

Decolonising Anglo-Indians: Strategies for a Mixed Race Community in Late Colonial India during the First Half of the Twentieth Century

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Short Abstract

Anglo-Indians, a designation acquired in the 1911 Indian Census, had previously been known as Eurasians, East Indians, Indo-Britons and half-castes. 'Anglo-Indian' had previously denoted, and among some scholars continues to denote, Britons long resident in India. We will define Anglo-Indians as a particular mixed race Indo-European population arising out of the European trading and imperial presence in India, and one of several constructed categories by which transient Britons sought to demarcate racial difference within the Raj's socio-racial hierarchy. Anglo-Indians were placed in an intermediary (and differentially remunerated) position between Indians and Domiciled Europeans (another category excluded from fully 'white' status), who in turn were placed below imported British superiors. The domiciled community (of Anglo-Indians and Domiciled Europeans, treated as a single socio-economic class by Britons) were relied upon as loyal buttressing agents of British rule who could be deployed to help run the Raj's strategically sensitive transport and communication infrastructure, and who were made as a term of their service to serve in auxiliary military forces which could help to ensure the internal security of the Raj and respond to strikes, civil disobedience or crises arising from international conflict.

The thesis reveals how calls for Indianisation of state and railway employment by Indian nationalists in the assemblies inaugurated by the 1919 Government of India Act threatened, through opening up their reserved intermediary positions to competitive entry and examination by Indians, to undermine the economic base of domiciled employment. Anglo-Indian leaders responded with varying strategies. Foremost was the definition of Anglo-Indians as an Indian minority community which demanded political representation through successive phases of constitutional change and statutory safeguards for their existing employment. This study explores various strategies including: deployment of multiple identities; widespread racial passing by individuals and families; agricultural colonisation schemes; and calls for individual, familial or collective migration.

Long Abstract

Anglo-Indians acquired their designation in the 1911 Census of India, having been previously known as Eurasians, East Indians, Indo-Britons and, most pejoratively, half-castes. The term had previously denoted Britons long resident in India, and is still used by some scholars in this sense. For the purposes of this study, Anglo-Indians are a particular portion of the mixed race Indo-European population arising out of the European trading and imperial presence. Anglo-Indian was one of several socially constructed categories by which transient (i.e., non-domiciled) Britons sought to demarcate racial difference within the Raj's socio-racial hierarchy. Through such categories, it is argued, the Raj structured discriminatory gradations of rank and remuneration in state and railway employment. Thus Anglo-Indians were placed in an intermediary position between Indians and Domiciled Europeans (another category excluded from fully 'white' status as the work of Elizabeth Buettner and Satoshi Mizutani have shown), who in turn were placed below imported British superiors. British ostracism made Anglo-Indians largely, though it is argued never entirely, endogamous. Miscegenation continued to take place and socio-racial hypergamy remained a strategy, though one which was generally only available to women and especially those with sufficiently fair complexion to engage in racial passing. The domiciled community (of Anglo-Indians and Domiciled Europeans, treated as a single socio-economic class by Britons) were relied upon as loyal buttressing agents of British rule who could be deployed to help run the Raj's strategically sensitive transport and communication infrastructure, and who were made as a term of their service to serve in auxiliary military forces which could help to ensure the internal security of the Raj and respond to strikes, civil disobedience or any crisis precipitated by international conflict.

The thesis reveals how calls for Indianisation of positions in state and railway employment by Indian nationalists in the assemblies set up by the 1919 Government of India Act threatened, through opening up their reserved intermediary positions to competitive entry and examination by Indians of all classes, to undermine the economic base of domiciled employment. Though defined by the state as 'Statutory Natives of India' exempt from Indianisation, the government found it difficult to resist ending the discriminatory hiring procedures, grades of employment and pay scales which the domiciled had hitherto enjoyed.

Indianisation of even junior positions like railway firemen and ticket collectors thus impacted on Anglo-Indian employment, if not displacing them making it increasingly difficult for Anglo-Indian youth to enter these positions to the same degree. Faced with the exit of those successful Anglo-Indians sufficiently fair complexioned to engage in racial passing at the top end of the socio-economic spectrum and widespread unemployment and poverty at the bottom end, the state and railway employment on which Anglo-Indians had become overly-reliant was threatened by Indianisation, open competition, and general retrenchment following the global impact of the Wall Street Crash. In this context Anglo-Indian leaders offered varying strategies to contend with the challenges of increasing devolution of power to Indians on the long road to self-government (amidst uncertainty, Dominion Status within the empire was thought a likely outcome of this process). Philanthropic and social organisations set up for the domiciled community and the uplift of the Eurasian poor (mostly during the late 19th Century) were amalgamated into a predominant all-India political Association in the decade following the First World War.

The main thrust of Anglo-Indian political efforts went into demanding, while defining themselves as an Indian minority community, statutory safeguards for their existing employment and political representation at every stage of constitutional change to effect that end. Deputations to the Secretary of State for India, participation at the Round Table Conferences and lobbying members of both houses of Parliament in Britain ultimately secured statutory reservations for Anglo-Indian employment in state and railways service in the 1935 Government of India Act, though securing the implementation of these provisions on the ground proved a challenge for Anglo-Indian local and national politicians. Additional complimentary or conflicting strategies included: deploying varied and contextual forms of self-identification with whiteness, Europeaness, and with Britain and India; widespread racial passing by individuals and families; agricultural colonisation schemes; and calls for individual, familial or collective migration.

With the paucity of historical studies on Anglo-Indians (particularly their experience in the 20th Century) the insights of geographers, anthropologists and sociologists have been crucial. One historian, Christopher Hawes, whose study *Poor Relations: The Making of a Eurasian Community in British India, 1773-1833* (1996) focuses on the origins of the mixed race

group argues that the disparaging and dismissive British colonial attitudes towards Eurasians as marginal and unimportant people have influenced subsequent historiography. In *The Meaning of White: Race, Class, and the 'Domiciled Community' in British India 1858-1930* (2011), Mizutani estimated that in the early 20th Century there were 93,000 transient Europeans, 47,000 Domiciled Europeans and 160,000 Eurasians in India. Clearly the Britons in the army and elite administrative roles were the most disproportionately impactful group in India. However, this study makes the case that despite Anglo-Indians small numerical strength, in the context of a very minute British official, non-official and military presence in South Asia, the addition of the domiciled (mixed race Anglo-Indians and supposedly unmixed Domiciled Europeans who, it is argued, were often infiltrated by Anglo-Indians engaging in racial passing), concentrated mainly in key urban centres across India, collectively amounted to a significant additional buttressing population which was loyal to British rule. Anglo-Indians' history, it will be shown, is of broad relevance and significance to global, imperial and South Asian historians.

To understand the importance of and meaning of race in late colonial India it is indispensable to examine the history of the mixed race group, which existed on the constructed boundaries of racial difference, and the size of whose population reflected, in contrast to other colonial empires in Asia (such as the Dutch and the Portuguese), evolving British attitudes towards racial difference and miscegenation. As Robert Young has argued in *Colonial Desire: Hybridity in Theory, Culture and Race* (1995), hybridity has the potential to undermine Manichean divisions of 'colonizer and colonized, self and Other' as it lies at the 'most anxious, vulnerable site: a fulcrum' between essentialist constructs of race. 19th Century racial ideologies of difference and rule led 20th Century transient Britons to ostracize and subordinate the domiciled, seek to police constructed socio-racial boundaries to prevent further miscegenation and harbour anxieties that their visible presence and very existence might racially discredit British rule. Anglo-Indians, such as the biologist and advocate of pan-Eurasianism Cedric Dover, also expressed their own views on race. In *Half-Caste* (1937) and *Know this of Race* (1939), Dover argued against emerging eugenic theories which were gaining currency in Britain and which inspired the NAZIs, suggesting that racial hybridization created healthier offspring, and that like the Anglo-Saxons, Anglo-Indians constituted a new and vital hybrid race. Buettner's work *Empire Families: Britons and Late Imperial India* (2004), emphasizes the lengths to which transient British parents would go to

keep their children from acquiring Indian domicile and its markers (such as the 'chi chi' Anglo-Indian accent), including sending children, especially boys, back to Britain for their education. To transient Britons, she argues, Domiciled Europeans were racially suspect and frequently associated with the mixed race group. At the same time British officials recognized the potential of both groups as a security asset.

In covering their role as loyal defenders of the Raj the thesis suggests that the domiciled played a significant role in upholding Raj security, especially during wartime, and that such service formed a plank of Anglo-Indian identity which was deployed in appeals to British paternalism for economic protection. In making such demands it was questioned by some Indians and Britons whether Anglo-Indians were asking for protection or for continuation of unjustified preferential treatment. However their position was one of both privilege in relation to Indians who sought employment in state and railway service and subordination in relation to transient Britons, who included young men brought out to India to serve on the railways with little or no prior experience and placed in positions above experienced older Anglo-Indian and Domiciled European subordinates. Anglo-Indians also presented themselves as a kind of railway caste, disproportionately employed, through no fault of their own, in services for which they had hitherto been judged to have a particular aptitude (as well as security function), in a context in which they were discriminatorily barred from certain other kinds of (mainly military) employment and were generally restricted from ascending too far in any career (public or private) by the socio-racial values of the Raj and its employment hierarchy.

In contrast to work by Mizutani and Hawes, which skillfully explored issues of Eurasian poverty and private British and the colonial state's emphasis on proposing philanthropic solutions to this perceived problem, the present study presents a broader spectrum of Anglo-Indian life, revealing Anglo-Indians to be a diverse and internally stratified group, including relatively affluent families, some of whom even managed to provide higher education for their children in Britain. It is argued that despite their internal differences Anglo-Indians at opposite ends of the Indian subcontinent possessed enough commonality of experience to constitute a community (albeit one that Hawes has argued was a 'reluctant' one fostered through their exclusion by transient Britons). This is made accessible through a brief

exploration of their social lives, which emphasises their agency and how they sought to create and depict the lives they lived to those around them. Sources originally employed by the geographer Alison Blunt in *Domicile and Diaspora: Anglo-Indian Women and the Spatial Politics of Home* (2005), such as the monthly journal of the All India Anglo-Indian Association, the *Anglo-Indian Review* (1929 to the present) and the Colonisation Society of India's journal the *Colonisation Observer* (selected issues, 1934-1941), which present Anglo-Indian views help us to transcend the limitations of the colonial archive and its preoccupation with viewing Anglo-Indians through the prism of poverty and the so called 'Eurasian problem'. Studying internal stratification within the mixed race group necessitates an understanding of internally and externally variable forms of self-identification that Anglo-Indians deployed in different contexts and interactions with other groups, private employers and the colonial state. Several of the asserted identities of Anglo-Indians amounted to conscious and unconscious forms of racial passing, and created overlap between them and Domiciled Europeans, and all of these issues are explored in depth and are recurring themes through the thesis.

The thesis also builds on Blunt's (and fellow geographer Kuntala Lahiri-Dutt's 1990) examination of the colonisation experiment at McCluskiegunge in modern Jharkand. McCluskiegunge is historically contextualized by an examination of the colonial state's promotion of agricultural colonisation, such as the state-backed Punjab Canal Colonies, through its promulgation of concepts of scientific agriculture and publication of figures of 'culturable' wasteland across the different provinces of India. Anglo-Indians saw their own colonisation efforts in a global perspective, making comparisons with Australian and New Zealand farming, Jewish settlement in Palestine, and even Italian colonisation of Abyssinia. Drawing on concepts of scientific agriculture and co-operative shareholding societies, the Colonisation Society of India launched Anglo-India's most elaborate colonisation effort in McCluskiegunge, and though ultimately unsuccessful in attracting Anglo-Indian youth to the occupation of agriculture, the project is shown to have been meticulously planned and substantially enacted. Other, more abortive schemes, such as colonisation in the Andaman Islands (which was attempted on a very small scale) and a scheme for a pan-Eurasian colony in German New Guinea (which was not) also receive attention. It is argued that Anglo-Indians aspired to an autonomous homeland within India or outside of the Indian mainland that might aspire to separation within the British Empire, and that with the example of the

state-funding given to the Punjab Canal Colonies Anglo-Indians expected British support in financial terms or in land grants to follow the establishment of an even marginally successful bridgehead through the communities use of its own limited resources. That such attempts threatened to dissipate those resources and even leave investors and colonisers destitute in the worst case, made the Anglo-Indian leader Sir Henry Gidney a cautious and variable supporter of well-planned colonisation efforts, and his successor, Frank Anthony, a fervent opponent of colonisation.

Given the study's broad chronological and geographic scope much has been omitted. With the paucity of academic work by historians directly focusing on Anglo-Indians, especially in the 20th Century, it is hoped that this study will point the way towards new avenues of research in this area. The thesis focuses on the high politics of the All India Anglo-Indian and Domiciled European Association and its leaders, Gidney and Anthony, with only passing reference to the work of provincial politicians and branches of the Association where they serve to illustrate some broader analytical point. The important topic of Anglo-Indian religious life is not addressed. The treatment of Anglo-Indians' social lives and education is only briefly covered in order to illustrate the nature of the community and to better understand the context for emerging Anglo-Indian strategies to contend with primarily economic and political challenges. The last chapter does not pretend to be a comprehensive treatment of Anglo-Indian emigration, and unlike Blunt's work does not attempt to cover the experience of Anglo-Indian emigrants except insofar as their accounts (accurate or otherwise) were represented by Anthony and the Association in debates about the strategy of emigration. The chapter explores the existential fears of Anglo-Indians in the run up to Indian independence, and discusses migration debates within India as a prism to understand the fundamental choice facing Anglo-Indians. Anthony presented the option of embracing India more fully as their homeland, going further than Gidney in redefining Anglo-Indians and their identities through a strategic embrace of Indian nationalism under the formula 'Indian by nationality, Anglo-Indian by community' and ultimately seeking to decouple Anglo-Indians from their historical identification with Britain. Wealthier Anglo-Indians were more likely to opt for the main alternative strategy of emigration (mainly to Britain and Australia) and continued identification with Britain.

These two larger choices were bound up with the issues of: identity; identification with Britain and India, whiteness and Europeaness; racial passing; hypergamy and marriage strategies; economic life and beliefs about employment prospects for themselves and their children in independent India and Britain and the white dominions; preservation of cultural, linguistic, religious and educational distinctiveness within independent India; and political strategies for securing a constitutionally recognized and protected existence in independent India. Anthony ultimately achieved more on the political front through embracing the Congress Party, Indian nationalism, and building personal connections with nationalist leaders (especially with Nehru), than even he had anticipated. Anglo-Indians obtained a status as a defined minority within the Indian Constitution, safeguards for their educational grants, nominated seats in the Lok Sabha and provincial legislatures, and more unexpectedly a continuation of Anglo-Indian economic reserved posts in the railways for ten years. Anthony's success was not enough to persuade a large portion of the Anglo-Indian community that their best hopes for the future lay in India, with the result that a large diaspora was created and the post-independence era would experience future waves of Anglo-Indian emigration.

List of Common Abbreviations

AIF	Anglo-Indian Force
BL	British Library
CSI	Colonisation Society of India
EIC	East India Company
ICS	Indian Civil Service
IMS	Indian Medical Service
ISMD/IMD	Indian Subordinate Medical Department/ Indian Medical Department
NAI	National Archive of India
RAMC	Royal Army Medical Corps
UP	United Provinces
WAC(I)	Women's Auxiliary Corps (India)

Introduction

Whose History?

Anglo-Indians are a particular group of mixed race people in late colonial India who had both European and Indian ancestry. Miscegenation occurred predominantly between European men and Indian women or mixed race women, and European paternal ancestry would come to define the mixed race group. However, there were also cases of unions between Indian men and European or mixed race women and the offspring of these relationships were usually excluded from the Anglo-Indian group. Different European powers, present in India for the purposes of trade and empire, had different attitudes towards miscegenation and its offspring.

The Dutch were particularly at ease with intermarriage with natives in their colonial possessions, including Ceylon and Indonesia and outposts in India – they distinguished socially between those of mixed race and those of pure descent but gave both the same legal status. In Dutch Indonesia either could be referred to as an *Indische Nederlander* (Indies Dutchman), while an *Indo* and a *Totok* (a Javanese word for pure) distinguished the mixed from the exclusively Dutch. The Portuguese adopted an Iberian and Catholic attitude in their trading outposts, encouraging conversion of and intermarriage with native peoples, and creating Portuguese speaking communities with a small proportion of mixed race Indo-Portuguese or Luso-Indians and a larger number of Indian Christians who adopted Portuguese family names.

The early East India Company (EIC or the Company) was tolerant, even encouraging of unions between its soldiers and servants and Indian women or mixed race offspring of unions between Indians and the Portuguese, French and the Dutch. During this period, characterized by the ubiquitous Indian *bibi* and the title of William Dalrymple's book *White Mughals*, the mixed race sons of Company officers could aspire to follow in their father's footsteps, rise in Company service and mixed race daughters were considered eligible brides for Company officers.¹ At the same time mixed race people were known pejoratively as half-castes, and later as Eurasians, Indo-Britons or East Indians. In 1791 the Company prohibited the employment of Eurasians (except as regimental musicians), and although this was not always enforced and many Eurasians continued to be hired as clerks, it began a process of discriminatory ostracism. Under these pressures the group became increasingly, although it will be argued never entirely, endogamous.

19th Century racial ideologies grew into part of the justification for British rule, and with the increasing number of British women coming out to India, especially after the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869, a new colonial domesticity replaced the *bibighar*. The development of the railways provided new employment opportunities for Eurasians, and British philanthropic bodies sought to address the 'Eurasian problem' through orphanages and educational institutions. Eurasians were subordinated within a socio-racial hierarchy, which structured employment that placed (and differentially remunerated) them in intermediary positions between the British and Indians. They began to campaign in the late 19th Century for the burial of the term 'Eurasian', which had acquired pejorative

¹ See 'Petition of Indo-Britons', *London Times*, 5 May, 1830, p. 1 – 'A great many females, the daughters of European fathers by native mothers, were married to European officers high in the service of the Company in Calcutta. Among the officers who held the highest situations on the staff in the Company's service at Calcutta, there was not at present one who was not married to a female of Indian descent.'

undertones and its replacement with one, 'Anglo-Indians', which had hitherto represented the group to which they aspired to belong – that of the British in India, and this was finally achieved through their redesignation in the 1911 Census.

The 1919 Government of India Act was the beginning of a series of staged steps along the path to decolonisation, the effects of these processes created unprecedented challenges to the Anglo-Indian community, particular to its allegiances, identities and economic life. Under pressures on the community's employment in state services and the railways, philanthropic organisations were amalgamated into an increasingly effective political Association that sought to address Government on the community's behalf, pushing for political representation and economic safeguards (reservations for Anglo-Indians in their existing fields of employment). The present study seeks to analyse the collective, individual and familial strategies which Anglo-Indians embraced in order to face the complex and changing world of late colonial India. In the context of India's vast population, Anglo-Indians were only a tiny minority, but there are many cogent reasons why their history deserves to be written and needs to be understood by historians.

Why it Matters.

British attitudes towards miscegenation and its offspring are powerful means by which to understand their evolving construction of racial ideologies of difference and rule. As Young has argued 'at the heart of racial theory... hybridity... maps out its most anxious, vulnerable site: a fulcrum at its edge and centre...'² Anxieties about how their mixed race

² R. Young, *Colonial Desire: Hybridity in Theory, Culture and Race* (New York, 1995), 19.

offspring and 'poor whites' would bring their racial prestige into question hampered British attempts to build a socio-racial hierarchy of rule with whiteness at its apex. The small size of the mixed race population was the result of official policy and social practices from the 19th Century on. The British sought to erect and police boundaries of class and race between the constructed categories of the transient British population (including those born in India whose parents could afford to keep them free of the taint of Indian domicile through sending them to Britain for part of their education), and a domiciled community of Domiciled Europeans (exclusively European in origin, or mixed race people attempting to racially pass as such) and Anglo-Indians.

As Malthus observed the 'passion between the sexes' is an irresistible constant.³ Social constructions of difference and even the most rigorous attempts to keep particular social groups from procreating (for example the South African Apartheid system) can never be entirely effective. Yet the scale of British social and official attempts to prevent interracial sex should be of intrinsic interest to any historian seeking to fully comprehend the nature of socio-racial attitudes and ideologies of British rule in India. The implications and experience of the small mixed race group hence go far beyond the mixed race group itself. Its small size is also testimony to the successes of British efforts to construct and police racial difference, which they believed justified and safeguarded their rule. However, perceiving Anglo-Indians as the offspring of the British, Indians were heard to judge the British more harshly for their want of feeling towards Anglo-Indians than for miscegenation itself.

³ T. Malthus, *An Essay on the Principle of Population* (London, 1798), 4.

A different approach to interracial sex on the part of the British would have resulted in a very different colonial society taking shape. With encouragement rather than censure India would have developed a far larger mixed race population, perhaps closer to the Mestizo societies of Latin America. This suggests that the policies and practices which attempted to restrict miscegenation had very profound and lasting consequences (obscured by our tendency to overlook counterfactuals), and invites further comparative study of mixed race populations in colonial settings.

Anglo-Indians' role in South Asian history cannot be effectively judged by their numerical strength alone. In 1922 the Prime Minister David Lloyd George told the House of Commons that there were a 'total of 2,500' Britons governing India, including '1,200 British civil servants' and '700 British police officers'.⁴ While in 1901 there were 60,965 British soldiers in India.⁵ Satoshi Mizutani estimates that by 1911 there were 'roughly 93,000 non-domiciled Europeans, 47,000 Domiciled Europeans and 160,000 Eurasians.'⁶ Clearly the apex of India's colonial administration were the most disproportionately impactful group in the country, and there is no suggestion that any other group had anything like the same level of significance, but their numbers and the larger (but proportionally still very limited) numbers of British troops help to contextualize the important role a small loyal community like the Anglo-Indians could play in buttressing British rule.

