 1862, the paper had become fortnightly with a circulation of 31,000 copies, which was the largest in the province. The popularity of this paper was not tolerated by M. Kempson, the Inspector of Schools for Agra Division. Kempson was a friend and supporter of H.S. Reid. He imposed restrictions on its circulation and brought pressure upon the people involved with the publications. In 1863, Lachman Singh, who played a significant role in producing the Hindi version, was transferred to distant Bulandshahr. In 1864, Jawahar Lal the editor and owner of the press influenced by Kempson's criticism, relocated to Agra (Wedderburn, 1913, p. 22), thus ending one of the earliest newspapers of the North Western Province.

Hume considered the welfare of the people as the duty of the administration, which could be achieved through the education of the entire population. Hume stressed that «the foundation of any healthy and comprehensive scheme of education must be laid amongst the masses. ... I would devote our chief care, our last energies, to sowing thickly and widely through the land, good elementary schools for the people ... The object of education with which we have to deal is to prepare youth, first for the discharge of their duties as citizens, and second for the exercise of their functions, as producers, and enjoyers of wealth» (Education, 1859, No. 121). In all his educational endeavours, Hume involved the local population. All the School Committees comprised of Indians and British officers, including Hume, were only honorary members without any veto powers. The Indian members decided the curriculum, admissions, appointment of teachers and all other aspects of school

management. The people were so enthusiastic that they did not want to give a holiday on Sunday. A Muslim in Mynpuri asked Hume, «why should our children remain idle a whole day every week because it happens to be a religious festival with you?» (Mehrotra and Moulton, 2004, p. 358). There were also differences of opinion between Hume and Indian members of the School Committees. For instance, when Hume selected a teacher from the Ahir caste, several upper caste zamindars of a village opposed. In contrast, a neighbouring village had no such problems and took the Ahir teacher. Similarly, the School Committee of the Central English School had a lively discussion about whether students from affluent and poor background should study together. The Committee resolved that no distinction should be followed. However, they voted against the admission of the children of butchers, tobacco sellers and untouchable Chamars and Bhangis. Hume opposed it and argued for the access of all children irrespective of their caste backgrounds. The School Committee disagreed. Finally, a compromise was reached that the low caste children would form a separate class where they were allowed to learn Hindi, Urdu and Persian, but not Arabic, English and Sanskrit (Education, 1859, No. 121). In some villages «about one-fourth of the Zamindars utterly disapproved of their cultivators' children being able to read receipts and check accounts», however, they did not oppose the schools as they sent their own children (Education, 1859, No. 121).

Such instances were very few, and popular support to Hume's educational efforts created so much goodwill among the people that it saved the lives of all British officers and their families of Etawah district during the revolt of 1857. Etawah was at the centre of this revolt, and Hume fought two pitched battles with the rebel forces during May-June 1857. Hume raised an army of the local population to fight the rebels (Wedderburn, 1915, pp. 8-13). Hume wrote later that

Many of my native friends warmed themselves into the confidence of some amongst the sepoy (soldiers). Lutchman Singh, Kanwar Zor Singh and Anup Singh voluntarily offered to escort all the European women and children to Agra fort. They, with chivalrous courtesy and watchful care, fulfilled their dangerous self imposed task. When the Gwalior Grenadiers mutinied, though they could have killed every one of us, harmed no hair of any man's head, they only told us that they could no longer obey us. ... next morning allowed us all to ride quietly off through their lines (Mehrotra and Moulton, 2004, pp. 98-99).

When there was no Hume and British administration in Etawah district, Kanwar Zor Singh, Jaswant Rao, Laik Singh, Ganga Persad administered the district on behalf of Hume. During this period «a new police station was built, a crime punished, taxes levied». Throughout the revolt, 31 schools functioned though there was no supervisory authority of Hume or the British administration; the landlords paid the teachers' salaries. In other places, the schools were closed down only as a security measure. In July 1858, the remaining schools reopened even before Hume returned to the district in October (Mehrotra and Moulton, 2004, p. 360).

By the time revolt ultimately ended and the British administration was firmly established in January 1859, Etawah had 182 schools. However, there was a marginal decline (Table 3) in the number of students under ten years from 2,519 to 1,972,

predominantly among the children of zamindars. The number of children above the age of 10 had gone up from 2,667 to 2,762. Hume explained that the parents were still afraid of small children to school as one of the rebel leaders «Ferozeshah had swept through certain areas of the district with fire and sword during December 1858». Hume also stated that Zamindars' unwillingness was also because their sons «habitually wear gold and silver ornaments» (Mehrotra and Moulton, 2004, p. 326).

