

Standard Persian text book is described,  
suggests to me the remark that the English  
schoolboy is, or was, nurtured upon Ovid  
Juvenal, and Catullus.

The heaviest drag upon the elevation of  
India (we might again say Asiatic) society  
is the condition of the women. This again is  
an immemorial custom, founded by ~~ages~~  
ages of immaturity, and repeated compact by  
foreign races, and the survival of primitive  
habits. Until the higher classes abandon  
polygamy, I see little hope of permanent  
improvement - and it is dangerous to attempt  
hasty reforms, for on this question all natives  
are heavily sensitive to any attempt at  
interference.

Pray kindly excuse this long dissertation -  
and believe me to be

Very faithfully yours

A. C. Lyall

I have  
received your  
kind letter  
with thanks  
and interest

40 Lyall  
June 30th 1899.

18, Queen's Gate,  
S.W.

Dear Lord Dunsford -

I am very much obliged to you for sending  
me this paper, and I return it with some  
reluctance, for I should have liked to keep it  
by me. I have always given much attention to  
the observations and opinions of Indian writers,  
whose point of view is so different from that  
of officials, and who have peculiar opportunities  
for studying native society.

Undoubtedly, as the writer says, the suspicion  
and interestfulness of Indians, in their relations  
to each other, is their fundamental defect - but  
this defect provides all Asiatic society, and is  
at the same time the cause and the effect of  
all their political misfortunes. And I have  
often heard natives attribute the success of the  
English in India to their steadiness in standing by  
and acting with each other. There is a passage in  
Butler's Analogy (Chap. III) where he says that a



bridge founded on "wisdom, public spirit, union  
is vital, and fidelity." "which plainly be superior to  
all others, and the world must gradually come  
under its empire" - which has sometimes seemed  
to me to have some bearing on the English  
position in India. But I think that the  
moral level of native courts is slowly rising  
under the influence of regular government, peace,  
and security.

With regard to the address (p. 6) made by a  
native judge to his court - I have no  
doubt that this expresses the mind of a native  
judge of the old school, though I find it hard  
to believe that he said it so openly and explicitly -  
and I venture to suspect some exaggeration  
of the precise words used. You see I am  
making the very criticism anticipated in the  
footnote; and I may add that there is  
hardly a country in Europe where the judges are  
so little influenced by the executive as England -  
so that to us the native's notion of his duties  
appears much more strange than it will seem

in Italy or Austria.

I should be inclined to disagree with the  
writer's estimate of the commercial morality  
of the Hindus. Thirty years ago, at any  
rate, the reputation of the Hindu banker  
for integrity stood very high indeed; their  
business proceeded almost entirely upon mutual  
trust; default was almost unknown, and  
they were to be relied upon in monetary  
transactions that extended from India  
into Central Asia, and all along the  
shores of the Persian gulf. I would have  
much rather left my money with a  
leading native banker of Upper India, than  
with one of the English banks, which were  
constantly failing through over-speculation.  
Of course the banker was always kept to  
a family, but I think this was the same  
with us in England up to very recently.

The footnote to pages 11.12, where the