⁴ Hansard HC Deb 02 August 1922, vol 157. Col 1511.

⁵ *Census of India, 1901*, 93.

⁶ S. Mizutani *The Meaning of White: Race, Class, and the 'Domiciled Community' in British India 1858-1930* (Oxford, 2011), 72.

According to the Census in 1901 of a total Indian population of 294,361,056, Europeans in India (including the army) comprised 169,677 of whom more than a third had been born in India, while Eurasians accounted for 87,030 (excluding 2,221 ‘Feringis of East Bengal’).⁷ If we were to take these figures at face value, which the Censors did not, then the Indian born Europeans (which did not equate to Indian domicile, but can be taken as proxy if it is accepted that the number of Indian born Europeans who could afford to send their children to Britain for education and thus maintain their status as part of the transient British community would have been small and probably significantly less than the number of Eurasians engaging in racial passing who had infiltrated the European Census category) would have amounted to slightly over 56,600 to 87,030 Eurasians. Taken together those born in India, of mixed or unmixed European ancestry, amounted to more than 143,589 compared with less than 113,118 Europeans born in Europe.

Now, as has been said those born in India did not equate with the socially constructed and subordinated domiciled community, but they likely account for the bulk of it. Though somewhat divided and highly internally stratified Domiciled Europeans and Anglo-Indians had an overlapping social and economic existence fostered by British exclusion of both groups from complete acceptance into the privileged status of undisputed whiteness.⁸ Collectively the two groups buttressed the security of the Raj through their employment in middling ranks (with middling differentiated remuneration) of service in strategic areas such as railways, telegraphs, customs and other government departments, where they effectively supervised Indians on behalf of British superiors thereby helping to secure the

⁷ *Census of India, 1901*, 45; 393-394.

⁸ See Mizutani, *Meaning of White*, and E. Buettner, *Empire Families: Britons and Late Imperial India* (Oxford, 2004).

vital infrastructure of transport and communication without which the British ability to govern effectively and rapidly redeploy troops in time of crisis would have been impossible. Additionally, recognised as a security asset, even in peacetime they were inducted (compulsorily) into part-time Auxiliary military units to safeguard the railways and held in reserve to back up the army and police in case of emergency. This study makes a powerful case for the strategic importance of Anglo-Indians alongside Domiciled Europeans, in spite of their small numbers, to the colonial state.

Despite its socially constructed nature, race as a contemporary marker of social difference refuses to go away. It is a locus of essentialist political assertions of group identity, including by those who have in the past suffered most from racial theories and ideologies. Public debates about interracial adoption in Western countries have often been particularly heated, and have obscured the fact that so many individuals concerned (children and prospective parents) no longer fit into the contrived racial categories society continues to emphasize. Crosscultural and interracial relationships are becoming more common in multiracial societies, as overt racism has retreated (though not disappeared) from mainstream discourse to varying degrees in several Western countries. The identity issues of resulting interracial children are still considered problematic (a familiar prism, through which the falsity and contradictions of racial categories have often, historically, been placed at the foot of mixed race people themselves).

These public policy issues as well as the lived experience of mixed race people in contemporary societies like Britain have attracted increasing attention within the social

sciences. Miscegenation, still perceived as such, is of growing contemporary relevance. Hybridity is increasingly celebrated in academic circles for its potential to destabilize existing dichotomies, unsettle ‘hierarchies, orthodoxies and purities’,⁹ and create what Homi Bhabha has termed a ‘third space’.¹⁰ Yet much of the theorizing which has taken place is insufficiently grounded in a historical understanding of miscegenation’s long and complicated past.

Working within the fields of sociology and global studies Jan Nederveen Pieterse, who emphasizes the importance of his Indonesian-Dutch mixed ancestry to his work, has argued for viewing globalization as a more longstanding process (as global historians are increasingly doing) with racial hybridity as its transhistorical result.¹¹ Hybridity is seen by some literary theorists as reflecting ‘a postmodern sensibility of cut’n’mix, transgression, subversion... in Foucault’s terms, a “resurrection of subjugated knowledges” because it foregrounds those effects and experiences which modern cosmologies, whether rationalist or romantic, would not tolerate.’¹² Amidst such contemporary idealizations of its postmodern potential, Pieterse has argued that more ‘Distinctions need to be made between different times, patterns, types, and styles of mixing; besides mixing carries different meanings in different cultural settings.’¹³ This study should provide a solid historical case study for scholars interested in hybridity.

⁹ P. Wade, ‘Rethinking Mestizaje: Ideology and Lived Experience’, *Journal of Latin American Studies*, 37 (2005), 242-243.

¹⁰ H. Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (London, 2004).

¹¹ N. Pieterse, *Globalization and Culture: Global Mélange* (New York, 2nd edn. 2009).

¹² *Ibid.*, 55.

¹³ *Ibid.*

Existing Literature

The mixed race population of India has, until recently, attracted relatively little direct attention from professional historians. One notable exception is the late Christopher Hawes' work covering 1773-1833.¹⁴ Commenting on the paucity and problems of the existing scholarship Hawes opined that 'in many ways some of the hangovers of British attitudes towards Eurasians still exist amongst historians... [and Eurasians] tend to be dismissed in a footnote or else described as marginal people.'¹⁵ Hawes may have been thinking of an article by David Arnold, which successfully overturned a historical and historiographical 'illusion of an essentially elite European community' which the rulers of the Raj sought to convey through their attempted concealment of 'poor whites'.¹⁶ Arnold implied that Domiciled Europeans were almost entirely poor and that even the most degraded whites enjoyed a racial status that allowed them to condescend to similarly impoverished Anglo-Indians. Despite undoubted insights, Arnold defined the poverty of the domiciled relative to wealthier Europeans, failing to acknowledge that they themselves were internally stratified, with some Europeans and Anglo-Indians achieving successful careers and a not unenviable standard of living.¹⁷

Hawes also felt that early polemical works by members of the community, especially Herbert Stark,¹⁸ had exercised undue influence on some early authors who focused on the

¹⁴ C. Hawes, *Poor Relations: The Making of a Eurasian Community in British India, 1773-1833* (Richmond, 1996).

¹⁵ G. D'cruz, 'Christopher Hawes in Conversation with Glenn D'cruz', *International Journal of Anglo-Indian Studies* 3:1 (1998) [online], available at <http://home.alphalink.com.au/~agilbert/hawesint.html>

¹⁶ D. Arnold, 'European Orphans and Vagrants in India in the Nineteenth Century', *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, 7 (1978), 104.

¹⁷ See D. McMenamin, 'Graduate Research Essay: Identifying Domiciled Europeans in Colonial India: Poor Whites or Privileged Community?', *New Zealand Journal of Asian Studies*, 3:1 (June, 2001), 106-127.

¹⁸ H. Stark, *Hostages to India* (Calcutta, 1936).

Anglo-Indians' postcolonial plight such as the Anglo-Indian Evelyn Abel,¹⁹ and the sociologists Noel Gist and Roy Wright.²⁰ Along with Stark, Hawes argued, the Anglo-Indian leader Frank Anthony's memoir-cum-history,²¹ had become the 'two 'Bibles'' for those who later wrote about the community's history.²² The present study treats Anthony as a primary source and subject rather than a secondary authority. Several Anglo-Indian authors such as Gloria Moore have sought to tackle what they perceive as the neglect and prejudicial treatments of Anglo-Indians and their history. CTR Publishing, set up by the New Jersey based Anglo-Indian author Blair Williams, has issued several collected anthologies of Anglo-Indian family histories, stories, and a few academic articles about the community, that seek to express Anglo-Indian voices on their own terms. The online *International Journal of Anglo-Indian Studies* has gathered a similar mix of scholarly and more personal accounts of the community's present and its past.

Most academic work on Anglo-Indians has been carried out by anthropologists, sociologists and geographers. The anthropologist Lionel Caplan,²³ provides fascinating insights, particularly into how Anglo-Indian women in post-independence India adapted more successfully to new forms of employment and helped to keep their families afloat. The geographer Alison Blunt's pioneering *Domicile and Diaspora*,²⁴ provides a wide-ranging exploration of geographies of home and identity for Anglo-Indian women, past and present in India, Britain and Australia. Blunt also examined Anglo-Indians' dual

¹⁹ E. Abel, *The Anglo-Indian Community: Survival in India* (Delhi, 1988).

²⁰ N. Gist and R. Wright, *Marginality and Identity: Anglo-Indians as a Racially-Mixed Minority in India* (Leiden, 1973).

²¹ See F. Anthony, *Britain's Betrayal in India: the History of the Anglo-Indian Community* (New Delhi, 1969).

²² D'cruz, 'Christopher Hawes in Conversation'.

²³ L. Caplan, *Children of Colonialism: Anglo-Indians in a Postcolonial World* (New York, 2001).

²⁴ A. Blunt, *Domicile and Diaspora: Anglo-Indian Women and the Spatial Politics of Home* (Malden MA, 2005).

identification with Britain as Fatherland and India as Motherland touching on the political careers of the Anglo-Indian leaders Sir Henry Gidney and his successor Anthony and examining the attempt to found the Anglo-Indian colony McCluskiegunge, topics which are revisited at length in the present work. The present study has also emulated Blunt's extensive use of the All India Anglo-Indian Association's *Anglo-Indian Review* and the Colonisation Society's *Colonisation Observer*, sources which provide Anglo-Indian voices and redress the problems of the colonial archive.

Durba Ghosh is a historian whose work emphasizes the problems of the colonial archive, which often renders Indian women who engaged in interracial unions and their offspring invisible.²⁵ Ghosh argues that 'In early British India, the absence of native women's names in colonial archives correlated with the state's interests to suppress the visibility of subjects who threatened the whiteness of colonial society.'²⁶ 'Anglican church records, baptismal and marriage records... court records, such as wills and court cases' crafted a coded language that subtly revealed issues like legitimacy of offspring and offer clues to the historian as to racial status while seeking to obscure the 'natal forms of identification' and the presence of native women in interracial unions.²⁷ The present study makes clear that in constructing their own family histories, often by obscuring the existence of an Indian maternal ancestor as they sought to ascend the Raj's socio-racial hierarchy through assertions of exclusively European ancestry, many Anglo-Indians were complicit in this process. Ghosh emphasises how, 'set on the margins of historical and literary narratives, local women proved to be critical to the colonial enterprise in the contact zone between

²⁵ D. Ghosh, *Sex and the Family in Colonial India: the Making of Empire* (Cambridge, 2006).

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 18.

²⁷ *Ibid.*

Britons and the peoples they encountered on the Indian subcontinent.’²⁸ Anglo-Indian employment as the Raj’s intermediary allies between ruler and ruled mirrored such disproportionately significant positioning.

Another critically important historical work for the early colonial period is Kenneth Ballhatchet’s *Race, Sex and Class Under the Raj: Imperial Attitudes and Policies and their Critics, 1793-1905*. Ballhatchet argues that ‘English class attitudes are transformed into racial attitudes in an imperial setting’ and that in their pretensions to an aristocratic status the ruling elite sought to distance themselves from the Indian populace, which they considered ‘not only socially appropriate but politically necessary’, and thus those – such as Indian princes seeking European wives, European or Eurasian women suspected of or engaging in prostitution, or those of mixed race (i.e. anyone who might engage in or was the product of miscegenation) – ‘who threatened to bridge that distance aroused great concern.’²⁹ Ballhatchet touches on the early history of Eurasians and the increasing economic discrimination against them, gives the example of British anxiety about a Eurasian doctor treating European women, and argues that the British dominant group behaviour fitted a pattern of attributing ‘to members of other groups the characteristics most feared in one’s own group’ and dismissing or ignoring evidence that contradicts the stereotypes the dominant group has created ‘of those on the margins of social distance’.³⁰

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 256.

²⁹ K. Ballhatchet, *Race, Sex and Class Under the Raj: Imperial Attitudes and Policies and their Critics, 1793-1905* (London, 1980), 121-122.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 121.

Two other recent studies by Michael Fisher,³¹ and Chandra Mallampalli,³² tackle the cases of two rather exceptional examples of 19th Century Eurasians, charting their histories of global connections. Fisher's subject inherited spectacular wealth as the adoptive heir of the Indian Catholic ruler Begum Sombre of Sardhana, married into the English aristocracy and became the first Indian Member of Parliament (though this achievement has usually been ignored due to his complex interracial status). One of Mallampalli's subjects was in all likelihood the first Indian to study at the University of Cambridge, and the son of an Indian dalit convert to Protestantism who had married a Eurasian woman. Both studies reflect a growing interest in mixed race Indians and how their experiences (as well as their bodies) have at times embodied the transnational.

Central to this emerging interest among historians in the mixed race population of India is Mizutani's recent study,³³ which makes a crucial contribution to our understanding of both Eurasians and Domiciled Europeans in the context of the Raj's complex construction and policing of 'whiteness'. The present study usefully dovetails chronologically with Mizutani's work and gains significantly from his insights. However, like Hawes, Mizutani's focus and use of sources (partly dictated by the limitations and concerns of the colonial archive), tends to reinforce an image of Eurasians that emphasises the most impoverished sections of the community and British philanthropic and educational attempts to combat the perceived 'Eurasian problem'. Racial passing, the questionable nature of the 'Domiciled European' claim to unmixed descent, internal stratification

³¹ M. Fisher, *The Inordinately Strange Life of Dyce Sombre: Victorian Anglo-Indian MP and Chancery 'Lunatic'* (London, 2010).

³² C. Mallampalli, *Race, Religion and Law in Colonial India: Trials of an Interracial Family* (Cambridge, 2011).

³³ Mizutani, *Meaning of White*.

within domiciled groups, and Anglo-Indian agency receive more attention in the present study.

Elizabeth Buettner's insights into Britons' attempts to maintain non-Indian domicile and protect their children from socio-racial tainting through limiting their educational and social association with the domiciled community and its markers such as the 'chi-chi' Anglo-Indian accent, have greatly enriched the present work.³⁴ This study builds on the existing literature's depiction of fears of racial passing by emphasising how frequently and successfully Anglo-Indians deployed this as an individual strategy. In doing so the conceptual insights of the sociologist Graham Watson,³⁵ are applied to Anglo-Indian passing.

Core Issues to be addressed

It is not clear from the existing literature whether Anglo-Indians were, as they maintained, and the British like to perceive them, a largely endogamous group by the start of the 20th Century. Certain interpretations of their relations to Domiciled Europeans and transient Britons emerge from the work of Arnold, Mizutani and Buettner, which tend to imply their successful exclusion and ostracism from at least the latter group. A major theme of this study is that of racial passing, a predominantly individual strategy which transgressed and challenged the boundaries that the British sought to erect and police. A strategy which became increasingly at odds with the collective communal strategies advanced by the Anglo-Indian leadership. Hawes has suggested that Anglo-Indians were, at most a

³⁴ E. Buettner, *Empire Families: Britons and Late Imperial India* (Oxford, 2004).

³⁵ G. Watson, *Passing for White: A study of Racial Assimilation in a South African School* (London, 1970).

‘reluctant community’,³⁶ forced into existence through their ostracism by Britons. Passing might be argued to be part of that reluctance, or simply a strategy for economic and social advancement within the Raj’s socio-racial hierarchy.

The questions of who Anglo-Indians were, how they socialised, where they lived, and how they organised collectively for social, philanthropic and political purposes, must be answered in order to ascertain if they amounted to a community. It will be argued that although they were more internally stratified than they appear in the existing historiography, and never entirely endogamous, with blurred boundaries between them and other groups and complex, contextual, varied and evolving forms of self-identification, Anglo-Indians nonetheless possessed enough commonality of experience, mediated through their practices, social organisations and educational institutions for one Anglo-Indian to recognise and understand another of entirely dissimilar life experience from the other side of the subcontinent. Individuals might choose radically different political views and strategies for self-betterment. However, though they might contest issues such as degrees of European ancestry and whiteness, or levels of identification with Britain, empire, and India, Anglo-Indians recognised each other as part of the same group.

Central to this study is the emergence of effective national Anglo-Indian political organisation, through a process of amalgamating existing (usually philanthropic and social) associations and bodies into the All India Anglo-Indian and Domiciled European Association. A process precipitated by pressures on domiciled employment and economic life. Anglo-Indian employment was also intimately bound up with their role as servants of the Raj, although we will consider whether the community was really as reliant on the

³⁶ D’cruz, ‘Christopher Hawes in Conversation’.

state and the railways for its economic life as its leaders asserted. Anglo-Indian unemployment and poverty were clearly real concerns, but Arnold's image of even gainfully employed Anglo-Indians as impoverished conflicts with that of Indian nationalists at the time who saw their position as one of privilege. In seeking to reconcile these seemingly contradictory interpretations we will analyse their intermediate role in the socio-racial hierarchy of Raj employment.

Discriminatory systems of employment and promotion utilising numerous gradations of rank and remuneration sought to render opaque the reality that Anglo-Indians were placed in intermediate positions (with middling pay) above those of Indian subordinates and menial workers (some of whom possessed superior levels of education) and below Domiciled Europeans who were in turn placed below British superiors (some of whom, on the railways, were hired directly with little or no experience). The question arises as to the purpose of the British fashioning of these systems and the reason for the place in which they had (presumably deliberately) placed Anglo-Indians. Anglo-Indians strategic role in buttressing the Raj, in peace and war, will be explored and questioned.

Through the prism of Anglo-Indian concerns, we reveal how Indianisation was not merely a process of transferring elite positions in the Army and ICS to Indians, but extended down the socio-economic spectrum to arguments about replacing Anglo-Indian railway guards and ticket-collectors with Indians. Indian voices in the legislatures set up under the 1919 Government of India Act soon set about unraveling the discriminatory employment and promotion structures of government services and the railways, pushing for Indianisation of jobs held by Europeans and Anglo-Indians and Indian admission to these

higher level subordinate grades by open competition and examination, and though upholding their own insistence that Anglo-Indians were statutory natives of India (and had no claim to citizenship in Britain) British colonial administrators on the ground found these demands difficult to resist. Anglo-Indian leaders felt compelled to utilize the language being deployed by the British and by Indians to construct their community as an Indian political minority, even when the mere assertion of Indian legal status was enough to arouse heated contestation both from within the ranks of the Anglo-Indian community and from Indian nationalists.

As the political strategies of the Association's leadership were often at variance with a substantial proportion of Anglo-Indian opinion, alternative strategies which might be characterized as escapist found wide support – such as founding an agricultural colony within India as an Anglo-Indian homeland that might aspire to autonomy or even independence or emigration *en masse*. The reasons for, successes and failures of these schemes will be explored as reflective of the extent of Anglo-Indian anxiety about Indian home rule and the prospects of a Hindu Raj. The core political strategy of the Association's leadership was to demand, as a minority political community, the right to political representation at every stage of constitutional change and fixed constitutional safeguards (reserved percentages) for Anglo-Indian employment in their existing fields of state and railway service. The differences in leadership style, identity and political positioning between Gidney and Anthony will also be analysed. The decisive shift from what Blunt termed Gidney's 'dual identification' with Britain as fatherland and India as motherland, to Anthony's distancing of himself from a Britain he would later argue had betrayed the community and strategic embrace of Indian nationalism (under the

framework of 'Indian by nationality, Anglo-Indian by community') will also be key to our understanding of Anglo-Indian political strategies.

Given the large chronological and geographic scope of the present study much has, of necessity, been excluded. The study does not explore the actual experiences of the Anglo-Indian diaspora and migration, except insofar as these were represented (accurately or otherwise) in debates within the community in India. There is a disproportionate focus on the high politics of the All India Anglo-Indian and Domiciled European Association and key leaders such as J. H. Abbott, E. T. McCluskie, Gidney and Anthony. Provincial Association branches, local Anglo-Indian politicians and rival organisations, are selectively mentioned and only where they serve to illustrate some particular communal debate or analytical point. The social life of Anglo-Indians, and the diversity of their experiences is briefly illustrated as a necessary part of the context in which we should understand their evolving worldviews, identities and strategies, but all these areas could be made the subject of in depth studies. Anglo-Indian religious life (including marriage practices etc.) is a particular omission. A considered understanding of Anglo-Indian education and its problems was necessary in order to analyse the Anglo-Indian economic situation, though education only receives relatively brief summary within this study. Given the paucity of prior historical research on Anglo-Indians in the 20th Century, it is hoped that, in spite of its limitations, the present study will provide a useful basis on which to proceed.

Organisation of the Thesis

The first section, comprised of four short chapters, is centered on the theme of locating and defining Anglo-Indians. This is achieved through an examination of: the contested terms by which they were designated; their relations to other groups, in particular Domiciled Europeans; the individual or familial strategy of racial passing; the problematic Census figures documenting their numbers; and their social world, sources of economic livelihood and role as loyal servants and defenders of the Raj. The second section, comprised of three long chapters, emphasizes Anglo-Indian strategies to contend with the challenges posed by constitutional changes and threats to their economic position. In particular: their political efforts to organize and lobby government for continuing political representation and statutory economic safeguards; the efforts expended on attempts at agricultural colonies, and the strategy of migration individually or *en masse*, which was rejected by the final major Anglo-Indian leader of our period, Anthony, in favour of a strategic embrace of Indian nationalism.

Chapter I attempts to define and enumerate Anglo-Indians through an exploration of the changing designations which had been used to refer to them in the Census. It would be as difficult for the historian as it was for the Censors to estimate Anglo-Indian population figures over time based on the Census data, owing to the propensity of Anglo-Indians to pass as Europeans. Racial Passing is therefore set up in this chapter as a key theme of the thesis, and necessary to our understanding of who Anglo-Indians were, who they variously claimed to be, and how they bordered and overlapped with other groups such as Indian Christians and Domiciled Europeans. An oral history of a self-proclaimed Domiciled European of 'swarthy complexion', the majority of whose friends and girlfriends had been

Anglo-Indians (who had refused to recognize him as anything other than a ‘fair Anglo-Indian’), and who may have been an Anglo-Indian engaging in racial passing, is used to set up the social world of the (often conjoined) domiciled community and its life within the Raj’s socio-racial hierarchy.