Year	No of sons of cultivators	No of sons of zamindars	No of sons of officials	No of sons of artisans
1857	1,631	1,342	366	873
1859	1,932	758	283	966

Table-3, Mehrotra and Moulton, Selected Writings, 326

The popularity of Hume's educational policies could be judged by the fact that the Etawah School Committee collected subscription for repairing the schools within the district, and contributed 5,500 rupees towards the repair of the Agra College destroyed during the Mutiny. The people of Etawah also made considerable financial contributions. From May 1856 to May 1861, they contributed more than 110,000 rupees towards the salaries of schools masters and the construction of school buildings. Hume, too paid a part of his salary to these schools. (Education, 1861, Nos. 1-3A). By 1861, the number of schools had gone up 185 with 8,700 boys, and the Central English School had 282 boys. Hume asked for government aid for this school. The local contribution for the high school was 263 rupees, five *anna* and 11 pice. The school had a boarding house with 24 inmates, comprising of ten paid and 14 were free students. Lt. Governor visited the Central School and impressed with its progress promised 10,000 rupees towards the completion of the building and purchase of equipment and 600 rupees per month towards the maintenance of the school libraries. Governor-General Canning sanctioned the amount sought by Hume (Education, 1861, Nos.1-3A).

The success of Hume's educational endeavour was not tolerated by H.S. Reid, who had earlier painted the district as the most uncivilised. He became the Director of Public Instruction of the North-Western Provinces in 1855. As the head of the education department, Reid could not attack Hume as the Scottish Lieutenant Governor John Russell Colvin supported Hume. This was often the case with Scottish officers in India. They helped the reformist programmes of fellow Scottish officers. However, the death of Colvin during the revolt made Hume vulnerable. Reid accused Hume of «working against the government, and his system of education was faulty and unpopular with the respectable classes». George Cooper, the Secretary to the government of the North-Western Province, supported Reid. But they could not do anything as long as Hume was in charge of the district. Towards the end of 1861, Hume left for London on sick leave. Immediately, Cooper and Reid ordered an enquiry by C.R. Pollack, the officiating Collector of Etawah. Pollack visited the schools in the first week of January 1862, which is usually one of the coldest and foggy weeks in Etawah. He found only 50% attendance in most schools.

He accused the School Committees of «deceiving the government by reporting higher attendance». He also found out that schools had a helper who brought most of the children to school. He immediately ordered «removal of the services of the helpers and the halted the construction of buildings» (Education, 1862, No. 1). Even before the arrival of Pollack's report, Reid had decided to deny grant in aid to Etawah schools (Education, 1861, Nos. 1-3). The government also passed a resolution to test the students' competence in various subjects and ordered that Etawah schools not claim great-in-aid (Education, 1862, Nos. 6-7). Lieutenant-Governor of NWP G. F. Edmonstone was surprised by the report and asked H.S. Reid to depute M. Kempson, the Inspector of Schools of the Agra Division, to conduct a further enquiry (Education, 1862, Nos. 6-7). Kempson upheld Pollack's report and declared that the Etawah schools were «most inefficient and disorganised». Reid and Kempson visited the schools together and strongly recommended that the schools should be handed over to the education department for «efficient management» (Education, 1862, Nos. 23-24A). The government accepted the report and passed a resolution to withhold the funds to schools, and ordered the education department to take over the schools (Education, 1862, No. 5). In the meantime, the people of Etawah wrote about these developments to Hume in England.

When Hume came to know of these developments, he protested. He asked about the unfair comparison of Etawah with prosperous districts of Agra and Mathura. He stated that 'a zamindar in Etawah had built several school buildings, each costing 2,300 rupees, and another zamindar read all the textbooks to enable him to examine the students. In some villages, the poor who could not contribute financially gave free labour by building the schools with their own hands, others distributed sweets. Everyone who had something to offer had done so for these schools'. Hume questioned

The people of Etawah have contributed 72,000 rupees in cash in the last six years and more than 50,000 in labour, land, material for school buildings. Have Agra and Mathura, wealthy and prosperous districts contributed actually, let alone in proportion to their resources, one-half of this latter amount? Did any of the Agra or Mathura zamindars keep the school open and pay the masters out of their own pockets during the disturbances? Has Mathura or Agra a High School of 250 pupils, entirely managed by the native community? If all these questions must be answered in the negative, we have at once a clear view of some of the special exertions made by the people of Etawah (Education, 1862, Nos. 5-8).