Chapter II attempts to give a brief picture of the social world of Anglo-India, exploring (and asserting): its highly internally stratified nature; the diversity of economic and educational achievements; the extensive employment of Indian servants far down the socio-economic spectrum; the divergent experiences of (constructed) archetypal groups such as urban Anglo-Indians, railway colony Anglo-Indians, and the few who lived in jungle villages; its institutions (railway institutes, schools and churches) that provided a basis of commonality for many mobile Anglo-Indians and a transferability of their lives when they were posted from one station to another; as well as Anglo-Indian hybridized cuisine and leisure activities. There is insufficient space to explore these areas in depth, some of them are mentioned only in passing, and more could have been added based on the rich source material that has been collected for this study (for example on sport and hunting). Books by Anglo-Indians themselves such as memoirs and family histories furnish a great deal of evidence on their social lives, so fortunately these facets of Anglo-Indian life are less imperiled than many other elements of Anglo-Indian history. This snapshot emphasizes that Anglo-Indians expressed their agency and attempted to pursue meaningful and rich lives on their own terms, rejecting the notion that European traditions they felt that they had inherited from their parents and grandparents were somehow wrongfully appropriated in crude emulation of transient Britons.

Chapter III addresses what was widely perceived to be the defining problem of the community, its economic position and employment. An early anthropological study of their position in South India provides evidence that, at least in this region, Anglo-Indians were not as reliant on state employment as their leaders claimed. Early writers had defined the community by its claims to a better standard of living than the average Indian, necessitated by efforts to live according to what Anglo-Indians felt was a European mode of living. The British regarded Anglo-Indian profligacy and inability to live within their means as central to the Anglo-Indian problem, encouraging them to become less reliant on state and railway employment which underpinned the middling lifestyle and the economic position they sought to maintain. As Mizutani argues the British felt that this stemmed in part from a misapprehension by Anglo-Indians of their appropriate class status.

The demand for servants extending to even poorer Anglo-Indians was a misconceived emulation of the European lifestyle modelled on that of wealthier European mercantile and official classes in India. Anglo-Indians had no good example of working class whites and associated manual labour with Indians on whom they looked down, accordingly British philanthropists who focused their efforts on the community sought to inculcate a sense of the dignity of labour. British views of Anglo-Indians often echoed criticisms, ‘othering’ and rhetorical dehumanisation, of the working classes back in Britain, with the addition of concepts of racial and environmental degeneration. Britons sought to encourage self-help and communal uplift through education, better living and employment, but established and policed a socio-racial hierarchy of employment which restricted Anglo-Indians’ rise above certain middling rungs of state, railway and private employment through discriminatory and social barriers built into the institutional frameworks and cultures of these private and public organisations.

State and railway employment placed Anglo-Indians in a position of relative privilege in terms of rank and remuneration above Indian subordinates and menial workers, allowing a substantial proportion of the community to achieve its demanded higher standard of living. The sustainability of this discriminatory framework placing Anglo-Indians economic position between Domiciled Europeans (who were in turn below transient Britons) and Indians was challenged by Indianisation following the 1919 Government of India Act. Anglo-Indian resistance to economic displacement (from positions of relative privilege and subordination) in state and railway employment manifested in the political demands for reserved proportions of posts in these areas enshrined in the form of statutory safeguards. These reservations were achieved in the 1935 Government of India Act, but it proved more difficult to secure their adequate implementation on the ground.

If not motivated by philanthropic concern for the community's well-being, something that appeared largely absent among civil servants and government officials who prioritised cost-savings, the reason for the deliberately intermediary salaries of Anglo-Indians (in between Indians and Europeans) might find its explanation in Chapter IV. Here we see how Anglo-Indians were employed in strategically sensitive services which underpinned the Raj's security infrastructure (transport and communications, that is railways and telegraphs). Anglo-Indians on the railways were usually compelled to be members of Auxiliary military forces in peacetime that could guard this infrastructure, help to break strikes and combat civil disobedience and provide an additional strategic reserve in times of war or crisis. Evidence is presented that the British recognised the strategic role Anglo-Indians and Domiciled Europeans could and did play in the security of the Raj, and that their wartime contribution was even greater. More importantly perhaps, were perceptions

as well as how this affected Anglo-Indian identity and was emphasised in claims on the British for recognition (in the form of political and financial support) in return for their loyal service, something which they themselves pointed out had created conflict and animosity between themselves, nationalists and other Indian communities.

Chapter V on Anglo-Indian politics is the longest chapter, and attempts to weave together the other threads of the thesis into a chronologically arranged overview of the evolving strategies of the Anglo-Indian leadership in response to successive phases of constitutional change. The core strategy involved constructing an Indian political minority community according to the language which was being used by both Britons and Indians. The process of Anglo-Indian political development began with attempts in the 19th Century to secure legal equality, especially in terms of employment, to transient Britons in India, attempts which failed, but gave rise to a variety of early Anglo-Indian organisations, often led by religiously minded Britons, whose aims were primarily philanthropic and concerned with communal uplift. From this time into the early 20th Century the British attempted to shape and direct the Anglo-Indian community away from political agitation or demands for a legal status equal to that of transient Britons. In the early 20th Century more effective political organisation began to take shape through a long process of amalgamation of pre-existing bodies which would continue throughout our period but which had resulted in a large measure of consolidation of the Anglo-Indian voice under the largest such body, the All India Anglo-Indian and Domiciled European Association, by around 1929.

After the 1919 Government of India Act there were two Anglo-Indian deputations to the Secretary of State for India (1923 and 1925), with the second being advised that Anglo-Indians must accept their future was only to be in India under the legal status of statutory natives. This advice was fundamental to directing the efforts of the Anglo-Indian leadership towards continuing political representation as an Indian minority community and economic safeguards (in the form of statutory reservations of fixed proportions in their existing areas of state and railway employment). Anglo-Indian political activities in the Legislative Assembly, in lobbying government, at the Round Table Conferences and in securing a House of Lords amendment to the 1935 Government of India Act to provide the desired reservations were extensive. The shift in tone and strategy with the take-over by the Anglo-Indian leader Anthony in 1942, who had taken on board the message of the Cripps Mission that safeguards would not continue, was dramatic. Anthony's new strategy was to embrace Indian nationalism.

Chapter VI explores colonisation strategies, focusing on the attempt to create an agricultural colony in the UP (modern Jharkhand) named for its founder McCluskiegunge. McCluskiegunge has been the subject of previous research by two geographers, Alison Blunt and Kuntala Lahiri-Dutt. At the start of the 20th Century the British had at times encouraged agricultural colonisation by Anglo-Indians as an alternative option to political agitation, although they became less supportive of the idea and never offered it state backing. The early Punjab Canal Colonies were essentially state projects backed by expertise and considerable investment; they provided a model for Anglo-Indians in a context in which government was speaking favourably about the idea of agricultural colonisation, the prospects for scientific agriculture, and advancing the concept through its

publications for 'culturable' waste land, which it enumerated for each province and implied was ripe for agricultural development. At the same time the idea of co-operative societies was being advanced. These two ideas were adopted in McCluskie's scheme to found the Colonisation Society of India in order to settle and farm the land of an Anglo-Indian colony collectively. Elaborate schemes of finance, investment return, Society membership and shareholding eventually led to the concept of the absentee settler, whose investment plot would be turned into a home and functioning farm in their absence through the Society's efforts.

Critics of colonisation worried that the failure of such a scheme might leave investors (some of them retirees) destitute and compound rather than solve the problems of the community. Even if successful, many in the Anglo-Indian Association worried they would distract and deflect attention from its activities while failing to provide a solution for the bulk of the community. Anglo-Indians also looked further afield both for inspiration, and for sites for possible overseas colonisation. The example of Jewish settlement in Israel and British agricultural development of New Zealand and Australia provided particular models for colonisation. Thwarted by the colour bar preventing their mass relocation to the white dominions of the British Empire, some Anglo-Indians attempted to settle in the Andamans in what they thought might become a self-governing state (possibly detached from India and remaining under the British crown), and theorised about even more grandiose schemes such as a pan-Eurasian settlement (with other Asian Eurasians) in German New Guinea. The most elaborately enacted scheme had been McCluskiegunge, and ultimately this failed, largely as it attracted limited numbers (many of them retirees), remained reliant on Indian labour and could not provide a sufficiently

attractive economic future for the young. Colonisation reveals the extent of Anglo-Indian anxieties about coming Indian self-rule, a desire to achieve self-sufficiency and also a relative isolation in which their cultural identity and European mode of life might be preserved.

The final Chapter (VII) deals with arguments about early emigration by Anglo-Indians, around the time of independence, and with Anthony's attempt to persuade Anglo-Indians to embrace their future within India. Emigration would continue and increase, in waves, particularly to Australia and Britain in the decades following independence, but any attempt to enumerate or document emigration must be the product of future research. This chapter confines itself to debates within the community about emigration as a strategy, and how they centred on Anglo-Indian identity and shifting levels of identification with Britain and India. Anglo-Indian rhetoric reveals mounting anxiety about future Hindu domination. Anthony took over leadership of the community in 1942 and began to deliver a strikingly different message, seeking to rapidly reorient Anglo-Indians away from their traditional identification with Britain towards a more wholehearted embrace of India as Motherland, under the formula 'Indian by nationality, Anglo-Indian by community'. Many Anglo-Indians were unwilling to accept Anthony's reformulation, his assertions about Anglo-Indian identity, his attempt to bury the term 'Domiciled European' and his strategic embrace of Indian nationalism. Those with the financial means to emigrate were likely to do so.

Anthony used the Association's journal the *Review* to oppose emigration and publish the stories of those Anglo-Indians who had emigrated and regretted the decision, bemoaning the conditions they found in Britain or Australia, and desperate to return home, as well as those who did return to India. Even in Anthony's attempt to stem the tide, the widespread panic his efforts were responding to is evident. Many Anglo-Indians experienced an existential crisis of identity. Emigration was often motivated by fears for the future, education, employment and marriage prospects of their children – this led Anthony to make gendered criticisms of Anglo-Indian women's role in pushing families towards the individual or familial strategy of emigration that, through depletion of the community's numerical strength, threatened to harm his collective strategies for securing the community's future within India.

For those who could not afford to consider emigration, Anthony's stark message provided a reassuring path forward, so long as they could believe that he would achieve protections for their way of life and education in independent India. In fact, Anthony received more generous terms from the Congress Party than even he had expected, including three seats in the Constituent Assembly, and ultimately a defined protected minority status in the Indian constitution, nominated seats in the Lok Sabha and regional legislatures, and an unexpected continuation of reservations in the railways for ten years.

Who Were Anglo-Indians?

The term Anglo-Indians is used in this work to refer to a particular community of racially mixed descent in India. Prior to the 20th Century they were known as Eurasians, half-castes, and East Indians, and these terms will also be used where appropriate to accord with the usage in historical sources being cited, the context or the period in question. Overall preference will be given to Anglo-Indian as the least pejorative term, one acquired through the choice and agency of the community itself, and as the officially recognized designation during the period of this study. Anglo-Indians were the descendants of unions between Europeans and Indians which were prevalent to varying degrees among the Portuguese, French, Dutch and British during the 16th-18th centuries –usually between European men and Indian women or mixed race women who were the result of prior unions between European men and Indian women.

European men were present for reasons of trade, war and empire building. They fathered children with varying degrees of encouragement and discouragement from the colonial powers they represented and carried different cultural and religious attitudes towards unions with indigenous peoples, that influenced the formality or informality, duration and nature of these sexual partnerships. British soldiers and servants of the East India Company (henceforth EIC) favoured the mixed race Indo-Portuguese and Indo-French offspring of prior unions, and consequently the majority of the mixed population was Catholic, followed by Anglicans and smaller numbers of other Protestant denominations.

Mixed race children of these early unions often identified as European or English (if their father or grandfather had been English) – one English lady in her letters home (1836-42) expressed ‘savage amusement... at being forced to endure the indignity of meeting self-styled Englishmen and women who are actually ‘uncommonly black’ such as the famous Colonel Skinner.³⁷ Unions between Indian men and European or mixed race women were far rarer,³⁸ especially as there were very few European women in India prior to the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869, and by the 19th Century racial attitudes had hardened against miscegenation, and even though such ‘transgressions’ continued to take place, the gendered sensibilities undergirding British racial prestige held interracial sex between white women and non-white men in far greater abhorrence than the reverse.

The state approved definition of Anglo-Indians appearing in the 1935 Government of India Act and later the Indian Constitution would define the group explicitly as those possessing European ancestry in the male line, deliberately omitting any mention of Indian maternal ancestry and excluding the offspring of Indian fathers and European or mixed race women altogether. The All India Anglo-Indian and Domiciled European Association (henceforth the Association, which came into being through the amalgamation of various, mainly philanthropic groups aimed at the uplift of the mixed race population that had come into existence during the late 19th Century, into the primary political organization representing Anglo-Indians in the early 20th Century) maintained and policed this exclusion, though the question of the mixed race offspring of Indian fathers was raised several times within the Association. As the Association became increasingly able to offer

³⁷ Y. Park & R. Rajan (eds.), *The Postcolonial Jane Austen* (London, 2000), 174.

³⁸ See C. Younger, *Wicked Women of the Raj: European Women who Broke Society's Rules and Married Indian Princes* (New Delhi, 2004).

educational and financial assistance to Anglo-Indians in need the perceived necessity of jealously guarding its meagre resources from excluded mixed race people and Indian Christians engaging in racial passing became more important. In policing these boundaries themselves Anglo-Indians discovered the necessity of making the same kinds of iniquitous and unsettling demands for proofs of racial status and parentage from would be members of the Association that they had resented being subjected to by the colonial state and private employers.

From the 19th Century the increasing importance of ‘scientific’ racial ideology to British imperial rule forced the existing mixed race population to become increasingly endogamous, though occasional intermarriage with Indian Christians, Domiciled Europeans and more rarely Britons (usually privates in the armed forces) continued. Goans claiming European ancestry and the Indo-Portuguese (or Luso-Indians) would be increasingly absorbed into the Anglo-Indian fold towards the end of our period, as Anglo-Indian leaders sought to claim the greatest possible numerical strength for their community in negotiations with India’s much larger communities. On the ground, such attempts to redefine the boundaries of the Anglo-Indian community (to include other mixed or supposedly mixed race groups) faced resistance.

Domiciled Europeans claimed exclusive European descent and Indian domicile, and many had lived for generations in India. What separated them from ‘transient Britons’ (Buettner’s multigenerational *Empire Families*) was that they could not afford to maintain a European domicile by sending their ‘country born’ children ‘home’ to Europe for

education. Contrary to David Arnold's emphasis,³⁹ they not only included 'poor whites', but also more financially sound families (often, like Anglo-Indians, in state or railway employment) sharing an economic existence overlapping with the upper socio-economic strata of the Anglo-Indian community and the lower socio-economic strata of the transient Britons, i.e. those engaged in commercial, trading or agricultural (tea planters etc.) vocations.

Buettner and Mizutani have argued that Domiciled Europeans were excluded from whiteness by transient Britons through: suspicions of them having Indian ancestry (in a lesser degree than Anglo-Indians); conceptions of white degeneration in certain climates; and constructing whiteness as not 'a permanent attribute of Europeans' but rather something requiring 'continuous care and material investment.'⁴⁰ Transient Britons and the imperial state placed Domiciled Europeans alongside Anglo-Indians in the same socio-economic category as 'statutory' Indians for employment purposes, reinforcing perceptions that their association with Anglo-Indians and acquisition of particular markers of the conjoined domiciled community (accent etc.) made their claims to exclusive European ancestry suspect. Social, legal and economic difference was thereby structured through domicile.

³⁹ Arnold appears to define the entire group as 'poor', even if they were living comfortable lives and had reasonably successful careers in railway service. See Arnold, 'European Orphans and Vagrants'.

⁴⁰ S. Mizutani, 'Rethinking Inclusion and Exclusion: the Question of Mixed-Race Presence in Late Colonial India', *University of Sussex Journal of Contemporary History*, 5 (December, 2002), 20.

Mizutani has argued that “Domicile’ was a key idiom, invented to re-define and domesticate a ‘class’ problem that... should not have come into being in the first place.’⁴¹ Conversely, the Census was one arena where state-sanctioned categories placed the critical boundary not at the domiciliary divide, but at the fault line between those who could successfully assert a European status (grouping Domiciled Europeans, Anglo-Indians passing as Europeans and transient Britons together) and those who returned themselves as Eurasians or from 1911 on as Anglo-Indians (which the state perceived as an admission of mixed descent). Accordingly the Census provided the means for Domiciled Europeans to assert their difference from the mixed race group, but also (despite the pleas of their politicians) provided Anglo-Indians an opportunity to pass as members of the same category as transient Britons.

Many Domiciled Europeans accepted an overlapping social and economic existence with Anglo-Indians, while believing themselves to be – socio-racially – a cut above them. However, fairer complexioned Anglo-Indians significantly infiltrated the Domiciled European group. The 1901 Census attempted to breakdown the European population by place of birth (not synonymous with domicile) and noted that (excluding the army) two-fifths had been born in India, concluding however that ‘In view of the uncertainty as to the extent to which Eurasians are included in the figures very little value can be attached to these proportions.’⁴²

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 17.

⁴² *Census of India, 1901*, 394.

Self-identifying Anglo-Indians and Domiciled Europeans might also have been genuinely unaware of Indian maternal ancestors who had been deliberately expunged from the family construction of its ancestry. Within the domiciled world children were socialised to believe that Europeans, particularly those with Portuguese ancestry, came in much darker colours than Britons might find plausible. Undue darkness within members of the same family could be explained away by acclimatisation to India, overexposure to the sun, heat and train engine fumes, and even using ‘too much coconut oil’ in your hair.⁴³ Some untraveled Indians, based on their experiences with the domiciled, might have entertained similar misconceptions about the range of skin tones that existed in southern Europe.

Durba Ghosh’s work reveals ‘archival efforts to render... [native women] invisible’ as their names were either omitted entirely from Church records of the births and baptisms of their mixed race children, or in marriage records ‘they were identified, either by their Christian names or by their married last names...’⁴⁴ EIC records employed conventions that marked legitimacy or illegitimacy, but again obscured the identities and presence of Indian mothers. Colluding with such archival efforts, Anglo-Indian and self-identifying Domiciled European families, often went to elaborate lengths to hide or obscure the presence of an Indian maternal ancestor, writing them out of the family history they passed down to their children and grandchildren or misrepresenting them as European and forgetting their pre-conversion names and former ethno-religious identities. Such deliberate conspiracies of silence, were compounded as multigenerational families of Indian domicile intermarried thereby increasing the likelihood that any ‘country born’

⁴³ Explanations given to the author by an Anglo-Indian politician in Delhi in 2010 for the darker complexion of ‘our boys in south’.

⁴⁴ Ghosh, *Sex and the Family*, 4, 18.

family of long residence in India, however fair complexioned, would become unknowing carriers of Indian genes.

Ghosh has shown how in the 18th and early 19th centuries the East India 'Company state vacillated between providing native women [in relationships with soldiers] and mixed-race children with financial benefits and cutting them off from charitable support.'⁴⁵ Hawes highlighted the difficulty for various 'charitable funds' in excluding those 'of mixed race, and Eurasian wives... even though they were legitimately married; forms were produced which you had to sign in order to claim which testified that you were of 'unmixed' blood, and the definition of unmixed blood was four generations.'⁴⁶ So in attempting to define 'unmixed blood' charitable funds in 19th Century India encountered similar problems to those that Nuremberg, Jim Crow and Apartheid legislation sought to address.

Complex, varied and competing theories of scientific racism originated in the 19th Century. The concept of 'reversion' posited by 'W. F. Edwards, an English West Indian comparative anatomist and anthropologist resident in Paris', and taken up in the 2nd edition of Robert Knox's *The Races of Men* (1862), contended that the products of inter-racial unions would 'after a few generations... revert' to the race of either parent.⁴⁷ An explanation necessitated by the obvious falsity, in light of fast growing Caribbean mixed race populations, of popular theories that miscegenation produced only weak and infertile offspring. Other unfalsifiable theories asserted that hybrid offspring could not be endogamous and remain fertile, but required new infusions of blood from either of the

⁴⁵ Ghosh, *Sex and the Family*, 213.

⁴⁶ D'cruz, 'Christopher Hawes in Conversation'.

⁴⁷ Young, *Colonial Desire*, 15.

parent stock in order to survive for multiple generations, and hence no new races could emerge from the hybridization of existing races.⁴⁸

Early 20th Century Anglo-Indian writers frequently compared themselves to the Anglo-Saxons arguing that they constituted a new hybrid race. The Anglo-Indian biologist Cedric Dover, who advocated pan-Eurasianism and sought to build up a sense of self-worth in mixed race peoples, attacked contemporaneous emerging eugenic theories of racial purity (which were gaining currency in Britain and inspired the NAZIs) by positing the opposite argument – hybrid vitality, that those with what we would now term greater genetic heterozygosity were in fact genetically healthier than those who were more homozygous.⁴⁹ Hybrid vitality is now widely accepted in relation to animals and closer to our modern scientific understanding of genetic health, although rarely explicitly stated in relation to humans owing to our continued discomfort with discussing science which can be connected with the artificial construct of race.