Hume also pointed it out that while examining the competency of the students in the schools, questions were asked on «History, Geography, and Cube-Root in Decimals» while the curriculum in these schools consisted of «Reading, Writing, Arithmetic up to Compound Interest and Double Rules of Three». So, the boys were examined in the subjects that were not part of the curriculum in their schools. This shows that the enquiry by Pollack, Reid and Kempson was guided by the sole principle of discrediting Hume's schools. Hume also replied to Kempson's accusation that he had «ignored the education department», by stating that «Reid and Kempson

neither visited nor examined a single school during the five years that I had charge of them». Hume concluded his protest by stating that «when I took charge of the Etawah district there were only seven schools with 300 boys, and within three years I had increased the number of the schools to more than twenty-fold and was educating some 7000 boys. When I am 8000 miles away, sick I find myself and the system suddenly attacked» (Education, 1862, Nos. 5-8). Secretary of State for India, Charles Wood, did not support Hume. He informed the government of India that the schools should be under the education department of a province and not under the district officials. Wood also recommended that «the Etawah schools be handed over to the Education department when Hume finally leaves the district» (Education, 1862, Nos. 5).

Hume returned to Etawah in January 1863; by this time, the condition of schools had worsened. The School Committee consisting of Indians existed but devoid of any real power. Teachers had been appointed and dismissed at will by the government. H.S. Reid had changed the whole course of studies, hours of attendance, rate of fees, holidays, and textbooks. The education department had taken over the Central English School but still made the local population pay for completing the construction of additional rooms. Reid, who had ten years back, accused the people of Etawah that they suspected the educational officers as the emissaries of missionaries (Education, 1850-51, pp. 3-6), now handed over one of the rooms of the Central English School to a missionary for a scripture class on Sundays! The destruction of Hume's system of education was complete. Hume loved his schools so much that he did not seek promotion which would have taken him away from «his schools in Etawah» (Mehrotra and Moulton, 2004, p. 472).

Hume was transferred out of the Etawah district in 1867. While leaving Etawah, he donated his entire savings of 7,200 rupees to the Central English School and invested in a government bond to cover the cost of maintenance and scholarship to poor students. After his departure, the government refused to make it a high school which could have enabled the students to appear for matriculation examination and join Calcutta University. The Central School was the only school to survive as the remaining 185 schools were gradually closed down. Though the Central School survived as a middle (Zilla) school, none the less it encouraged critical thinking among its students. Its students formed the Etawah Debating Club and organised a public debate in 1868 to discuss «social vices and the hierarchal caste system». Deena Nath, an ex-student of Hume's Central English School, discussed «the general degradation of the society and the miserable condition of women». Deena Nath advocated social reform to rectify the ills in the Hindu society. He was opposed by Tara Chand, who defended the caste system. The debate ended when Deena Nath told Tara Chand that «I can give you argument, sir, but not the brain». At the same meeting, several members of the club opposed caste and religious divisions and suggested that «universal love as the sum and substance of true religion» (Education Proceedings, 1868, p. 872). It was precisely this aspect of education that the Orientalists like Reid hated. The Orientalists came from elite backgrounds and supported the hierarchical caste system and opposed a radical transformation of the society in India. (Rao, 2019, p. 90).

Hume's appointment as a district officer at Etawah was the first and last job he held that directly dealt with the people. The government was aware of his popularity among Indians, so it kept him as far away as possible from the public. His next appointment was that of a Commissioner of Customs for the North Western Province in 1867. In the new job, Hume achieved a gradual abolition of 2,500 miles long customs barrier, which had hitherto protected the government salt monopoly by excluding the cheap salt produced in Rajasthan. (Wedderburn, 1813, p. 24). In 1870, Hume was appointed as a secretary to the government of India in charge of agriculture, once again an unimportant department. However, Hume was proactive and urged the government to introduce agrarian reforms. The 1870s was a period of major famines in southern and western India which had made his friends William Wedderburn and Mahadev Govind Ranade to draft Deccan Agriculturists Relief Bill 1879, which exempted the land and the tools of the peasants from being confiscated by the money-lenders through the civil courts. Wedderburn and Ranade also came up with the idea of the Agricultural Banks to lend money to peasants at one-third of the interest rates charged by the money-lenders (Rao, 2009, pp. 55-61). Hume supported them and wanted the government to extend these measures to the rest of India. The famine of the 1870s made Hume proactive on behalf of the peasants of India. He passionately wrote about agrarian distress. «The dependence of the peasants on the money-lenders and the civil courts in the rural areas that settled these cases had caused further difficulties for the peasants. The grievous mortality among the plough cattle, in many cases, had amounted to 10 million cattle a year». Hume urged the government for agrarian reforms in India. (Hume, 1879) The conservative and elitist governor-general Northbrooke (1872-1876) and Lytton (1876-1880) opposed it, and the Agricultural Department was closed down (General Education, 1871, No. 426). By June 1879, Hume came into collision with the ruling authority, which practically ended his official career. He was removed from his position in the interest of public service for «insubordination» (Wedderburn, 1913, pp. 35-36). Hume formally retired from the service in 1882.