Adrian Piper has critiqued the intense reluctance of contemporary white Americans ‘educated and uneducated alike’ to contemplate ‘the probable extent of racial miscegenation’ and the likelihood that some of them unknowingly carry African and Native American ancestry.⁵⁰ Piper also notes that many ‘blacks are equally unwilling to explore their white ancestry – approximately 25 percent on average for the majority’ partly due to distaste for ‘bitter reminders of rape, disinheritance, enslavement, and

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 15-17.

⁴⁹ See C. Dover, *Half-Caste* (London, 1937) and *Know this of Race* (London, 1939).

⁵⁰ A. Piper, ‘Passing for White, Passing for Black’, in E. Ginsberg (ed.), *Passing and the Fictions of Identity*, (Durham NC, 1996), 251.

exploitation... But for others, it is the mere idea of blackness as an essentialized source of self-worth and self-affirmation that forecloses the acknowledgement of mixed ancestry.⁵¹

Piper argues that given America's long history of miscegenation, 'the longer a person's family has lived in this country, the higher the probable percentage of African ancestry that person's family is likely to have'.⁵²

The point is forcefully made in the South African case, where 'by the end of the seventeenth century there were fewer than four hundred White colonists at the Cape, and that 15-30 per cent of all marriages at the time were' mixed.⁵³ The Sociologist Graham Watson was persuaded by the argument presented by Jeffrys that 'It is fairly safe to say that where any family has been in the country for more than two hundred years, the chance of having no infusion of colour is rather remote.'⁵⁴ Van den Berghe estimated 'that anywhere from one-tenth to one-quarter of the persons classified as "White" in the Cape Province are of mixed descent, and that every "old family" from White Cape Society has genealogical connections with Coloured families.'⁵⁵ Although an all-India community, of relatively mobile individuals and families, Anglo-Indians (and Domiciled Europeans) were scattered across India and Burma in small pockets with larger concentrations in key cities. Many had been in India for several generations and so the likelihood of intermarriage, knowingly and unknowingly between families of pure European extraction and those with some admixture of Indian genes, as in South Africa, increased the

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 250.

⁵² *Ibid.*

⁵³ Watson, *Passing For White*, 18.

⁵⁴ M. Jeffrys, 'Where do Coloureds Come From?', *Drum*, Nos. 102-6 and 108, 1959., cited in *Ibid.*

⁵⁵ P. van den Berghe, *South Africa: A Study in Conflict* (Middletown, 1965), cited in Watson, *Passing For White*, 18.

probability that few of the families who had been present for more than a century would remain of entirely European ancestry.

The Census

The boundaries between Britons, Europeans, those of mixed race and Indian Christians were policed as part of the Raj's socio-racial hierarchy, but the attempt to separate and enumerate these different groups, rooted in constructions of racial difference (with cultural markers serving as proxy), was both problematic and contested. Censors had to face this problem most directly, stating in 1891 that 'the distinctions between the three races is very shadowy, and there is a tendency for Eurasians to enter the European group, and for native Christians to be returned as Eurasians.'⁵⁶ The Census provides evidence for the prevalence of racial passing, but complicates our own efforts to judge the size of the mixed race population.

In 1880 the barrister David Sutherland denounced 'East Indian',⁵⁷ as equally applicable to Hindus and Muslims, and 'Eurasian' as 'a philological monstrosity... [Encompassing] for instance, a cross between a Turk and a Naga, between a Norwegian and a Japanese', arguing instead for designating them 'Anglo-Indians, or Indo-Europeans'.⁵⁸ Sutherland attempted to blur distinctions between the English and Anglo-Indians declaring: 'all Indian towns are being gradually, if not rapidly, filled with a resident Christian population of pure

⁵⁶ *Census of India, 1891*, 178.

⁵⁷ Twenty-two 'East Indians' were returned in the provinces of the 'Andamans, Punjab, Central India and Rajputana' (only to be reclassified as 'Eurasian' for the 'Imperial Table') in the *Census of India, 1901. Volume I-A. India. Part II. -Tables*, 554.

⁵⁸ D. Sutherland, *The Grievances of the East Indian Community. A Paper to be Read before the East India Association*, pamphlet (London, 1880), 3.

English or mixed descent, who are English for the most part in their habits and sympathies though doubtless they have inherited many of the infirmities of their Asiatic parentage'.⁵⁹

Some 19th Century documents use the terms 'Eurasians', 'East Indians', 'country-borns' and 'Anglo-Indians' interchangeably.⁶⁰ As President of the 'Anglo-Indian Association' (a forerunner of 'the Association') Chambers advocated the benefits of: establishing 'Anglo-Indian Schools' in the hill stations for 'the children of Europeans and Eurasians',⁶¹ turning the railway and telegraph services (both largely manned by Anglo-Indians) 'into a *Reserve Military Service*' [author's emphasis],⁶² encouraging permanent settlement in India amongst retiring British soldiers, and recruiting 'the better class of East Indians to join the ranks of the *Local European Army*'.⁶³ In speaking of an 'Anglo-Indian race' Chambers attempted to weld together those of mixed race with 'the Indianized European population' or Domiciled Europeans emphasizing a commonality of interest between 'Poor Whites' and 'Eurasians', attacking deportation laws, and highlighting that 'many a soldier marries among East Indians, and many there are who would gladly do so if they saw the prospects of making a happy home in the country.'⁶⁴

Until 1901 the Censors used the term 'Eurasians', but despite their efforts ninety-six individuals managed to return themselves as 'Anglo-Indian' in the Punjab and

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 4.

⁶⁰ See Chambers, *Anglo-Indian Prospects in India: Read at a Meeting of the Board of Direction of the Anglo-Indian Association*, pamphlet (Calcutta, 1879), 16.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 12.

⁶² *Ibid.*, 13.

⁶³ *Ibid.*

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 12.

Rajputana.⁶⁵ They complained of unreliable figures as ‘Eurasians are prone to describe themselves as Europeans, and it seems certain that... a considerable part of the gain recorded at the present census is artificial and is due to a greater degree of success in counteracting this source of error.’⁶⁶ Censors reported ‘greater success in distinguishing between pure Europeans and persons of mixed descent in Calcutta’.⁶⁷

The term Anglo-Indians had originally referred to Britons of long residence in India, so its connotations likely appealed to Eurasians in their efforts to appropriate it to define themselves. By 1911 they had been successful in having themselves reclassified as ‘Anglo-Indians’.⁶⁸ The Censors explained that the change emanating from ‘the Government of India’ was effected because ‘Eurasian, their former designation... [was] very unpopular amongst them.’⁶⁹ Some embraced the new designation while asserting its older definition in order to bolster their denials of Indian ancestry. ‘Anglo’ was intended to reflect or assert the predominantly British paternal ancestry of this mixed race community. However, that the majority of Anglo-Indians were Catholics reminds us that their racial origins were also Irish, French and Portuguese.⁷⁰

Dr Graham who founded the St Andrew’s Colonial Homes at Kalimpong for the uplift of mixed race children lamented in 1934 that the reclassification had ‘meant robbing

⁶⁵ *Census of India, 1901. Volume I-A. India. Part II. –Tables*, 541.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 393.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

⁶⁸ *Census of India, 1911*, 131.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 140.

⁷⁰ Though Hedin has suggested that those of mixed race gravitated towards the Catholic Church as a result of its philanthropic work and ‘the more liberal attitude of the Roman Catholic orders toward people of mixed blood.’, in E. Hedin, ‘The Anglo-Indian Community’, *American Journal of Sociology*, 40, 2 (Sep., 1934), 171.

Britishers, who had served in India, of a title of which they were proud and for which no satisfactory successor seems to have been discovered'.⁷¹ Buettner argues that 'Graham accurately reflected the disparaging sense of entitlement many Britons felt *vis-à-vis* Anglo-Indians, a community widely seen as unworthy of either their privileges or their appellation.'⁷² Sir John Rees echoed similar sentiments in the Commons in 1915: 'the Eurasians... are now described as Anglo-Indians, which is exactly what nobody else calls them.'⁷³



Fig. 1: An early 20th Century Anglo-Indian Family.⁷⁴

⁷¹ Cited in Buettner, *Empire Families*, 12.

⁷² *Ibid.*

⁷³ Hansard HC Deb 19 July 1915, vol 73, cols 1275-76.

⁷⁴ Photo courtesy of Shirley Gifford-Pritchard.

Frank Anthony, the Anglo-Indian leader from 1942-1993, argued that, under the 1935 Government of India Act definition, which made its way into the constitution of independent India:

...all persons of European descent in the male line, whose parents were habitually resident in India, were and are Anglo-Indians... [Generally] 'Anglo-Indians' was, after 1911, taken to signify persons who were... mixed... Thus... a distinction was often sought to be drawn between Anglo-Indians and the so-called Domiciled Europeans... even the Association under Gidney subscribed to the designation, 'The All-India Anglo-Indian and Domiciled European Association'. A large number of its members... claimed to be of unmixed European descent, that is, Domiciled Europeans... the term 'Anglo-Indian' included all persons of European descent in the male line whether of mixed or allegedly of unmixed blood... At most there could be one generation of Domiciled Europeans... Their children were Anglo-Indians. The definition... does not postulate mixture of Euro-Asian blood but merely requires European descent in the male line...⁷⁵

In the 1940s Anthony attacked Anglo-Indian passing as 'renegadism' which deflated the size of the community, even accusing the European members of the Legislative Assembly of encouraging such defections.⁷⁶

The new designation made Anglo-Indians less insistent on returning themselves as Europeans, somewhat improving the accuracy of the Census. However, more Indian Christians and Goanese also began attempting to return themselves as Anglo-Indians. The blurred edges of the partially permeable categories Native Christian, Anglo-Indian and Domiciled European are as interesting to the historian as they were troubling to the Censors, pointing towards a socio-racial hierarchy in which the genetic accidents of complexion alongside cultural-linguistic markers still allowed for some upward social mobility across constructed racial boundaries. Mizutani's attempts to overcome these

⁷⁵ Anthony, *Britain's Betrayal in India*, 3-4.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 117.

inaccuracies by estimating that by 1911 there were ‘roughly 93,000 non-domiciled Europeans, 47,000 Domiciled Europeans and 160,000 Eurasians.’⁷⁷ Still, the problematic Census figures are worth exploring as they provide us with a rough quantitative and geographic picture of the community over time.

1901 Censors tried hard to maintain a statistical separation of ‘Europeans and Eurasians’, but usually analysed both groups together.⁷⁸ They reported a ‘very high degree of literacy amongst Europeans and Eurasians and... a lower one amongst native converts’ to Christianity.⁷⁹ Across India Europeans had increased from 168,158 in 1891 to 169,677 and ‘Eurasians’ from 80,044 to 87,030 ‘or to 89,251 if the Feringis... are included.’⁸⁰ ‘Eurasian’ populations were greatest in Madras (26,209), Bengal (20,893), and Burma (8,449), followed by ‘Mysore and the United Provinces with between 5 and 6 thousand each.’⁸¹ The Censors noted ‘the smallness of the Eurasian population in Bombay and the relatively high figures for Burma, which is a comparatively new possession, and has, until recent years contained a very small number of Europeans.’⁸² That Catholics accounted for one-fifth of Europeans was ‘perhaps in part due to the inclusion of a certain number of Eurasians’, while amongst ‘Eurasians’ themselves half were Catholic, two-fifths Anglican and the remainder mainly Methodists, Presbyterians or Baptists.⁸³

⁷⁷ Mizutani, *Meaning of White*, 72.

⁷⁸ *Census of India, 1901*, 393.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 161.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 393.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 394.

⁸² *Ibid.*

⁸³ *Ibid.*

The 1911 Censors continued to treat the returns for Europeans as ‘not altogether reliable, owing to the tendency of persons of mixed race to return themselves as pure Europeans.’⁸⁴ Although the change from ‘Eurasian’ to ‘Anglo-Indian’ provided ‘some reasons for thinking that the errors due to this cause at the recent Census were considerably less than on previous occasions’.⁸⁵ Still ‘special enquiries made in certain towns by Mr. O’Malley showed that three-tenths of the persons returned as Europeans were in reality Anglo-Indians.’⁸⁶ The Censors accepted that ‘a certain number of Anglo-Indians... still succeeded in returning themselves as Europeans’ which they again posited as a possible explanation for the ‘large proportion of European Roman Catholics’.⁸⁷

The returns for Anglo-Indians ‘excluding Feringis’ placed the population at ‘100,451, or 15 per cent. more than in 1901’ which they suggested ‘may be due partly to some Anglo-Indians having returned themselves under their new designation who would have claimed to be Europeans if Eurasian had been the only alternative, and it is also perhaps due in part to a growing tendency amongst certain classes of Indian Christians to pass themselves off as Anglo-Indians; the Punjab Superintendent accounts in this way for the greater part of the increase of 42 per cent... in his province.’ Anglo-Indian populations remained large ‘in Madras (26,000) and Bengal (20,000)’ and again the Censors opined that the ‘number of Anglo-Indians in Burma is remarkably large in view of the short time that has elapsed since it became a British possession and the strength of its European population.’⁸⁸

⁸⁴ *Census of India, 1911*, 139.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 140.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*

Anglo-Indians enjoyed ‘remarkable fecundity’ in the succeeding censuses,⁸⁹ increasing to 113,090 in 1921, 138,359 in 1931 (excluding ‘22,000 in Burma’)⁹⁰ and 140,422 in 1941.⁹¹

However, definitions remained problematic:

In 1921 an Anglo-Indian was described for census purposes as a person of mixed European and Indian descent, but for the 1931 census a slightly different definition was suggested, for use where a definition was asked for, describing an Anglo-Indian for census purposes as a person whose father, grand-father or other progenitor in the male line was an European... It is possible however that this consideration was inoperative in the case of progeny of an European or Anglo-Indian woman by an Indian Christian...⁹²

The Censors mentioned the ‘number of Indians who go abroad for their education and return with European wives.’⁹³ Boundaries with Indian Christians and the status of Luso-Indians were also raised:

...some allowance must be made in India proper for the return of Indian Christians as Anglo-Indians. It is probable that a number of the descendents of Portuguese dependants, whose practice it was to take their masters’ names and who are found in certain districts in Bombay and Bengal where they are known respectively as “East Indians” and “Feringhis,” returned themselves at this census, as in previous decades as Anglo-Indians.⁹⁴

‘East Indian’ had been favoured by 19th Century Eurasians, but the Censors appeared confused over the proliferation of terms. ‘Table 25’ from the 1871 Census attempted to distinguish between the different ‘Mixed Races of British India’:⁹⁵

⁸⁹ *Census of India, 1931*, 430.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 429.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 469 and *Census of India, 1941*, 99.

⁹² *Census of India, 1931*, 429.

⁹³ *Ibid.*

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*

⁹⁵ [Two columns in original table have been omitted, which reveal under ‘Other’ mixed race nationalities 166 in Burma and 14,279 in Bombay, and the totals for all three mixed groups], H. Waterfield, *Memorandum on the Census of British India 1871-72*, (London, 1875), 52.

Provinces	Eurasian	Indo Portuguese
Bengal	20,195	0
Assam	84	0
North - West Provinces	2,701	0
Oude	990	0
Punjab	1,559	0
Central Provinces	1,348	74
Mysore	2,920	0
Coorg	229	0
British Burma	3,562	461
Madras	26,426	0
Bombay	3,671	29,737
Total	63,685	30,272

Other mixed race groups with European paternal ancestry, including Anglo-Burmans and Luso-Indians, came under the aforementioned 1931 definition of Anglo-Indians. These groups overlapped and intermarried with Anglo-Indians. Anglo-Indian leaders appreciated adding their numerical strength to the community on paper, especially when negotiations on constitutional reform loomed. However, their inclusion remained highly contested within the community. Socially they were frequently looked down upon as interlopers. Despite Anglo-Indian leaders' attempts to suppress such sentiments they persisted beyond independence. Identities, designations and definitions remained complex, whether externally imposed or internally asserted. The Census prompted Anglo-Indians and others to play the numbers game; to redefine themselves individually and as a community.

Strategies of Racial Passing

Racial passing was a recurring individual strategy. Mizutani argues that 'the domiciled community insisted that the only way to overcome its pauperism was to make itself... 'more white', thereby allowing its members to enjoy more rights and privileges on account

of their historical connection to the British... a claim [which] naturally entailed a fundamental critique of the imperial politics of whiteness that established hierarchical differences between the non-domiciled British ruling classes and the rest of the white population in India.’⁹⁶ After the Mutiny the British sought to Europeanize the armed forces, colonial administration and the railways, through the importation of Britons. Domiciled Europeans and Anglo-Indians, ‘especially after the mid-1870s’, demanded incorporation ‘into the Europeanized portions of public service employment’ and were rebuffed ‘according to the criterion of whether or not candidates attended a suitable educational institution *in Europe*’.⁹⁷

Buettner’s work highlighted the necessity of maintaining non-Indian domicile through education at the metropole in order to secure an uncontested white status.⁹⁸ In response the ‘basic counter-strategy of the domiciled community, at least until the end of the 1910s, was to try and transform the ongoing policy of Europeanization into one that would benefit Domiciled Europeans and Eurasians.’⁹⁹ The 1919 Government of India Act marked a reversal of this policy towards Indianisation. Indianisation was not merely a transfer of elite jobs in the ICS and the armed forces from Britons to Indians, it extended down the socio-economic spectrum to the more junior non-menial railways positions (guards, stationmasters etc.) in which the domiciled were largely employed. This forced Anglo-Indian leaders to accept the state’s designation of them as ‘Statutory Natives of India’ in order to protect domiciled employment. However, the desire to be perceived and treated on equal terms with transient Britons did not disappear, and Indian status (even

⁹⁶ Mizutani, *Meaning of White*, 181-182.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 184.

⁹⁸ Buettner, *Empire Families*.

⁹⁹ Mizutani, *Meaning of White*, 184.

explained as mere nationality without cultural or racial implications) remained highly contested amongst Domiciled Europeans and Anglo-Indians.

Indian nationalists also withheld recognition of Anglo-Indians' status as Indians, as they pressed in the legislative assemblies for domiciled jobs to be Indianised. While members of the domiciled community continued to fight for the managerial positions just above the middling rungs of state and railway employment they already occupied, by the 1920s 'the claim was no longer based on the community's Europeanness but on its being one of the *minorities* of the Indian nation [author's emphasis] – an occupational minority with a century-long connection to the civil and railway services.'¹⁰⁰ After 1919 the community's leaders abandoned the collective strategy of acceptance as whites. Embracing Indian minority status formed the basis of a new collective communal strategy for economic survival and political recognition. Racial passing, however, remained a prevalent countervailing individual and familial strategy.

The Anglo-Indian Kenneth Wallace described Anglo-Indian Raj employment as governed by a policy of 'This far and no further. You may fill certain subordinate positions, but do not attempt to rise higher', extending to private employers, 'social relations' and 'the church'.¹⁰¹ But even as the number of senior positions available for transient Britons was shrinking, for the successful individual racial passing remained a materially rewarding strategy. Whatever the economic logic of the choice, successful racial passing continued to confer greater socio-racial status. Wallace recounted 'an Anglo-Indian holding a good appointment by virtue of his passing for a European' fearful that 'an old lady who knew

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 185.

¹⁰¹ *Anglo-Indian Review and Railway Union Journal*, March, 1931, 25-26.

his family in the old days' letting her tongue 'wag' too freely might have lost him his promotion or even his job.¹⁰² Wallace recounted how an Anglo-Indian in the 'A.I.R.O.' during the First World War who, when visited by his 'not very dark' mother, told his comrades that she was 'A very old and faithful ayah'.¹⁰³

Buettner's work details the length to which the transient British in India would go to place distance between themselves, their children and 'the ranks of the 'domiciled' or 'country born', who included less-affluent Europeans and Anglo-Indians alike.'¹⁰⁴ Markers like the 'chi chi' Anglo-Indian accent (with a lilting intonation) became dangerous pollutants (and proxies for racial difference) from which to protect one's children. Hence schooling in India was often ruled out. Families under financial constraints would prioritise boys' education at the metropole to ensure their employment prospects within India. Those of 'European descent were metaphorically valued at 8 annas or 15 annas' (short of the 16 annas in a rupee), referring in popular slang to an Anglo-Indian and Domiciled European background respectively.¹⁰⁵ To transient Britons the difference between the two 'amounted to the same small change',¹⁰⁶ as to be a Domiciled European was to enter a 'racially amorphous realm',¹⁰⁷ in which claims to exclusively European ancestry were so inherently suspect that it amounted to being seen in accordance with 'long-standing British biases... as racially as well as socially inferior'.¹⁰⁸ According to Arnold 'Indians as well as

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, 26.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁴ Buettner, *Empire Families*, 74.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 97.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 94.

the European ruling classes in India tended to treat Anglo-Indians and Europeans as pretty much the same social category'.¹⁰⁹

Assertions by Domiciled Europeans of a non-British yet exclusively European ancestry were particularly suspected as illustrated in *Scabby Dichson*, a 1920s fictional work, recognised by Buettner as a 'thinly disguised portrayal of the Bishop Cotton School at Simla',¹¹⁰ in which a policeman angrily states 'Dutch my grandmother!... That is an old dodge among that sort. They're always claiming outlandish ancestry – usually Spanish or Portuguese – when there's a touch of the old brush in them somewhere.'¹¹¹ The domiciled did often possess such diverse European ancestry, but transient Britons were correct in assuming that many Domiciled Europeans also had Indian ancestry.

Attempting to objectively assess the precise proportion of Domiciled Europeans who were of exclusively European ancestry, those who were of largely European ancestry and those who were simply fair skinned Anglo-Indians is an impossible task and one which involves the scholar in an almost partisan way in the replication of contemporary debates and discourses of the very people we are seeking to assess. There is a danger of being drawn either into the contemporary view that all Domiciled Europeans were simply fraudulent or mistaken in their assertions about their ancestry, or conversely into blind acceptance of those assertions.¹¹²

¹⁰⁹ Arnold, 'European Orphans and Vagrants', 106.