4. Hume's address to the graduates of the Calcutta University 1883

By this time, Hume realised that the administrative reforms could not be brought about from within the administration and building up a strong public opinion was essential. According to Wedderburn, a fellow Scotsman and a friend who worked in the Bombay Presidency, «scattered individuals, however capable and however well-meaning are powerless singly. What is needed is union, organisation, and well-defined lines of action; and to secure these, an association is required, armed and organised with unusual care, having for its object to promote the mental, moral, social, and political regeneration of the people of India» (Wedderburn, 1913, p. 51). On 1 March 1883 Hume in an open letter addressed the graduates of Calcutta University. He called upon these young men to build «a strong Indian nation». He proposed that a commencement could be made with «a body of fifty founders, to be the mustard seeds of future growth». He suggested «the working methods of the association; and especially he insisted on its constitution being democratic, and free from personal ambitions: the head should merely be the chief servant and his

council assistant servants» (Wedderburn, 1913, p. 51). Though «the mustard seeds of future growth» is a biblical metaphor, Hume was hardly a practising Christian. He and his entire family were Theosophists, and he was the vice president of the Theosophical Society of India and had a deep understanding of Hindu philosophy (Humphreys and Benjamin, 1979 pp. 52-121).

Hume's call had a powerful impact. The educated Indians began to contact each other. In December 1885, 72 Indians from different parts of India, from diverse religious and cultural background, established the Indian National Congress / INC at Bombay. Pherozesha Mehta, W. C. Bonnerjee, Budrudin Tyabji, Surendranath Banerjea and others who attended the first meeting in Bombay emerged as the leading political leaders of India. Hume was aware of the fact that the British elites would project this development negatively in the British press. So, Hume wrote to the leading journals and newspapers in advance about the proposed organisation (Wedderburn, 1913, pp. 56-57). For further strengthening of the «Congress movement», Hume contacted British radicals and liberals in London to establish an organisation to represent the issues and concerns of INC. They were Charles Bradlaugh (1833-1891) a radical British MP, William Digby (1849-1904) a radical journalist who had worked in India, and Eardley Norton (1852-1931) a lawyer and a friend of social reformers in Madras, Dadabhai Naoroji (1825-1917) and W.C. Bonnerjee (1844-1906) the founders of INC in London. Several liberal British members of parliament too assisted this endeavour. On 27 July 1889, they formed the British Committee of the Indian National Congress in London. Bradlaugh delivered many lectures on Indian question in different parts of Britain (Wedderburn, 1913, p. 88). With the election of Dadabhai Naoroji to the British Parliament in 1892, the INC got a powerful voice inside the parliament. The British Committee started a journal called «India» in 1890. Hume wrote a pamphlet titled «The Old Man's Hope» in which he made a passionate appeal to INC to address «the hunger and toil of the peasants». The Congress leaders organised mass meetings across India which were attended by thousands of people. They urged the government to introduce radical agrarian reforms. The influential British officers who considered him «a traitor» called on the government to «deport Hume» (Nanda, 1979, p. 482).

Hume left India in 1894 due to ill health; the entire rank and file of the INC were sad as the newly emerging aggressive reactionary militant forces had begun to attack the INC (See, Rao, 2011). Hume told them, «let nothing discourage, you work on ceaselessly, and India shall one day reap a glorious harvest of your labours. Let nothing-no temporary checks and no temporary losses dishearten you. The spirit of the age is behind you». He advised them to achieve two things – «remove the child marriage, and educate every boy and girl in the country» (Wedderburn, 1913, pp. 104-106). When Hume left India, he felt both like a «poor condemned prisoner who looks around one last time upon his fellow-men», as well as «a father parting forever from his children that he loves and whose future he fears». Bidding farewell to «thousands of his friends», an emotional Hume went on,

I have spent 45 years of my life in India. India has become part of me, my thought, my hopes. I have lived my life amongst you. The welfare of the nation is the highest law. ... India should grow great and glorious, that her people

should become free and happy. ... Farewell, dear friends, farewell. I have not succeeded in securing for you any appreciable fraction of what I hoped to win for you. The land I have loved will surely someday win all I have hoped for her (Hume, 1894, pp. 7-17).

Hume did not want a statue in «bronze or marble but written in the loving hearts of Indians' that 'he laboured zealously in India's cause» (Hume, 1894, pp. 7-17). Such sentiments cannot be dismissed off as paternalistic. Hume spent his entire adult life from the age of 20 to 65 in India. Hume tried to infuse Scottish radicalism into Indian education and political consciousness, India too, transformed him in many aspects. The Hindu philosophy influenced him (Humphreys and Benjamin, 1979 pp.52-121). His wife and the only daughter converted into Theosophy, and the entire family became vegetarian and remained so till the end (Moulton, 1997, p. 125 and p. 166).

In England, Hume was elected as the president of the Liberal Association in 1894 and effectively used his position to campaign for the INC. He contributed thousands of pounds to these campaigns. Hume died on 31 July 1912 at his residence in London. The news of his death sent the entire India into mourning. The condolence meetings were held in large cities like Bombay, Calcutta and Madras and small towns and remote places like Amraoti, Yeotmal, Rai Bareli, Mainpuri, Meerut, Etawah, Gorakhpur, Cuddapah, Bezwada, Berhampore, Nandyal, Trichinopoly. His friends, as well as his political opponents, mourned equally. The INC expressed «its sense of profound sorrow at the death of father and founder of the Congress». It expressed «India's deep and lasting gratitude for Hume's lifelong service and sacrifice ... in whose death the cause of Indian progress and reform sustained an irreparable loss». The leading newspaper of Calcutta, *The Bengalee* wrote that «to Hume belonged the credit of organising the scattered elements of public life and focusing them in an institution which was to cement the public spirit of the country, to build and stimulate national life ... and revolutionise the political aspect of the country». The conservative politicians who were not supporters of his liberalism too mourned. They remembered his «strong sense of justice and equality» and expressed gratitude for «his financial support» and «rearing a national Indian institution-the Congress». *The Punjabee* wrote «his name was truly a household word, pronounced with love and veneration by the young and old». *The Indian Patriot* regarded Hume as a «father of the Indian people, as well as the "father" of the Congress. *The Hindi Punch* compared him to «a venerable sage of India» (Wedderburn, 1913, pp. 170-176).

Amidst all these condolences from political leaders and journalists, it was the mourning in Etawah that stood out. As soon as the news reached the town, people voluntarily shut the shops and markets. This shows that the people had not forgotten Hume's educational activities even after 45 years of his departure. Zorwar Singh Nigam, the Municipal Commissioner of Etawah, called for a condolence meeting. The people remembered the schools he established in the district, particularly the Central English School establishment. They also recognised Hume's financial contributions to schools in the district and «the first medical institution built-in 1856» (Wedderburn,

1913, p. 178). No other British officer had received this kind of adoration across India.

5. Scottish Radicalism and Entangled Histories of Reforms

The century commencing with Joseph Hume's entry into the House of Commons in 1812 to the death of his son A.O. Hume in 1912 was heydays of the British Empire in India. Joseph Hume's efforts to give direct representation to Indians in the House of Commons in 1831 and his son Allen Hume's efforts to establish an organisation to fight for independence in 1885 could be regarded as the unbroken continuation of Scottish radicalism. Joseph Hume's campaigns against Corn Laws, a secular national education for Britain, had parallels in his son's campaigns for agrarian reforms and schools in Etawah. Scottish radicalism was at the heart of the activities of both father and son. Till the very end, Hume retained the idealism of Scottish radicalism he embraced in his formative years at his father's house. During his long stay in India, he also embraced Hindu philosophy, Theosophy and vegetarianism. Hence Scottish and Hindu influences coexisted in perfect harmony. This shows a person could assimilate multiple influences and negotiate diverse worldviews. His closest allies in India were both Scotsmen and the Hindus.

The conventional historical narratives do not even mention Joseph Hume's efforts to empower Indians through direct representation and support Indian cause as well as the educational activities of A.O. Hume. The latter's involvement in the establishment of INC has been regarded as an effort to provide a «safety valve» to British rule. The conventional narratives construct an image of monolithic British colonialism and do not recognise the diversities within it. The presence of Scottish officers in India who supported and assisted Indians is rarely looked into while analysing the colonial rule. Such anomalies within the apparent «monolithic colonial rule» are inconvenient truths for many writers who neatly divide the world into watertight compartments of European/non-European, east/west, colonised/coloniser. They refuse to see diversities within each category and nuances of interaction between different groups. In the light of such narrow analysis that hitherto exists, there is a need to revisit numerous aspects of British colonialism, particularly the influence of Scottish radicalism and the entangled histories of reform.

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