¹¹⁰ Buettner, *Empire Families*, 83.

¹¹¹ Referring to the common pejorative expression 'touch of the tar brush'; Cited in *Ibid.*, 84.

¹¹² See McMenemy, 'Identifying Domiciled Europeans'.

Watson's sociological study of Apartheid South Africa examined how Cape coloureds proceeded upwards along a continuum of social mobility, which towards the top end of the spectrum lead them to a choice, a 'bifurcation, one branch leading to élite status, the other to White status. Persons situated at the point of bifurcation may, if their complexion is sufficiently fair, choose to pass for White.'¹¹³ Alternatively they could choose to enter the ruling economic class at the top of the coloured group, known as the 'élite'. Social prestige sometimes trumped economic considerations. Similarly successful fairer complexioned Anglo-Indians and Domiciled Europeans could pass out of the ranks of the domiciled community through convincing an employer or agent of the state of their fictional European domicile. Braving ridicule, even darker Anglo-Indians could assert Domiciled European identity, whatever their neighbours believed. Successfully racially passing as a Domiciled Europeans required no evidence of domicile, only a complexion sufficiently white to racially pass as a tanned southern European.

As H. Simons persuasively argued 'Social mobility is much the same thing, whether it occurs between classes or between colour groups. To be accepted, the climber must adopt the habits, style of life, and attitudes of the group to which he aspires.'¹¹⁴ Anglo-Indians and Domiciled Europeans had long been acculturated within a socio-racial hierarchy embodying social and material incentive structures that rewarded racial passing as white, stigmatized Indian ancestry in those aspiring to be recognized as European, and encouraged racist views that upheld the order it had created. That Anglo-Indians had internalized racist attitudes which created internal hierarchies of colour within their own

¹¹³ Watson, *Passing for White*, 26.

¹¹⁴ 'Preface' by H. Simons in *Ibid.*, vii.

community, and in some individuals must have simultaneously encouraged self-loathing as well as the aspiration to be accepted as white, is hardly surprising.

The Raj's Socio-Racial Hierarchy: An Oral History

Roy Nissen (1905-2002) was a self-described 'Domiciled European' with a Danish paternal ancestor, who was well integrated with the Anglo-Indian community, and may have been an Anglo-Indian engaging in racial passing as he acknowledged having a 'swarthy complexion' and a 'chi chi' accent.¹¹⁵ Nissen also mentioned that his girlfriends had consisted of 'one or two [Domiciled] European girls, and most of them were Eurasian girls'.¹¹⁶ As an Accounts Officer in the Indian Railways (1924-1960) his wide-ranging testimony, provides a crucial source for reconstructing the lived experience of the domiciled community during our period. If Nissen was a Domiciled European his testimony points to a social existence for Domiciled Europeans which was almost inseparable from Anglo-Indians. If Nissen was really a fair Anglo-Indian racially passing as a Domiciled European then his experience of the commonality between the two groups may have been less representative of the experience of others who identified as Domiciled Europeans.

Nissen explained '...I was very friendly... all my friends were Anglo-Indians... most of them were Anglo-Indians...'¹¹⁷ Nissen declared that he never went to Indians' houses, but he and his family mixed freely with Anglo-Indians and frequently visited each others' homes. The interviewer asked about Nissen's parents' attitudes:

¹¹⁵ BL, Mss Eur R189, Nissen, Roy Edward King, b. 1905, interviewed in 1989 on four cassettes covering 1905-1960.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*

Interviewer: They didn't mind the fact that they were half-castes? If I can use a pejor... I mean, I... Forgive the pejorative expression... but, but, but... they didn't mind that Eurasians were... were... partially... partly coloured?

Nissen: ...No... Uh... There has always been a confusion about this business of Anglo-Indian, Eurasian and so on... As you know... That prior to the Mutiny English people who made India their homes... I am speaking of... I am speaking of 1800, 1820, and 1830... They were always referred to as Anglo-Indians... It was only after the Mutiny that this expression Eurasian came into being...¹¹⁸

Nissen described how Gidney 'objected to this term Eurasian, because by describing a person as Eurasian he lost his Anglo entity... All... Although they were descendants of Britishers... Whereas a Eurasian can be any... well... any country...'¹¹⁹ The interviewer raised 'half Portuguese, half Indian people in Goa, uh... people with names like D'Sousa...' to which Nissen replied: 'Eventually all the... every Indian Christian, especially those from Goa, they... they'd describe themselves as Eurasians...' even though they had 'Not a drop of European blood in them...'¹²⁰ Nissen recalled '...going up to school on the train... We had... we had four different classes there on the railway... First, second... Inter and third... and I remember there used to be a small little coupon which used to be pitted on top "reserved for Europeans and Eurasians"... those were the days of the Raj of course and so they were given preference...'¹²¹

Nissen also tried to join 'the empire association' which had been set up by 'some of the younger turks amongst the covenanted-wallahs' who 'objected to the speed at which India was being Indianised'; he recounted how 'in the cinema and on the stage they had a table with a big union jack on it of course... and I asked to become a member and they said no, that my economic and social interests and so on, were represented by the

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*

¹²¹ *Ibid.*

Domiciled and Anglo-Indian Association, I wasn't eligible to join...'¹²² Nissen was consistently kept at arms-length by transient Britons who he called 'covenanted-wallahs', because they came out to India on covenanted pay packages.

Facing such exclusion, Domiciled Europeans, expressed their white self-identification forcefully to Anglo-Indians, even as they continued to enjoy an overlapping social existence with them. Both domiciled groups, in collaboration with the categories of the imperial state, sought to police their own boundaries, by excluding Indian Christians, and, to varying degrees, other mixed race groups. Nissen raised interracial unions involving Indian men:

Nissen: ...I think from before the Mutiny even you never found a Eurasian girl marrying an Indian, never, very few exceptions... In fact I think there were more English women marrying Indians than there were Eurasian girls marrying Indians...

Interviewer: There can't be many English women marrying Indians until... [audible tone of amusement]

Nissen: Oh, we used to see them in India...you know... and you, you, you... you, you... you, you... they were absolutely ostracized of course by the British, by the covenanted-wallah, and you see them walking down the street with their Indian husband and they all had that hang-dog look about them, firstly they had to wear a sari, whereas the husband of course wore European rig, but she had to wear a sari, and they always had their hair tied up in a knot here at the back, and they allways had this hang... hang-dog look about them, a sad look about them...

...

Interviewer: She'd virtually become a member of the Indian class?

Nissen: Absolutely Indian in every respect... Prob... Looked so unhappy, I don't know...

Interviewer: Well that is why... one can understand then why Eurasian girls did not wish to marry Indians because they didn't want to suffer the same fate as, as a European would...

Nissen: But they had nothing in common with an Indian, and I had nothing in common with the Indian, quite frankly... nothing in common really... unfortunately,

¹²² *Ibid.*

from the news that I hear now, now in India, all of these Eurasian girls and even white girls are having to marry Bengali Baboos and Indians...¹²³

Here the interviewer inadvertently enters into the source material – firstly by understandably accepting Nissen’s assertion of an unmixed status, more significantly through his evident amusement at the suggestion that there might have been many cases of English women marrying Indian men. Later the interviewer clearly believes that Nissen regards himself as superior to Anglo-Indians, but has some difficulty in getting Nissen to say so explicitly: ‘...I don’t like to record that... heh... in case someone else should hear that... my friends...heh, heh... No, I, I must be fair... I, I... 90% of my friends eventually were Eurasians and we, we didn’t consider ourselves any, any difference between us at all really...’¹²⁴ Pressed further Nissen knowingly replied ‘I suppose a European is a European isn’t he?’ and finally admitted ‘Well we thought ourselves so... heh, heh... Of course they would never admit that we were a Domiciled European... We were fair Anglo-Indians...’¹²⁵

Nissen said 90% of his friends were Anglo-Indian and he seems to have good-humouredly tolerated their implication that he was racially passing, but a 1928 issue of the *Anglo-Indian Citizen* reported that the ‘possibility of a split between Anglo-Indian and Domiciled European has threatened before. Much feeling was aroused among Domiciled Europeans by the uncharitable gibe *Albino-Anglo-Indian* levelled at them by’ Gidney.¹²⁶ A term Gidney claimed he had ‘never ‘applied to the Domiciled European *proper*, but to that unfortunate unpigmented Anglo-Indian who takes

¹²³ *Ibid.*

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*

¹²⁶ Cited in *Anglo-Indian Review*, June, 1928, 9.

advantage to deny his birth-right and is thus able sometimes to force himself or creep into a community from which his own darker-skinned brothers and sisters are ostracised.¹²⁷

The interviewer asked Nissen whether the ‘covenant-wallahs’ would ‘bed the Eurasian girl’ after taking her out, to which Nissen replied ‘Yes, yes...’, and followed up with ‘but he wouldn’t marry her?’ to which Nissen replied ‘No, no, no...’, then the interviewer pointed out that contrastingly Nissen’s sister (who asserted a Domiciled European identity) ‘did hook a covenant-wallah...’, which Nissen assented to emphasizing ‘my brother in law was on the Indian government house list, and my sister and me used to be invited for... dinner there...’¹²⁸ Nissen’s sister, formerly a senior nurse in Karachi, evidently managed to secure an upward move within the Raj’s socio-racial hierarchy by marrying a covenanted clerk in Calcutta from the UK. Nissen described his brother-in-law as a ‘junior clerk with royal insurance’ who ‘went out covenanted there... a very nice chap when he first went there, but it wasn’t long before he had to conform... along with the rest... and I found there was a great difference between us, in fact a considerable antagonism between us, because he used to put the heavy covenanted across me, which I was never prepared to accept from anybody, we were not friends I am a afraid...’¹²⁹

Nissen also found himself increasingly estranged from his sister, by marrying up she gained access to clubs and levels of colonial society that remained wholly inaccessible to

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*

him: ‘She became very covenanted, and, of course she was a member of all the clubs there, and she was my elder sister and I did feel that she used to... but that was because of the influence of her husband... she had to conform, and she had to conform with him...’¹³⁰ Nissen told stories of his sister’s new life, such as how, at a Ball with her husband at Government House, she danced with the Governor of Bengal who passed on the news he had just received of Edward VIII’s abdication. Whatever the truth of such stories, they reveal how she wished to portray her new life to her brother, even as she increasingly decreased her levels of contact with him. As a child, Nissen and his parents had excitedly gathered in the grass just to watch from a distance, through well-lit windows, the balls taking place at a military cantonment for transient Britons – enjoying the vision of a world beyond their reach.¹³¹ Cutting off from family members who could not join in one’s ascent is an observable feature of racial passing in other contexts. As Nissen’s Domiciled European status was an assertion (though not uncontested) of whiteness there was no absolute breach. Had her brother been darker skinned and clearly mixed the rupture would likely have been absolute.

Despite agreeing to their employers’ ‘code of practice’ that (among other things) forbade them to appear in public with Anglo-Indian women, ‘covenanted’ young men would take ‘them round in their cars, along the Maidan, the park, and do a little canoodling there...’¹³² They ‘used to grab all the girls’ as ‘we were poorly paid in comparison to the covenanted-wallah, whose salary was much bigger, and he was able to afford it, and as I said the first few years they were not allowed to marry, I’m sure they had to find these girls... and of course these girls considered it a great honour to be entertained by a covenanted-wallah,

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*

¹³¹ *Ibid.*

¹³² *Ibid.*

and they wouldn't mind us coming across to their house – see them from Monday to Friday, but Saturday it was always booked up with the covenanted-wallah, who would take them out, and take them back to the chummery, and probably bring her back Sunday morning...'¹³³ Their intentions were usually far from marriage, but both Domiciled European and Anglo-Indian women hoped to achieve hypergamous marriages with transient Britons. While Nissen's sister succeeded, Anglo-Indian and darker skinned girls had little chance of achieving such a marriage, though they might be seduced into sexual encounters either in hopes of marriage or through false promises.

Except among soldiers, marrying an obviously mixed girl would have been extremely rare as it would involve immediate ostracism by peers who would describe them as having 'gone jungly'. As possible sexual partners domiciled women remained attractive to transient Britons and so as Nissen declared 'They treated the women, the girls, better than what they treated us boys...'¹³⁴ Transient British women felt accordingly threatened by Anglo-Indian women and were probably complicit in the construction of prevailing gendered stereotypes that depicted them as overly-sexual predators. Asked if he had ever dated a sister of a 'covenanted-wallah' Nissen replied 'out of the question, out of the question, good heavens', laughed and added 'something so impossible, something so unthinkable', in their eyes 'we were just muck'.¹³⁵

Nissen described how the fathers of Anglo-Indian girls who had found white boyfriends among the privates of the British army jumped at the chance to buy them out of the army and help them to find employment on the railways in exchange for a socially advantageous

¹³³ *Ibid.*

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*

marriage. The interviewer questioned why ‘the father of a Eurasian girl [was] prepared to spend quite a lot of money presumably buying a British Tommy out of the regiment?’, and Nissen responded that the father ‘went up in status’ in his own community: ‘she wasn’t very particular so long as he was white... didn’t care whether she loved him or he loved her, so long as he was white’.¹³⁶ The father might be ‘station-master’ and he would get the young man a job as ‘as a ticket-collector, guard, fire... fireman, working the cabin, something like that’.¹³⁷

In 1929 Gidney wrote to the Army Headquarters in Simla to complain of soldiers deserting young Anglo-Indian women whom they had married when they returned to England:

...many marriages... are contracted by British soldiers in India with our womenfolk without the consent of the Officer Commanding... our girls are lured into secret marriages with British soldiers to find that

- (a) Their marriages are not recognized by the Officer Commanding... and
- (b) their husbands leave India when their regiments return to England and they are stranded penniless and without a home, in many cases with one or two or more children... such conduct on the part of the British soldier is reprehensible... it tends to lower the morals of these unfortunate, misguided and beguiled women and often compels them to live lives of dishonor.

I am familiar with the rules regulating marriages in regiments but... it is wrong to give any man the right to marry and then in obedience to his duty to encourage his desertion of his wife and family... The practice has created quite a tragedy in some stations in which British troops are quartered, particularly in Bangalore, Belgaum, Poona, Allahabad, Rawalpindi, Peshawar, etc.¹³⁸

If these British servicemen knew their marriages would be subsequently disallowed, engaged in ceremonies they did not regard as legal, or judged that Indian marriage records might not preclude their ability to marry on returning to Britain, some desertions may have

¹³⁶ *Ibid.*

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*

¹³⁸ *Anglo-Indian Review* (May, 1929), 34.

been premeditated. Soldiers might also have hoped to have a marriage accepted by the Commanding Officer after the fact. Gidney perhaps omitted women who had been made promises of marriage that were not fulfilled after sexual relations, but doubtless the problem extended further than the cases on which he felt he could make the strongest possible moral case for redress to the military authorities. Gidney's allusion to 'lives of dishonour' may have extended beyond simple abandonment and illegitimate children to the possibility that some of these unfortunate women might be driven by desperation into prostitution. Clearly hypergamy as a strategy was not without its attendant risks, the willingness of young women to face such risks further highlights the benefits perceived in successful marriage to white British men of whatever social standing in ascending the socio-racial hierarchy.

A white British husband could elevate a domiciled wife if she could successfully pass as white; otherwise he faced a corresponding descent down the socio-racial hierarchy. If the 19th Century had been more tolerant of miscegenation, it had not always been to the woman's benefit, as Emily Eden, during her six years travelling in India (1836-42), recounted: an indigo planter had 'murdered his wife, a girl of sixteen... beat her to death – and, because she was half-caste, the other planters in the neighbourhood helped him to get away, and the magistrate took no notice of the murder'.¹³⁹ By the 20th Century a white man marrying an Anglo-Indian woman effectively exited his own community, but conferred great socio-racial prestige upon his wife and children within the eyes of the domiciled community.

¹³⁹ E. Eden, *Letters from India* (vol 2. London, 1872), 252-3, cited in Park and Rajan (eds.), *Postcolonial Jane Austen*, 174 .

During the Second World War the opportunities for Anglo-Indian women, many serving as nurses or in the Women's Auxiliary Corps (India) (henceforth WAC(I)), to seek relationships in the hopes of marriage with white allied servicemen greatly increased. In his interview Nissen described many heavily made up Anglo-Indian girls being photographed with American soldier boyfriends during the war, and commented on 'lots of trouble...' that ensued.¹⁴⁰ However, Americans also increased Anglo-Indians' sense of self-worth:

It was very significant... when the war started and the Americans came over there... how things changed enormously... the attitude of the American soldier, American over there, especially in Calcutta, his whole attitude towards the Domiciled European and Anglo-Indian was ever so different to that of the Englishman and I found during those four or five during the war, the Anglo-Indian girls, the Anglo-Indian men and the boys, how, they, they developed a feeling of self-confidence, because they were being treated as equals...¹⁴¹

Nissen contrasted this with how the covenanted Britons used to treat him as a Domiciled European: 'The crib on our part wasn't, as far as I was concerned anyway, it wasn't, it wasn't that I wasn't getting promotion so much, it wasn't that I wasn't getting a salary which I felt I should have been getting, what I was resenting was the superior attitude that used to be put across people like myself by the expatriates from over here [Britain]...'¹⁴²

Nissen said their 'very favourite expression' was to accuse the domiciled of having 'chips on their shoulders', and suffering 'from inferiority complexes'.¹⁴³

Mizutani notes that even philanthropic Britons thought that Anglo-Indians were a working class group laboring under the misapprehension that they were entitled to a middle class

¹⁴⁰ Mss Eur R189.

¹⁴¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁴² *Ibid.*

¹⁴³ *Ibid.*

lifestyle, encouraged to sloth through having servants.¹⁴⁴ Nissen skillfully inverted this critique, attacking ‘covenanted’ Britons for harbouring false class pretensions:

... it was they who were suffering from a superiority complex, which was born of an inferiority complex, and what I mean by that is... that, I would say 90% of these fellows who used to come out from over here, they wouldn’t acknowledge their own mothers if they went out to India... These were fellows who had come up from the working classes, who may have gone to a Grammar School, and some even not there even, at the very best recruited from the lower middle class, and they would go out to India... [coughing] excuse me... and they would be given three or four servants, a posh house to live in and so on, and they had this inflated position, social position, that they would... and they now began to make themselves believe that they were actually from the middle or upper classes from England...¹⁴⁵

Nissen described the difficulties in gaining membership of clubs in India – ‘If you wanted to join a club, on the enrolment form, your name, when were you born, where were you born, when did you first came... come to India, and if you were born in India there was little likelihood to you getting in.’¹⁴⁶

Describing Calcutta clubs during the interwar years Nissen declared there to be ‘four levels of social strata’ each with its own clubs: the top level for senior government figures, members of the ICS, judges and army officers (who looked down upon the mercantile classes as ‘box-wallahs’) went to the Bengal Club; the second tier, the ‘commercial and mercantile lot, the covenanted-wallahs’ went to the Calcutta Swimming Club, the Calcutta Football Club, and the Calcutta Saturday Club; then thirdly employees of retail and trade firms like ‘Whiteaways’, ‘army and navy stores’, ‘jute-wallahs and tea-garden-wallahs’ went to the Dalhousie Club; and at the bottom was the Rangers Club for the domiciled. Nissen clarified that the Rangers Club ‘were 90% Eurasians – Anglo-Indians, and about

¹⁴⁴ Mizutani, *The Meaning of White*.

¹⁴⁵ Mss Eur R189.

¹⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

10% Domiciled Europeans, and most Domiciled Europeans did join the Dalhousie' as Nissen himself did in 1933.¹⁴⁷

Nissen commented that 'there were very strict divisions' between the different levels of club, nonetheless after finding a sponsor he attempted to gain admission to the Calcutta Swimming Club, and was rejected in 1938. However, years later Nissen was finally admitted through the influence of his covenanted brother-in-law and helped by the fact that the Secretary of the club also had a Danish background. Asked why he had been so determined to get into a club far above his level Nissen responded that despite ill-treatment by transient Britons:

I always felt that I would want to be with British people, and with Europeans, I didn't like associating with Indians, and I always wanted to be with British people, I always felt that that was my background, my feeling... and that's the reason why I really wanted to join the Swimming Club, because it was more a social club more than a swimming club, but I, again, maybe it's my inferiority complex, I never really felt at home there, and I never really felt that I... really accepted, I just used to go there for a swim... It was only to the middle of the war, when most of the Europeans had left the Calcutta Football Club, and their numbers had depleted enormously that they condescended to accept me as a member...¹⁴⁸

Nissen recalled that his brother-in-law, on coming out to India, had made the mistake of joining the Rangers Club and, following a dressing down by his employer, resigned his membership within a week.

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

Watson's sociological model of racial passing emphasizes the importance of behaviour by the 'superordinate group', some of whom will 'seek to thwart' aspirants to upwards mobility while others will 'wittingly and unwittingly aid them' while making 'ad hoc' decisions that are in their own best interests (i.e. when in doubt, avoiding potentially embarrassing confrontations by challenging someone about their racial status).¹⁴⁹ By 'undergoing preliminary anticipatory socialization' and then limiting their interactions with the superordinate group 'segmentally and selectively, in terms of formally defined roles' initially 'face-to-face' but subsequently as they acquire more supporting documentation for the status they aspire to 'in terms of bureaucratic norms' aspirants to upwards mobility can create 'conditions in which innumerable decisions cumulatively' favour their attempts to win recognition of the new status.¹⁵⁰

Through his sister's hypergamous marriage, even with some degree of estrangement, Nissen obtained beneficial social capital that aided his attempts to join clubs which would normally have been beyond his reach. Joining the right club, was one of those segmented achievements which could cumulatively help ones ascent within the Raj's socio-racial hierarchy. Anglo-Indians could obtain other such segmented victories through the connivance of, for example, their priest – baptismal records of a child's status as Anglo-Indian or European would affect its ability to move up the socio-racial scale, so sites like the Church were arenas for asserting identities that Anglo-Indians and Domiciled Europeans hoped would eventually find broader acceptance.

¹⁴⁹ Watson, *Passing for White*, 60.

¹⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 61.

The tendency of individuals to misrepresent themselves in the Census was another facet of this quest for upwards mobility – as indeed any interaction with the imperial state could be. That Anglo-Indians were told by the Censors and by their own leaders (in order to claim the largest constituency for their activities on the community's behalf) that the returns were confidential seems not to have affected the desire to use this opportunity to assert their desired socio-racial status. Railway employers and army recruiters (under wartime pressures) might also be persuaded, to accept employees and recruits under statuses which they themselves doubted, in order to advance their own interests. The strategies that individuals deployed to assert socio-racial statuses that elevated their position within the Raj's socio-racial hierarchy, though frequently unsuccessful, were rational and understandable given the incentive structures of the social and economic systems that bounded their existence and restricted their opportunities to rise above a certain level in colonial society.

This chapter has shown how the imperial state attempted to designate and enumerate socio-racial categories through the Census. How those of mixed race origins challenged the designation Eurasian and succeeded in having it replaced with their desired appellation – Anglo-Indians. How Indian Christians, Indian Christians passing as Anglo-Indians, Anglo-Indians, Anglo-Indians passing as Domiciled Europeans or simply Europeans, Domiciled Europeans and Domiciled Europeans passing as Europeans confused, negotiated and challenged the socially constructed categories promoted by the imperial state. Individuals and community leaders used the Census to further their own agendas, with Anglo-Indian leaders seeking to claim the largest possible political constituency and individuals desiring to assert a white or European identity. Anglo-Indian leaders realised the necessity of a communal strategy that embraced Indian nationality and domicile even

whilst defending Anglo-Indian's right to a distinct socio-racial status, identity and existence. However, for individuals and families, the socio-economic incentive structures of the Raj continued to reward racial passing, and so to varying degrees this strategy continued to be deployed against the wishes of the Anglo-Indian leadership.

Despite the problematic nature of Census returns they have helped us to approximate the size and geographic distribution of Anglo-Indians. The late colonial State constituted a socio-racial hierarchy that was central to its ordering of difference and to the perceived need to preserve British racial prestige in order to safeguard British rule. We have explored some of the colourful manifestations of this hierarchy, and how in arenas such as the colonial club and through hypergamous marriages, its blurred boundaries could be contested and even occasionally overturned. The British perceived mixed race Anglo-Indians and racially suspect Domiciled Europeans (some of whom were fair Anglo-Indians engaging in racial passing) as problematic and threatening to the maintenance of a more straightforward bi-racial order of ruler and ruled. At the same time, the British recognized the practical utility of the domiciled community as a loyal buttressing adjunct to the security infrastructure of the Raj in times of war and civil unrest, and continued to deploy Domiciled Europeans and Anglo-Indians as an intermediary class between themselves and Indians in an explicitly socio-racial hierarchy of employment in strategically significant state and railway service.

Chapter II: The Social World of Anglo-India

Internal Stratification Amongst the Domiciled

Anglo-Indian leaders negotiated with a language of community not of their own making. The British constructed the notion of a collective domiciled community with varying degrees of European descent with which Anglo-Indians engaged. The Association defined the domiciled as essentially one community with common interests which some 'misguided' Domiciled Europeans failed to perceive. Gidney highlighted the fact that both groups were 'Statutory Natives of India' as being persons 'born and domiciled... in India of parents habitually resident in India and not established there for temporary purposes only'.¹⁵¹ As such both could legally compete for jobs within the public services as Indians not subject to Indianisation, though this status was contested by Indian nationalists who frequently called for jobs for Indian-Indians in the Legislative Assembly.

Anthony later emphasised that 'Anglo-Indian' as defined by the state (mentioning only European paternal descent, and omitting reference to Indian ancestry) included all Domiciled Europeans. This blurred definition (which could even extend to Britons who acquired Indian domicile) was particularly attractive to the racially mixed group, which contained members who would contextually assert various statuses before different audiences, claiming exclusive European ancestry where they felt they would be believed. To those convinced of their exclusively European ancestry it was correspondingly threatening to their status. Some with mixed race backgrounds who chose to identify as Anglo-Indians after 1911 believed the term to retain its original meaning of being British

¹⁵¹ Act of Parliament of 1870, Cited in NAI, Finance Department, Progs., Nos. 80-81 (February, 1885).

in India and not admitting any Indian ancestry. Racial passing was commonplace. To understand the internal stratification of the mixed race group it is necessary to examine the blurred boundaries between Anglo-Indians, Domiciled Europeans and transient Britons.

The British – official and unofficial – often openly doubted domiciled claims to exclusively European ancestry. Anglo-Indian leaders were aware that many fair skinned Anglo-Indians obtained more favourable terms of employment by declaring themselves to be Domiciled Europeans and denying Indian ancestry. Gidney tried to persuade those who claimed to be Domiciled Europeans to throw their lot in with Anglo-Indians and accept their status as ‘Statutory Natives of India’, arguing that the field for European employment was bound to shrink further as India moved closer to dominion status. It was observed on all sides that social mixing and education at European schools in India placed Anglo-Indians and Domiciled Europeans in close proximity, sometimes amounting to a shared social experience.

The socio-racial values of transient Britons were an important influence on the social and economic incentive structures in late colonial India, creating a context for the internal stratification amongst all groups of European ancestry, including those who self-identified as Anglo-Indians. Anglo-Indians were further stratified to a large degree internally. Wealth, skin colour, accent and deportment, dress, mode of living, education, employment, religious denomination, club membership and the extent and kind of European ancestry were all means by which Anglo-Indians could assert a privileged status and their superiority over other Anglo-Indians. Some of these socio-racial status markers appear in

Buettner's analysis,¹⁵² and as Watson's sociological model of racial passing suggests,¹⁵³ acquisition of higher value markers constituted segmented achievements which could help aspirants (to upward social mobility) achieve greater recognition of – complexion permitting – their whiteness (or at least a more solidly European status).

There was also blurring at the other end of the socio-racial spectrum where poorer Anglo-Indians overlapped with and occasionally intermarried with Indian Christians. Lieut.-General Sir George MacMunn described the merging of 'humbler' Anglo-Indians with Indian Christians in the *Anglo-Indian Review* (the monthly journal of the Association, henceforth the *Review*):

That population is a considerable one, especially in the south of India; it often adopts British names culled, it is said, from the graves in the British cemeteries, and naturally often affects European dress. Further, there is a tendency in those Anglo-Indians whose affairs have not prospered to marry and merge with this population... Miscegenation of the past has been with the men of Europe and the women of India, but now both Indians of culture and Parsees are marrying British women...¹⁵⁴

Miscegenation that inverted the usual gender pattern was raised repeatedly – for example the Howrah branch convened 'a special meeting' to obtain 'the opinion of all the members' on the question of 'the admission into the Association of children of mixed Indian and European parentage *i.e.*, children whose fathers are Indians',¹⁵⁵ and the Bengal Provincial Branch opined that 'such members are, under the present constitution, ineligible'.¹⁵⁶ Frequent complaints were made about 'cases of Indians masquerading as Anglo-Indians', one in particular relating to their presence in London and the fear that the British

¹⁵² See Buettner, *Empire Families*.

¹⁵³ See Watson, *Passing for White*.

¹⁵⁴ *Anglo-Indian Review* ('X'mas 1928'), 20.

¹⁵⁵ *Anglo-Indian Review* (February, 1929), 21.

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 20.

metropolitan understanding of the Anglo-Indian community in India would be damaged by experience of these embarrassing imposters.¹⁵⁷ Anglo-Indians jealously guarded their assertions of European ancestry as a form of social capital.

Anglo-Indians policed the boundaries at the bottom end of their own group in order to: (a) protect themselves and their image in the eyes of superordinate groups; (b) to protect their own limited economic resources (charitable scholarships and reserved employment) from Indian Christians whom they viewed as even more economically challenged than themselves; and (c) to assert their superiority over other groups (placing Indian Christians in the same racial category as their Indian servants), thereby elevating their sense of self-worth. Many Anglo-Indians' experience of Indians was largely confined to the least affluent and educated classes, such as their servants and Indian menial workers on the railways or junior clerks subordinate to themselves, facilitating their assertions of superiority over Indians.

The affectation of disdain for Indian culture and religions practised by many Anglo-Indians in the early 20th Century may have compensated Anglo-Indians for the perceived and actual socio-racial slights they received from superordinate groups (initially transient Britons, but increasingly the resentful, well-educated and affluent classes of Indian nationalists). However, assertions of socio-racial superiority by Anglo-Indians were not confined to others; they were practised within an internally stratified Anglo-Indian social world over fellow Anglo-Indians. The aforementioned markers of status within the community allowed Anglo-Indian families or individuals to claim greater degrees of Europeanness or whiteness (the two not always coinciding) than friends, neighbours and

¹⁵⁷ *Anglo-Indian Review* (March, 1929), 23.

colleagues.

Affluent and Exceptional Anglo-Indians

Poverty and unemployment were significant Anglo-Indian problems. However Anglo-Indians were socio-economically stratified. Some earned enough in government service to retire in the UK, where a few were involved with the London Anglo-Indian Association (henceforth the London Association), which the Association regarded as a useful channel of communication to the British government provided it did not act on its own initiative, as well as constituting 'a bureau affording helpful advice and information to those members of the community whom, whether it be study or pleasure, takes to England.'¹⁵⁸ Affluent Anglo-Indians who migrated to the UK before 1940 more commonly severed all ties with Anglo-India.

A small minority of Anglo-Indians at the top end of the socio-economic spectrum managed to help their children receive education (usually higher) in the UK or proceed there in order to compete in examinations for All-India public services or to enter British Army Regiments stationed in India. They were influenced by many of the same impulses that led the British parents in Buettner's work to send their children to the UK, especially boys, even though many struggled with the expense. In 1929 Dr. May Shave described how:

...the prosperous and well-educated are constantly being lost to the Community because they are ashamed to admit that they are of mixed race and determined that the odium shall not cling to their children. Secure in the knowledge that they can effect the salvation of those children they care nothing for the fate of the people from whom they have sprung... sending their children out of the country, they prefer to life [sic] in solitary splendour, lives of practical ostracism (for they are only acknowledged *officially* by their European colleagues) with the comforting thought

¹⁵⁸ *Anglo-Indian Review* (February, 1929), 2.

that there is a back-door open for their offspring, whose salvation will be effected by absorption into the European community, if not in one generation, in two or three at most...¹⁵⁹

The achievements of ‘another brilliant Anglo-Indian Charles Donald Ellicott’ were touted in the *Review* – Ellicott’s early education consisted of private tuition, at 12 he proceeded to ‘the Grammar School in Karachi’, at 16 he won a scholarship by examination funding four years of study in India; entering ‘the Dayaram Jithmal Sind College in Karachi... [Ellicott] passed the F. A. and intermediate Science Examination with 2nd Class honours. He then proceeded to Edinburgh sacrificing 2 years Scholarship’ where he obtained a ‘B.Sc. with honours in Civil Engineering’.¹⁶⁰ His qualities as ‘a good athlete’ in the fields of tennis, boxing, boating and cricket were also mentioned.¹⁶¹ Another Anglo-Indian celebrated for her academic achievements obtained her B.A. with distinction in English and Modern History at Rangoon University having been awarded the Jardine Prize, and the Piroz Shah Medal for coming first in her final university examinations.¹⁶² Scholarships provided by the Imperial government or the Association made higher education possible for a few. However, the vast majority of Anglo-Indians aspired at best to the Senior Cambridge examinations, and many would never reach this level.

Lawrence D’Souza left a will providing the means to fund a £100 annual support allowance for ‘an East Indian (Anglo-Indian) youth to be selected for this scholarship to be educated in London for the sole and special purpose of competing for the Covenanted Civil Service of India, but whose parents or guardians are not in a position to meet all the

¹⁵⁹ *Anglo-Indian Review* (March, 1929), 5.

¹⁶⁰ *Anglo-Indian Review* (February, 1929), 12.

¹⁶¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁶² *Anglo-Indian Review* (May, 1929), 17.

expenses connected with the candidate's studies in the United Kingdom.’¹⁶³ ‘Mr. Shirley Forrester B.A.’ of Katni was a successful candidate for the ‘D’Souza, I.C.S. Scholarship’ who went to University College London in 1926, passed the ICS examination in 1928 and was due to begin two years study at the University of Oxford.¹⁶⁴ There were then ‘at least 8 Anglo-Indians... in England studying for the I.C.S.’,¹⁶⁵ so clearly some Anglo-Indian families possessed the means to finance such attempts without a scholarship. Gidney instituted scholarships under his own name financed through Association member subscriptions towards higher education qualifying candidates for ‘employment in the Public Services or Scientific Professions, or Higher Industrial or Vocational Training’ for Anglo-Indians and Domiciled Europeans provided that they intended ‘to live and work in India only’,¹⁶⁶ to prevent their being used as a means for emigration.

A ‘State Scholarship Tenable in Europe by Domiciled Europeans and Eurasians’,¹⁶⁷ attracted many applicants seeking to study engineering among other subjects – one of the unsuccessful candidates in 1908 was J. Stephens whose father was described as ‘a very respectable member of the local Eurasian Community, a man of the highest character, who has rendered valuable service to Bangalore’ having ‘served for 30 years in the Madras Public Works Department and has since 1898, been employed as Engineer to the Municipal Commission, Civil and Military Station’ and whose ‘mother is English and was born in England.’¹⁶⁸ The 1908 recipient was Mr. R. Dalley (possibly a Domiciled European) who planned to study mathematics at ‘the University of Cambridge... and

¹⁶³ *Ibid.*, 8.

¹⁶⁴ *Anglo-Indian Review* (October, 1928), 6.

¹⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁶⁶ *Anglo-Indian Review* (May, 1929), 9.

¹⁶⁷ NAI, Home Department, Education Branch: scholarship papers covering 1907-1910.

¹⁶⁸ NAI, Proceedings of the Home Department, July 1908, Prog. No. 21.

ultimately to appear at the open competition for the Indian Civil Service.¹⁶⁹ The emphasis that Mr. Stephens' father was the 'right sort' of Eurasian and his mother was a transient Briton, suggest which forms of social capital were valued, and reinforce the possible advantages of racial passing.



Fig. 1: A well-to-do Anglo-Indian family early in the 20th Century.¹⁷⁰

A few Anglo-Indians could afford to emulate transient Britons by visiting the UK. For example Mr. Peiera, president of the Simla Branch of the Association went to London in 1930 accompanied by his wife 'to qualify for higher employment'.¹⁷¹

¹⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, Prog. No. 20.

¹⁷⁰ Photo courtesy of Shirley Gifford-Pritchard.

¹⁷¹ *Anglo-Indian Review* (May, 1930), 11.

‘European’ Schools

Many ‘European Schools’ had been founded by individuals and religious authorities, sometimes with colonial state backing, more often through charitable donations, in response to the perceived ‘Eurasian Question’ and poverty amongst the domiciled more generally.¹⁷² The prescription was educational uplift, and the institutions established in the late 19th and early 20th centuries catered to the entire socio-economic spectrum of the domiciled community, from asylums for orphans and those designated (with or without parental consent) as effectively ‘abandoned’, to railway schools (which in smaller stations might include only a few years of primary education), to elite colonial schools (loosely modelled on English public schools) such as the La Martiniere Schools, the Bishop Cotton schools and St. Joseph’s College, Darjeeling. Buettner highlights British parents’ reluctance to send their children to even the more respectable of these schools if they could afford to send their children (particularly the boys) to England.

Some of the elite schools (usually hill station boarding schools) had not been intended for mixed race children, but found that ‘attempting to limit or exclude Anglo-Indians or charge excessive fees rendered it even more difficult to guarantee financial solvency and survival.’¹⁷³ In their aim to attract British students and reassure parents that there were no or few obviously mixed children these schools faced analogous pressures to those of ‘buffer schools’ in apartheid South Africa.¹⁷⁴ Watson explored the complexities of those who existed on the socially constructed racial boundary between white and non-white and argued that a principal of a ‘buffer school’, which was a place to bestow such ‘borderline’ cases of whiteness (usually ‘pass whites’) while the authorities selectively averted their

¹⁷² See Mizutani, *Meaning of White*, Chapter 4, ‘European Schools’.

¹⁷³ Buettner, *Empire Families*, 79-80.

¹⁷⁴ Watson, *Passing for White*, 114.

official gaze, had to perform a difficult balancing act as ‘He cannot maintain enrolment without recruiting marginally White children who endanger the schools’ officially White status, and he cannot safeguard White status without sacrificing enrolment.’¹⁷⁵ Nissen recounted experiencing physical and other cruelty at one of his early schools which was run by American missionaries before his father had been able to afford to send him to Bishop Cottons, Simla (est. 1859) by saving a meagre travelling allowance he was able to add to his railway salary through deliberately being away from home most nights of the week.¹⁷⁶

Anglo-Indian leaders argued that this ‘European education’ encouraged alienation from India and things Indian by imparting the socio-racial values, colour and cultural prejudices of European teachers (though some European educationalists concerned with Anglo-Indian problems strongly dissented from this view), and that in its emphasis on highly academic subjects like European history and Latin that it insufficiently prepared Anglo-Indian boys for employment in manual jobs, trades and industry. A typical critique of the inappropriateness of an education delivered by Europeans and geared towards examinations set in Cambridge (the Cambridge Junior and Senior examinations) with no reference to the Indian setting (apart from the option of studying Urdu, which few among the domiciled apparently chose to do) went as follows:

...the education system which has been imposed on him has taught him to despise his Indian heritage... Great stress is laid on an English public school atmosphere. European masters are imported as largely as possible. Latin and French are taught

¹⁷⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁷⁶ Mss Eur R189.

in preference to the vernacular. English history runs from the top to the bottom of the school curriculum, while until recently Indian history found no place in it.¹⁷⁷

European education very clearly set Anglo-Indians apart from Indians, though very gradually the miniscule number of Indians attending European schools in the 1920s would rise to become a more significant proportion by the time of independence. The emphasis on the Cambridge examinations made direct comparisons between Anglo-Indians and Indians competing for jobs problematic (probably not to Anglo-Indians' disadvantage). Anglo-Indian leaders in political negotiations in the 1930s made grandiose claims about the value of their Senior Cambridge qualifications, not infrequently equating them to Indian University degrees. Nissen, who like most of the domiciled community did not have a degree, declared that 'the advantage was that we, we had what you would call an English education, we were fluent in English and... and so we were able to do the job... and we had all the baboos under us, they were graduates of Calcutta University...'¹⁷⁸

Nissen acknowledged that educated Indians felt a resentment to less qualified Anglo-Indian and Domiciled European superiors similar to that he felt towards the 'covenanted-wallahs' but stated 'I just felt that we could do the job better than them... the fact that they were graduates, that didn't mean anything at all... I mean a bachelor of arts from Calcutta University, heh, with respect... We considered our Senior Cambridge far superior to that...'¹⁷⁹ Although Nissen said he 'had MAs working under me', he claimed most lacked degrees having taken only matriculation examinations,

¹⁷⁷ *Anglo-Indian Review* (August, 1928), 2-3.

¹⁷⁸ Mss Eur R189.

¹⁷⁹ *Ibid.*

and the railway would employ those who came in the first (of three) divisions.¹⁸⁰ Nissen put forward his view that ‘in between matriculation and bachelor of arts there was a I.A., Intermediate Arts’ which he felt ‘were about equal to our Senior Cambridge’.¹⁸¹ Like the imperial state Nissen held British qualifications in higher esteem than those of Indian universities declaring that ‘the London matric was a little superior to Senior Cambridge, but I think we, we, Senior Cambridge were about A Level...’¹⁸² Whatever level he thought Senior Cambridge to equate to at an Indian University Nissen still believed he had better quality qualifications.

However, European schools had decided advantages: Anglo-Indians were revealed in the Census to be consistently amongst the most literate communities in India;¹⁸³ their common curricula and examinations greatly facilitated the mobility of Anglo-Indian families (whose employment frequently demanded that they relocate); and they provided alongside other institutions such as the ubiquitous ‘railway institute’ focal points for Anglo-Indian culture. Dorothy McGill who worked with her sister Alison in the offices of the railway in Bombay during the early 20th Century recalled that ‘The railway institute was the centre of fun for all of us.’¹⁸⁴ Owing to such institutions Anglo-Indians possessed a common basis of understanding and a shared experience across great distances which helped them to function as a community, however ‘reluctant’ some might be to define the nature of their common identity,¹⁸⁵ and to constitute the most widely spread community in India. Towards the end of British rule Anglo-Indian teachers became more prominent in

¹⁸⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁸¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁸² *Ibid.*

¹⁸³ For example the *Census of India, 1901* referring to Bengal stated ‘The statistics of education by caste show that practically the whole Eurasian community can read and write.’, 168.

¹⁸⁴ Cited in G. Moore, *The Anglo-Indian Vision* (Melbourne, 1986), 75.

¹⁸⁵ See D’cruz ‘Christopher Hawes in Conversation’.

European schools and hence the education of their own youth.

An Anglo-Indian Culture?

Articulation of grievances and calls for redress by and on behalf of the mixed race population in India (arguably constituting a form of political consciousness) date far back into the 19th Century; certainly there were at that time those who regarded themselves as part of a common class with common interests. With the achievement of being redesignated Anglo-Indians in 1911 came a new phase in community formation and self-identification. Divisions remained, and there were classes of Anglo-Indians (who identified themselves as such as well as those that did not) who chose to play little or no part in the communal organisations, social and political, that were forging a new Anglo-India. Hawes has argued that Anglo-Indians were always at most a ‘reluctant community’.¹⁸⁶ The forces which were not disengaged from Anglo-Indian political and cultural debates but took an active role in opposing the vision of the community put forward by Gidney and the Association were often found contesting the ground of language and identity as well as that of communal interest.

Even if Anglo-Indian communal identity was ‘reluctant’, it will be shown that a common cultural language of customs, beliefs and practices existed, which trumped the existence of class and geographic differentiation. Within India we can identify certain sub-cultures of particular socio-economic or geographically bounded portions of the Anglo-Indian community, each with their own distinctive features – the Railway Colony Anglo-Indians, the Calcutta Anglo-Indians, other urban Anglo-Indians, the Anglo-Indians of Burma and the least significant numerically, Anglo-Indians who lived in relative isolation in small

¹⁸⁶ *Ibid.*

village stations, in rural areas or areas of jungle (generally owing to employment by the Forestry or Telegraph Departments or private plantations and businesses). The resident colonizers of McCluskiegunge again had their own distinct experience, having come from one of the preceding groups before being induced to become settlers of the land.



Fig 2: An Anglo-Indian family in remote Denkanicota in 1930. The father had been sent to the small village as a Ranger in the Forestry Department, his father had been an Inspector in the Salt Department and his grandfather an officer in the Madras Army Ordinance Department from Scotland. The mother's mother was Dutch. Observe the tiger skin – Gidney was not alone in priding himself on his skills as a Shikari; advertisements for guns and descriptions of hunting featured prominently in the *Review*. The European looking toys also reveal how the family wanted to present themselves. Hockey was a common game in Anglo-Indian schools.¹⁸⁷

Employees of the railways, Telegraphs, Posts and Forestry Departments had to be highly mobile. Larger railway centres constituted city life to some extent as in Jubbulpore,

¹⁸⁷ Photo courtesy of Tessa Osman (née McBride), sitting to the left in the foreground.

smaller stations gave an experience closer to that of other isolated non-railway Anglo-Indians as in Nainpur:

a back-water of the B. N. Railway... on the Branch line, and what is more the narrow guage of the Railway... generally neglected by the outside world... it took the Travelling Secretary four years to hear of us... and after a couple of disappointments, Mr. Atkinson... addressed a meeting in the Railway Institute... attendance was disappointing, but it was due to the heavy working on the Section, which meant half the men in the station were out... However, to a small gathering the Travelling Secretary delivered his message and it was decided to form a Branch...¹⁸⁸

Despite internal differences, it appears both plausible and likely from the historical evidence that an Anglo-Indian of one class, education, mode of employment and place of residence would recognise another of entirely dissimilar life experience and that both would speak a common language of mutual understanding that placed them within a single though not necessarily bounded social world. Both would likely share common features of upbringing which set them apart from the other communities in British India. Certainly this would apply in the wide middle of Anglo-Indian communal life in between the more fluid boundaries that resulted in losses to the community through racial passing and assertion of exclusively European parentage and identity at the top end of the social spectrum and the strata facing accretions from below through infiltration of Indian Christians and others.

¹⁸⁸ *Anglo-Indian Review* (July, 1929), 39.



Fig. 3: Best friends: two Anglo-Indian young women in Clarks Town, Nagpur in the 1940s.¹⁸⁹

Women as Conduits of Culture

Women played a critical role as conduits of the Anglo-Indian cultural package. At the start of our period most Anglo-Indian women probably did not undertake paid employment, or at least did not do so after marriage, and so they had a more significant role than men in shaping the domestic sphere. Many families in railway colonies were dependent on a single male wage earner, as Memoranda submitted to the Royal Commission on Labour in 1929 by Association branches on behalf of railwaymen indicate. At the same time they complained of the lack of opportunity for Anglo-Indian nurses owing to one railway's practice of hiring more expensive non-domiciled European nurses in one of their hospitals:

¹⁸⁹ Photo courtesy of Shirley Gifford-Pritchard.

A nursing staff is provided at only one centre, Ajmer, and here “the community” finds the conditions unsatisfactory, in that practically the whole of the nursing staff appointments are held by nurses of the Lady Minto Association... we respectfully submit that qualified nurses of Indian and Anglo-Indian and Domiciled European communities should be employed in the Hospital. We maintain that the Community can provide a nursing staff equally qualified and competent... [at] a considerable saving to the Railway... and in view of the antipathy of Indian women towards treatment by male doctors we suggest that lady doctors be appointed...¹⁹⁰

The Anglo-Indian Memorandum to the Secretary of State Lord Birkenhead in 1925 petitioned for Anglo-Indian women to be admitted into the Queen Alexandra Military Nursing Service which was similarly composed of imported British women.¹⁹¹ Nissen recalled that his sister (like Nissen self-identifying, but perhaps passing as Domiciled European), a nurse and a sanitarium matron whom he felt was ‘infinitely more qualified than a good many of’ the Queen Alexander nurses, was ‘treated as dirt in comparis... by, by these Queen Alexander nurses’.¹⁹² Nissen felt that social discrimination and sensitivity to domiciled markers such as the ‘chi chi accent’ was more acute among British women than men, and that ‘the women were worse than the men’ in expressing their disdain.¹⁹³ He gave the example of one British woman: ‘she told this Indian shopkeeper “I’ll come back again after you’ve finished with this Eurasian woman over here” and just simply stamped out of the... out of the room, we had quite a lot of that I think...’¹⁹⁴

Anglo-Indian women were more likely to work if they lived in major cities than in remoter areas. In addition to nursing, Anglo-Indian women were prominent in teaching, music and dance. As the Century progressed they were more likely to work following marriage and became more prominent in nursing, teaching and secretarial work. Buettner has argued

¹⁹⁰ *Anglo-Indian Review* (December, 1929), 30-31.

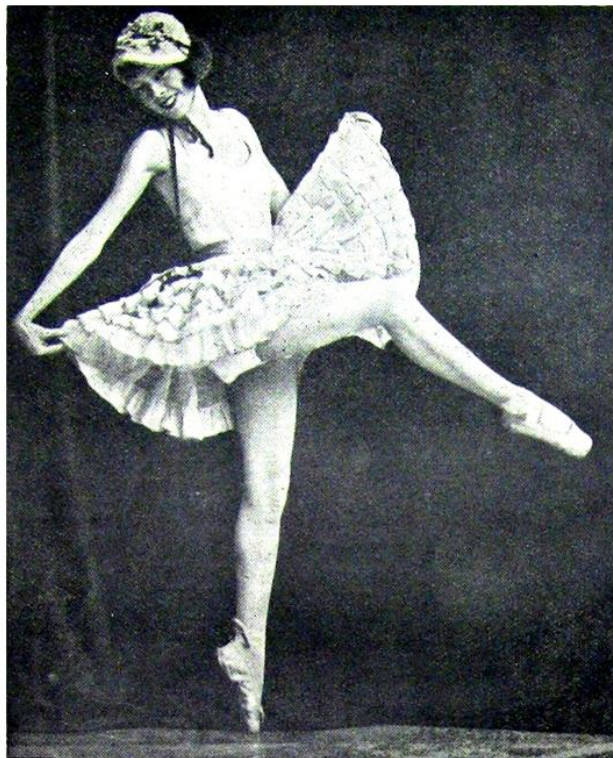
¹⁹¹ BL, Mss Eur D/925, ‘Memorandum relative to the Deputation of the Anglo-Indian and Domiciled Community of India and Burma to the Rt. Hon. The Secretary of State for India, 30 July 1925.’

¹⁹² Mss Eur R189.

¹⁹³ *Ibid.*

¹⁹⁴ *Ibid.*

that by the 1930s ‘While paid work outside the home for unmarried middle-class women had slowly shed some of its stigma in Britain... British women in India’ were likely to avoid ‘teaching, nursing, working in... department stores, and as typists and receptionists’ as otherwise they ‘faced inclusion within the category of the racially mixed – in effect judged by the company they kept.’¹⁹⁵



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Fig. 4: Advertisement appearing in the *Review*, 1929.¹⁹⁶ Calcutta’s ‘schools of dancing were run almost exclusively by Eurasians’.¹⁹⁷ ‘Teaching ballet posed... [a] risk’ to British girls of being classed with Anglo-Indians.¹⁹⁸

Caplan’s anthropological work suggests that after independence Anglo-Indian women increasingly played the crucial economic role of sustaining the community as young men

¹⁹⁵ Buettner, *Empire Families*, 103.

¹⁹⁶ *Anglo-Indian Review* (December, 1929), vi.

¹⁹⁷ R. Godden, *A Time to Dance, No Time to Weep* (New York, 1987), 86, cited in Buettner, *Empire Families*, 104.

¹⁹⁸ Buettner, *Empire Families*, 103.

struggled to find good employment.¹⁹⁹ During the interwar years Anglo-Indian women were elected to prominent positions in Association branches across India often in response to targeted appeals to women from the head office. Others notched up impressive academic and professional achievements. The 1922 returns for Eurasians in the Punjab States included: Miss G. M. Friend Pereira M.D., ‘Lady Doctor to Her Highness the Maharani Sahiba and Ranis and in charge Female Hospital’ on Rs. 425 p.m. and ‘House and carriage Free’; Miss Angelina Thomas, Head Mistress local Girls School on Rs. 90 p.m., and Miss J. Reid, Head Mistress Girls School on Rs. 50 p.m.²⁰⁰ In the *Review* a Miss Winnie Rowland (who had previously obtained an I.Sc. Degree from Lady Hardinge Medical College, New Delhi) was congratulated on having just obtained her B.Sc. (Hons.) in Biology from University College London, and her sister as ‘doing brilliantly’ in her third year course for the London M.B. B.S.²⁰¹ Miss Daphne Speechly was praised for obtaining her B.Sc. from Calcutta University at 19, having held two Rs. 20 p.m. scholarships.²⁰²

The Association was alive to the crucial role women could play in creating engagement between itself and Anglo-Indian populations scattered across India – increasing membership and sustaining interest in communal affairs from the home and through the social arena. At the 1929 AGM of the Allahabad branch the President made this appeal: ‘Ladies – I appeal to you, Mothers of Anglo-India, to help the Secretary to get in the monthly subscriptions without having to run after them... I beseech of you, Ladies join the Association yourselves and by your example get every male member of the Community to

¹⁹⁹ L. Caplan, *Children of Colonialism: Anglo-Indians in a Postcolonial World* (New York, 2001).

²⁰⁰ NAI, Punjab State Agency, General Branch, 1922.

²⁰¹ *Anglo-Indian Review* (August, 1932), 9.

²⁰² *Ibid.*, 10.

join.²⁰³ The Association's Travelling Secretary, Mr. Atkinson, toured India, encouraging the establishment of 'Ladies Committees' to organise social events that would increase membership, participation and raise funds for the Association's work.

In the same year (1929) 'Miss Parkinson was unanimously elected to the office of President' of the Rawal Pindi branch.²⁰⁴ Her two Vice-Presidents and three out of four of the Secretaries of the branch were men, with 'Mrs Creighton' being elected as Social Secretary 'and to be in charge of the lady members', and only three out of sixteen members elected to the Committee being women.²⁰⁵ The Association at this time had only two women on the central governing body, one of whom, Mrs. Ellen West of Calcutta, later replaced colony founder E. T. Mcluskie, as the Member of the Legislative Council of Bengal representing Anglo-Indians until her death almost a decade later in 1938.²⁰⁶

Servants

Anglo-Indians aspired to a privileged European lifestyle. They asserted their right to a higher standard of living than the average Indian and saw this as a practical necessity in order to maintain what they perceived to be a European mode of life. The Ajmer Provincial Branch asserted: 'We submit that the wages given to "the Community" [*sic*] cannot be disassociated from its standard of living. They are absolutely inseparable.'²⁰⁷ Anglo-Indians started in a position of relative privilege to Indians seeking jobs on the railways – they were paid significantly more than Indians, and under the pressures of retrenchment with increasing Indianisation, the railways were not prepared to raise the

²⁰³ *Anglo-Indian Review* (September, 1929), 30.

²⁰⁴ *Anglo-Indian Review* (January, 1930), 27.

²⁰⁵ *Ibid.*

²⁰⁶ *Anglo-Indian Review* (March, 1938), 6.

²⁰⁷ *Anglo-Indian Review* (December, 1929), 31.

wages of all incoming Indian employees to the Anglo-Indian level. There was thus downward pressure on Anglo-Indian wages even as superior grades of railway employment were theoretically opening up to Anglo-Indians for the first time. For those seeking to enter Railway employment the position was looking increasingly dire.

As a member of the Royal Commission on Labour, Gidney asked several questions of an Anglo-Indian Retired Station Master and of an Anglo-Indian Driver who accepted that 'the Anglo-Indian community' was greatly 'in the hands of the money-lenders', but attributed this to their 'low rates of pay' rather than 'extravagance in living', and asserted that no 'Anglo-Indian lad living alone' could afford to live on less than 'Rs. 70 a month' and even on this wage 'he cannot feed himself too well'.²⁰⁸ Gidney consequently suggested that 'Rs. 33 p.m., would be a starvation wage for an Anglo-Indian lad'.²⁰⁹ In the Bombay branch's Memorandum to the Commission regarding their employees on the Great Indian Peninsular (G.I.P.) Railway it was insisted that a minimum wage for Anglo-Indians 'should be at least Rs. 75 p.m. in up country stations. In Bombay, however, we would recommend a minimum wage of Rs. 100' p.m.²¹⁰ They provided the following table of costs:²¹¹

²⁰⁸ *Anglo-Indian Review* (December, 1929), 34-35.

²⁰⁹ *Ibid.*

²¹⁰ Cited in *Ibid.*, 44.

²¹¹ Cited in *Ibid.*, 45. Formatting and punctuation modified.

[Item of Expenditure]	Rs.	As.	P.
* Food per month	45	0	0
Clothes of all kinds	12	0	0
Dhoby ²¹²	3	0	0
Sweeper	2	0	0
Soaps etc.	5	0	0
Boots etc.	2	0	0
Railway deductions ²¹³	10	0	0
House rent	10	0	0
Servants	10	0	0
Water	1	0	0
Total Rs.	100	0	0
[Breakdown of the Costs for Food]	Rs.	As.	P.
*Chota Hazree – one cup of tea and 2 slices of bread and butter	0	4	0
Breakfast – one plate of curry & rice [<i>sic</i>]	0	8	0
Afternoon tea and bread and butter	0	4	0
Dinner curry and rice	0	8	0
Total p.d.	1	8	0

Particularly striking is the assumption that an absolute minimum wage for Anglo-Indian employees should include (in addition to the dhoby and sweeper) an expenditure on servants that equals that for rent. Interestingly, the food cost breakdown reveals that half of the meals are European in character ('bread and butter') and the other half Indian ('curry and rice'), but the Indian meals are the more substantial and account for twice the cost.

²¹² Launderer.

²¹³ Payments to a compulsory Provident fund for railway employees.



Fig. 5: Two Anglo-Indian sisters with their Ayah in the 1940s.²¹⁴

Mizutani asserts that the British thought part of the problem of the domiciled poor was their misapprehension of their working class status, their aversion to manual labour, want of economy and demand for a lifestyle that included servants in order to emulate transient Britons who were their only model for the whiteness and Europeaness to which they aspired (in the absence of any notion of a white working class population that lived very differently back in Britain).²¹⁵ The British noted that even the poorest Anglo-Indians, at whom most of their charitable and other attention was directed, were in the habit of employing servants. A headmaster of an institution to alleviate Anglo-Indian poverty through education and ‘betterment’ of Anglo-Indian children lamented ‘Anglo-India

²¹⁴ Photo courtesy of Shirley Gifford-Pritchard.

²¹⁵ See Mizutani, *Meaning of White*, 162.

demands the servants... Just here is the secret explanation of the whole matter.’²¹⁶ As Mizutani argues the ‘British were convinced that the domiciled became impoverished because they had no notion of thrift even in the midst of dire financial crises.’²¹⁷ Representing this mentality Nissen recounted that his starting salary was Rs. 75 per month, and he felt himself ‘very poor’ although still considered it essential to employ a bearer:

...I was very poor, I, I remember, when I was an audit probationer, only getting about 75 rupees, that’s about 5 and a half pounds a month, 5 and a half pounds a month, you will say things were very cheap, they were not that cheap I can assure you, there were times when I used to go hungry

...

when I used to see a dining car, all the people there, I’d be envious, I had my old conar-box it was, ah, wooden box with wire meshed on either side, and I had my grub there, my tin of condensed milk, mould, green mildew on top, stayed at one of these small little wayside, little stations, just one little room, the stationmaster wayside village, and my servant would – I had my own bearer, and he would set up two bricks at the back of the stationmaster’s room, office...²¹⁸

The interviewer queried ‘Though poor you had your own bearer?’²¹⁹ Discovering that the bearer was not paid by the railway but by Nissen himself he asked ‘Why couldn’t you do without a bearer?’, to which Nissen replied ‘Where would I get my grub from?’ and said that when he ‘arrived in England in 1960’ he could not even make a cup of tea.²²⁰ Nissen described how his ‘servant used to go out in the field and buy a chicken and then there was no coal... collect the... collect the cowpats, the cowpats, and that was the fuel...’²²¹

²¹⁶ J. Smith, ‘Correct Education for Anglo-Indians and Eurasians in India’, *St Andrew’s Colonial Homes Magazine*, January (1902), 7, cited in *Ibid.*, 162-3.

²¹⁷ Mizutani, *Meaning of White*, 162.

²¹⁸ Mss Eur R189.

²¹⁹ *Ibid.*

²²⁰ *Ibid.*

²²¹ *Ibid.*

Yet Nissen was not workshy – ‘I’d wake up at five o’clock in the morning and go on the railway platform under the water pipe before the coolies got there and have a bath...’²²²

Nissen’s starting position as an audit probationer involved moving almost continuously from station to station auditing the accounts. He would be given one to three days at most stations depending on the level of traffic passing through the station, would return to his headquarters every Saturday and set off again the following day. This hardly accords with British views of Anglo-Indian ‘vanity and indolence’.²²³

Food

Anglo-Indians developed their own distinctive cuisine, which could be characterised as either Anglicised Indian food or Indianised English food. Anglo-Indians in the home were punctilious in adhering to European table manners – sitting at a dinner table and eating with knives and forks. Anglo-Indian mothers perceived this as a marker of cultural superiority and were anxious to avoid their children eating with their hands. Anglo-Indians frequently ate lamb and beef, particularly emphasising their consumption of what was British or perceived by them to be so. However, they often erroneously believed dishes to be of European origin, for example ‘cutlets’, which in Britain meant particular cuts of meat and amongst Anglo-Indians spiced, breaded and fried mince-meat.

Imported foodstuffs of whatever quality were prized. An elderly Anglo-Indian lady and former military nurse, born in 1912, recalled what she ate as a child:

...we used to have a little rice and curry, and after that we had to have, definitely had to have a milk and egg pudding, either we had a burnt custard or we had a... a plain

²²² *Ibid.*

²²³ Mizutani, *Meaning of White*, 162.

custard, or we had custard with fruit with it, or something like that... that we had for lunch... for dinner we had soup... tea – we used to have either biscuits or we would have some cheese sandwiches or ham sandwiches or something like... and jam or something... then for, for breakfast we used to have fried eggs with either ham or bacon or whatever it is... and, um, toast with butter and marmalade...²²⁴

She believed that foodstuffs like marmalade, ‘IXL jam’ and ‘Polsons butter’ came from England. Polsons butter was then the most widely known brand of butter in India, having been set up by the Parsi, Pestonji Dalal, whose nickname ‘Polly’, he ‘adapted into the British sounding Polson’s’ in order to successfully launch a coffee business that became popular with the British in India, followed by a butter business that allegedly owed its quick capture of vast market share to contacts Dalal had made in the Army and Railways to which he became the main supplier.²²⁵ The fact that the brand name was intended to sound English helps to explain the context in which Anglo-Indians eagerly bought goods with European names, imported or otherwise. IXL, whose adverts featured regularly in the *Review*, was actually Australian.

²²⁴ Interview conducted by the author in Jubbulpore, 2010.

²²⁵ V. Doctor, 2007, ‘How Amul became Utterly Butterly Delicious and Salty’, *The Economic Times* [online], available at http://articles.economictimes.indiatimes.com/2007-07-21/news/27671277_1_butter-milk-dairy-operations

IXL

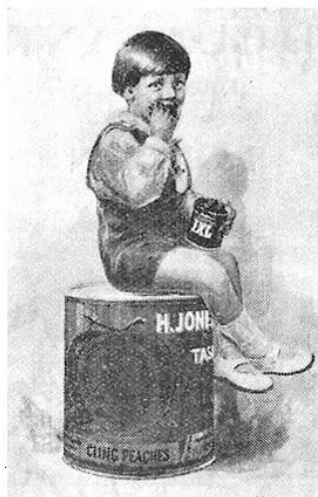
FRESH FRUIT JAMS ARE THE BEST IN THE WORLD

I X L
FRESH
FRUIT
J A M

VARIETIES

APPLE
APRICOT
BLACKBERRY
BLACKCURRANT
MELON & GINGER
LOGANBERRY
GREENGAGE
PLUM
FIG

PURE—FRESH
FRUITY



I X L
SUPER
QUALITY
J A M

VARIETIES

CHERRY
MARMALADE
RED CURRANT
MELON & LEMON
MELON & PINEAPPLE
QUINCE JELLY
STRAWBERRY
RASPBERRY
PEACH

REPUTATION BUILT ON
QUALITY

ALWAYS IN DEMAND—STOCKED BY ALL GROCERS

Fig. 6: IXL advertisement featured in the 'X'mas 1931' edition of the *Review*.²²⁶

Clearly white and very European looking children and adults were frequently deployed in adverts that appeared in the *Review*, which is perhaps understandable as the market for such goods included transient Britons and Anglo-Indians themselves formed but one part of the target audience for such advertisements. However illustrations presumably commissioned for the *Review* mirrored this depiction of 'whiteness' and both should be considered as contributing to and reflecting Anglo-Indian feelings on the subject of race and skin pigmentation and their connection to culture and identity.

A writer of numerous Anglo-Indian cookery books, Bridget White, describes Anglo-Indian food as 'neither too bland nor too spicy with a distinctive flavour of its own' having been

²²⁶ *Anglo-Indian Review* ('X'mas', 1931), 40.

the product of evolution ‘over many years as a result of reinventing and reinterpreting the old quintessentially western cuisine by assimilating and amalgamating ingredients and cooking techniques from all over the Indian subcontinent.’²²⁷ Anglo-Indian food differed between the north and the south and White confesses to more experience with the latter having grown up in Kolar Gold Fields and Bangalore.²²⁸ Examples of more English-sounding dishes include: ‘Cheesy Baked Cauliflower’ (including a teaspoon of ‘pepper powder’), ‘Cabbage and Sausage Casserole’ (with a teaspoon of ‘chili powder’) and a lamb roast with two teaspoons of pepper, two red chillies, two cloves and two pieces of cinnamon.²²⁹ On the other end of the culinary spectrum, ‘pish-pash’ was a dhal based soup often including bits of chicken which was used to nurse invalids back to health and in addition to a whole host of distinctive and distinctively named dishes such as ‘Dak Bungalow Curry’,²³⁰ and ‘Portuguese Devil Curry’,²³¹ was ‘pepper water’, a kind of Anglo-Indian masala-style mix of many different spices made into a soup that could be used to flavour many other dishes that might otherwise appear rather European. Desserts were more typically English. Tinned fruits and custards featured prominently alongside cakes and stodgy puddings.

²²⁷ B. White, *Flavours of the Past* (Bangalore, 2006), 3.

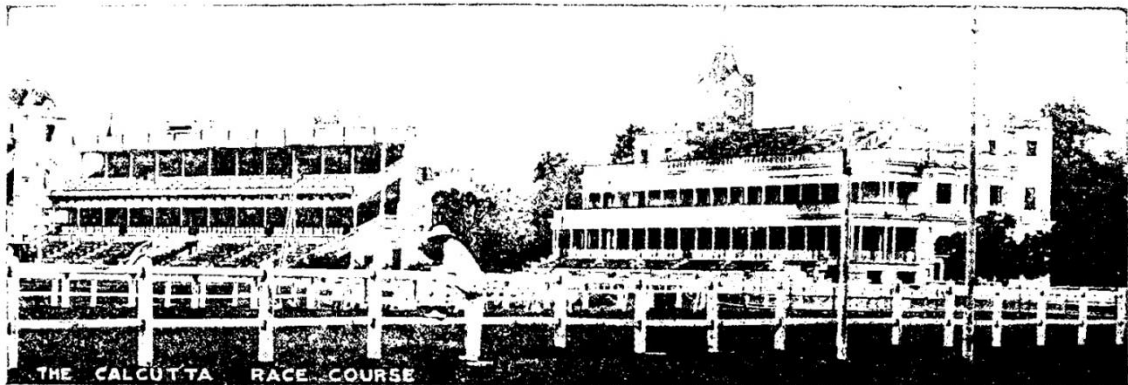
²²⁸ ---, *Anglo-Indian Delicacies: Vintage and Contemporary Cuisine from Colonial India* (Bangalore, 2007), 3.

²²⁹ ---, *A Collection of Anglo-Indian Roasts, Casseroles and Bakes* (Bangalore, 2005).

²³⁰ ---, *Flavours*, 4.

²³¹ ---, *Delicacies*, 4.

DURING
THE XMAS HOLIDAYS
DON'T MOPE IN THE MOFUSSIL!
COME TO GAY CALCUTTA.



PRINCIPAL ATTRACTIONS

<i>RACES</i>	<i>CRICKET</i>	<i>POLO</i>
<i>THEATRES</i>	<i>CIRCUSES</i>	<i>BIOSCOPIES</i>
<i>TALKIES</i>	<i>DANCES</i>	<i>PANTOMIME</i>

AMUSEMENTS FOR ALL

**CHEAP RETURN FARES
OVER
THE EAST INDIAN RAILWAY.**

Free brochure of Xmas Concessions on application to the
Publicity Officer, E. I. Railway House, Calcutta.

Fig 7: Advertisement for holiday deals by rail for the 'Poojas' and Christmas appeared frequently in the *Review* suggesting typical Anglo-Indian urban diversions listed above, scenic or historical sites to visit within India, places to go hunting and highlighting the attractions of the sea and the hill stations.²³²

²³² *Anglo-Indian Review* (December, 1929), i.

Distinctions were made between celebratory meals and everyday fare. Apart from prominent holidays like Christmas there were amongst the Catholic majority of Anglo-Indians feast days from the Christian calendar which were not usually celebrated in England. A December issue of the *Review* including recipes for ‘Christmas Plum Pudding’ with a ‘wine sauce’, a ‘Christmas Cake’ with ‘white icing’, ‘Prunes Al’Indienne’, and ‘Laitances Aux Ceufs’ [sic].²³³ A brief recipe for Roast Turkey was followed by a longer article entitled ‘When there is no Turkey’ with consoling instructions for preparing the ‘dinner of dinners for the Christmas feast... a Crown Roast of Pork... [which] if accompanied by mashed and browned potatoes and a spicy apple sauce... [would render the attractions of] all the turkeys in the world... unnoticed.’²³⁴ As an Anglo-Indian take on roast pork with apple sauce the recipe included ‘paprika’ and cooks were instructed to ‘season [the stuffing] rather highly with pepper and salt’.²³⁵ Better food and more effort to cook and purchase European foodstuffs seem to have accompanied such special occasions.

In some cases a distinction was made for the Sunday meal and poorer Anglo-Indian families who could not afford European products during the rest of the week would have them on a Sunday. Going to Church on Sunday often involved getting dressed up smartly: as an Anglo-Indian nun in her nineties living in Jubbulpore recalls: ‘our shoes had to be shining, our socks had to be in order, and we, we had nice dresses, and, so and... yes I think we had to wear hats, we had to wear hats, so each of us had our own’.²³⁶

²³³ *Ibid.*, 57.

²³⁴ *Ibid.*, 56.

²³⁵ *Ibid.*

²³⁶ Interview conducted by the author, Jubbulpore, 2010.



Fig 8: An Anglo-Indian wedding.²³⁷

Social Events

Events organised by Association branches across India were designed to encourage participation and attract new members and thus reflected Anglo-Indian popular tastes including music, comic-dramatic performances, dances, drinking and social gambling. A Grand Concert and Dance organised in 1928 by the Moghalsarai branch at their local ‘European Railway Institute’ featured operatic singing, showtunes, and dancing ‘Chorus Girls... [wearing] red bodices attached to white skirts, with two red bands... White shoes and flesh coloured stockings’ and ‘men... [wearing] red handkerchiefs on the head, red cuffed shirts, with large red bows and broad red kamarbunds [*sic*] ...white trousers and black shoes...’²³⁸ The organisers had sent large posters ‘to all the Stations & Institutes Up and Down the line, and outside station people came from far and wide... many paid willingly for standing accommodation.’²³⁹

There was a ‘well patronised’ bar and the evening was concluded by opening ‘two bottles of champagne’ and singing ‘God save the king.’²⁴⁰ Excepting a notably Catholic song entitled ‘When you played the organ and I said the Rosary’ such an event would not have

²³⁷ Photo courtesy of Shirley Gifford-Pritchard.

²³⁸ *Anglo-Indian Review* (October, 1928), 24.

²³⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

appeared out of place in a Church Hall in England, or indeed anywhere in what James Belich has termed the ‘Anglo-world’. Moghalsarai was a significant railway hub near the Himalayas, but was not a major city, and Anglo-Indian railway workers were hardly a wealthy portion of the community.

Mixed race people, in multiple social and historical settings have been defined as problematic and confused, they have often been blamed for their lack of authenticity whether they have sought to emulate one side of their ancestral heritage, the other or even both. The British perspective on Anglo-Indians was often one of racially and socially charged disdain, even those who worked for the uplift of the community through charitable works such as Dr Graham made remarks that Buettner has characterised as ‘disparaging’.²⁴¹ Anglo-Indians were blamed for their own problems, if not their own existence, and their supposed genetic or environmental degeneration. The Colonial Archive reflects the official British understanding that Anglo-Indians were a problem to be solved – an embarrassing threat to British racial prestige, a poor community reliant on government and private philanthropy, one seemingly incapable of self-help, thrift and modest living in accordance with their limited means and prospects. Of course the British had sought to determine the uppermost boundaries of Anglo-Indian prospects – attempts at racial passing were, in this sense, transgressive acts of resistance as well as calculated strategies of self-betterment.

The Raj’s socio-racial hierarchy and its employment structures were created by and for the

²⁴¹ Buettner, *Empire Families*, 12.

British. British policy vacillated between a desire to render invisible the continuation of miscegenation and the presence of racially mixed people in India as well as the poor whites with whom they were thought to associate (i.e. ‘those who might otherwise tarnish the image and self-perception of the British as a mentally and physically superior people’²⁴²) and a more pragmatic recognition of the utility they could serve as loyal subordinate intermediary servants of the imperial state. Britons in India attempted to police the boundaries of colour and class which limited the economic rise of Anglo-Indians and Domiciled Europeans, the successful few who overcame such obstacles (with or without resort to racial passing) highlighted the fact that there was nothing lacking in the innate abilities of Anglo-Indians. Still the problems within the domiciled community, of poverty, of imprudent spending habits, of unemployment and underemployment were no mere invention. There was considerable and widespread poverty. However, the concerns of colonial administrators and private philanthropists shaped the Colonial Archive towards an almost exclusive focus on the issue of poverty, and as this provides much of the available source material for scholars on the domiciled community that almost exclusive emphasis has been reinforced in the emerging academic literature.

The exceptional scholarship of Hawes and more recently Mizutani has tended to emphasise the British preoccupation with Anglo-Indian poverty and uplift. While these are highly useful arenas for academic research this chapter has attempted to paint a more multifaceted picture of Anglo-Indians and Anglo-Indian life – revealing them to be a socially stratified community, with a rich, complex and varied social existence, but one which contained enough commonality for Anglo-Indians to function as an effective all-India community with a shared package of cultural traits and practices.

²⁴² W. Ernst, *Mad Tales from the Raj: the European Insane in British India, 1800-1858* (London, 1991), 166.

We have seen that at all levels Anglo-Indians expressed their agency, and attempted to pursue meaningful lives on their own terms. Anglo-Indians clung to European traditions which they felt that they had naturally inherited from their parents and grandparents. Anglo-Indians rejected the notion held by many Britons, and some Indians, that they had wrongfully appropriated such customs in pathetic emulation of transient Britons. Some Anglo-Indians were successful in life and when they did not exit from the community entirely through racial passing they were held up as examples to emulate in the Association's monthly publication the *Review*. Other Anglo-Indians, gainfully employed and of middling means, achieved a lifestyle which would have surprised most Britons. We have seen how Anglo-Indians sought to present that life and their identities through their family portraits.

Anglo-Indians experienced a variety of lifestyles depending on where they lived – in urban centres, in small railway colonies, or in remote postings. In all of these contexts they attempted to forge a domesticity and social environment that replicated familiar features of Anglo-Indian life – the insistence on servants (so objectionable to the British), European sartorial choices (even if they might be out of date), the hybridised cuisine (which they sometimes thought to be more English than it was), the social gatherings at dances, railway institutes and clubs (with entertainments that would sometimes not have been out of place in Europe), and Christian rites of passage such as marriage (which in many cases took place within a Catholic setting, but which further connected them to their European heritage). This Anglo-Indian social existence was what was felt to be at stake as fears grew amongst the community about their future in India if the British were to further devolve power to Indians and (many refused to contemplate) actually leave the

subcontinent. There has unfortunately not been space to explore the richness of Anglo-Indian social life in great depth, areas such as sport, hunting, travel, alcohol consumption, gambling, music, dance and cinema-going, could be dealt with at length (on the basis of the source material which has been uncovered) in future research. Even a limited snapshot of Anglo-Indian social life is however useful to us as we proceed to explore the political, social and economic problems which were unfortunately all too real for the community.

Chapter III: The Economic Position of Anglo-Indians

This chapter will explore Anglo-Indian employment, unemployment and economic life. Anglo-Indians were generally placed in an intermediate position between imported British superiors, Domiciled Europeans (who tended to reach higher grades of employment), and Indian subordinates in state and railway employment. We will address the Anglo-Indian position within the Raj's socio-racial employment hierarchy, which came to be threatened by retrenchment and Indianisation following the 1919 Government of India Act.

The Trajectory of Anglo-Indian Economic Life

The question of Anglo-Indians' economic position in India was the primary concern of early philanthropic and later political efforts to uplift and protect the community through successive phases of tumultuous change. Anglo-Indians were generally considered to be a poor community. The title of Hawes' work *Poor Relations*,²⁴³ is illustrative of the prism through which the early history of the community was seen by the British. Anglo-Indian writers and political leaders looked back towards a prior golden age when the sons of soldiers and officers in the Company's armies had naturally followed in the footsteps of their fathers. Ballhatchet argues that 'for the greater part of the eighteenth century Eurasians youths with influential fathers became civil servants or officers in the Company's armies.'²⁴⁴ A few were sent to England for education. Daughters could be eligible brides for younger Company officers. However, even in this era most Eurasians were far from prosperous. In 1791 they were barred from service to the Company in all

²⁴³ Hawes, *Poor Relations*.

²⁴⁴ Ballhatchet, *Race, Sex and Class*, 97.

but the lowest positions (such as regimental musicians) for reasons of fear that they might multiply into a vast class that could threaten the Company's rule or in order that they might not deprive the Company of additional patronage in the form of posts that could be granted to those in England looking for favours for their sons.²⁴⁵ The 'exclusion did not apply generally to those already appointed, although one marine officer not long in the service asked to be allowed to remain and was refused.'²⁴⁶ Local recruitment of Eurasians as clerks continued and there were a few exceptions to the general prohibition on their employment in the Company's civil, military and marine services.²⁴⁷ Thus began a long period of comparative hardship for Eurasians, in which they would be looked on as a pitiable group, a potential embarrassment, deserving of charity. Eventually such charity was forthcoming to some degree through the increasing establishment of educational institutions and orphanages to cater for their needs.

With their loyalty and potential utility illustrated during the Mutiny their employment situation began to improve. The construction of the railways in particular gave Anglo-Indians a significant economic niche. Anglo-Indians helped to expand the railway networks, possessing as they generally did an endurance for the climate, a better than average standard of literacy in English, a ready and willing aptitude for low-level mechanical skills, and a willingness to be mobile and to be deployed to remote outposts. The importance of the railways to the life of the community from the beginnings of construction all the way through to independence was immense; Gidney's Association was at times referred to as a glorified railway union, and its monthly journal the *Anglo-Indian Review* was published for several years under the name the *Anglo-Indian Review and*

²⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

²⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

Railway Union Journal. In the railways, telegraph department and the customs service Anglo-Indians could fill middling positions which were of key significance to the maintenance of British rule. Anglo-Indians were placed in a position of relative privilege above Indian menial workers and below Domiciled Europeans and British born superiors. This position was made explicit in pay scales that discriminated, more or less openly, between the three groups.

Anglo-Indian fortunes rose with the construction of the railways in the second half of the 19th Century and their employment reached its pinnacle during the demands of the First World War. Following the war and the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms introduced in the 1919 Government of India Act Anglo-Indians began to face a return to widespread unemployment and underemployment, a decline in wages, and the pressure of Indianisation of government services and the railways at the expense of Anglo-Indian youth who were due to enter the workforce. The inter-war years were also a time of general retrenchment, owing to the Great Depression. The rapidity of their economic decline was seen relative to the prior period of relative security, inducing shock and alarm. Indianisation created fears of displacement and even economic extinction for the community, galvanising political efforts to form effective political representation to plead the case for protection of their employment.

Statutory safeguards were achieved by Gidney in a Lords amendment to the 1935 Government of India Act and Anglo-Indian politicians worked zealously across India to ensure the implementation of specific statistical reservations of railway and government jobs for Anglo-Indians. The Second World War brought another period of relative economic opportunity and widely available wartime employment. Anthony perceived the

danger that this reprieve could induce complacency, and seeing the writing on the wall after the Cripps Mission's proposals, warned Anglo-Indians to use this opportunity to save for the future instead of continuing to live for today in the false belief that the good times would keep on rolling at the war's conclusion.

The Origins of Anglo-Indian Employment

19th Century Eurasians complained to the Board of Directors and to Parliament about the economic and legal handicaps they had been placed under by the Company. A writer in the *Calcutta Review* argued that 'up to about 1835' clerks in 'various Government and mercantile offices' were 'almost exclusively... Eurasians' until Government and Missionary schools provided the English language education to allow Indians to compete with Eurasians, consequently they no longer 'occupied the favourable position with regard to service in the great departments of State in India which they occupied before 1790.'²⁴⁸

In 1829 John W. Ricketts, a Deputy Registrar of the Board of Customs in Calcutta, was chosen by his fellow members on a committee of prominent Eurasians to represent the population calling themselves East Indians in order to petition Parliament with legal and economic grievances for redress.²⁴⁹ The committee raised 'Rs. 12,677-5-6' to cover the cost of Ricketts 'journey and residence in England'.²⁵⁰ Edwards documents that a 'small section of the Eurasian community, choosing for themselves the name of Indo-Britons as distinguished from East Indians, headed by Mr. Charles Reed and J. L. Heatly, the former gentleman of considerable ability and possessed of a genius for litigation, opposed the action of the East Indian Committee, and did their best to invalidate and render abortive

²⁴⁸ T. Edwards, 'Art. VI. - The Eurasian Movement of 1829-30.', *Calcutta Review*, 76: 151 (1883: Jan.), 104.

²⁴⁹ Ballhatchet, *Race, Sex and Class*, 97.

²⁵⁰ Edwards, 'The Eurasian Movement', 105.

what had already been effected', but were unsuccessful.²⁵¹ Such factional infighting within the community was not uncharacteristic of later Anglo-Indian politics.

The emphasis of the Ricketts petition was legal and economic, it explained the nature and origins of the community declaring 'that, although thus closely allied to the European and Native races, they are excluded from almost all those advantages which each respectively enjoys, and are subject to peculiar grievances from which both are exempt.'²⁵² After objecting to their anomalous legal position which denied them the protection of English law, habeas corpus, and any civil law under which to conduct marriages, and exposed them to the vicissitudes of 'Mahomedan criminal law' while travelling in 'the interior', the petition complained of their exclusion 'from all superior and covenanted offices in the Civil and Military services, and from all sworn offices in the Marine service' and from 'subordinate employments in the Judicial, Revenue and Police Departments'.²⁵³

An 1879 article by 'P K' spoke of an 'Anglo-Indian race', stating that its membership was 'a question which must be decided on economic, not ethnic grounds.' The use of the term Anglo-Indian and its advocated definition were a foretaste of later Anglo-Indian political rhetoric:

It matters little whether this large number of people be of pure European, or of mixed descent... Of course there are great divergencies [sic] between... men of this class. There is the rich Anglo-Indian, and the poor Anglo-Indian. There is the man of some culture; there is the almost totally uneducated... What makes Anglo-Indians one class... [is their] demand for a higher income than is enjoyed by a native of the same rank...²⁵⁴

²⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 106.

²⁵² *Ibid.*, 108.

²⁵³ *Ibid.*, 109-110.

²⁵⁴ P K, 'Art. XI. The Anglo-Indian Question.', *Calcutta Review*, 69:138 (1879: Oct.), 382-4.

P K noted that a ‘young Anglo-Indian gets into Government employment, as a rule at present, on a smaller salary than formerly, and takes a much longer time to rise to a position of comfort, not to speak of affluence.’²⁵⁵ Alternatives to government employment were already being sought and P K declared that ‘the Anglo-Indian Society believes itself to have found [an answer] in the extensive employment of Anglo-Indians in trade, in commerce, in manufactures.’²⁵⁶ Plans by the ‘Calcutta Association’ for ‘trade and skilled labour’ such as ‘boot-making, carpentering and other branches of labour performed by artizans at home’ were mooted along with a proposal by ‘Archdeacon Baly’ taking up ‘such trades as papering... for which occupations, in his opinion, Anglo-Indians have a special capacity.’²⁵⁷ P K assessed the merits of these proposals and argued that the crux of the problem was that the Anglo-Indian could never hope to compete with Indian labour while maintaining a higher standard of living – the domiciled ‘could, with proper training, turn out in the same time a boot superior to that produced by the *mochee* of our bazaar. But then he will demand a higher price for it.’²⁵⁸

P K was equally pessimistic about agriculture where ‘the produce would be brought to market at a dearer rate than that at which the produce of the neighbouring Hindu cultivator would be sold. Improved methods of cultivation would be counterbalanced by more expensive habits of living, and even these improved methods would... [eventually] be adopted by the native.’²⁵⁹ Commerce was also ruled out, as ‘commerce needs capital, and capital is the very thing which Anglo-Indians more than any other class want.’²⁶⁰ The

²⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 385.

²⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

²⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 385-6.

²⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 386-7.

²⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 387.

possibilities that P K explored were largely those that continued to be raised in the Twentieth Century – agricultural colonization was later attempted with more optimism about the prospects for scientific agriculture. The point which P K expressed more succinctly than most of the later analysis was how were Anglo-Indians to compete with Indians in the same areas of employment while maintaining a higher standard of living. On a level playing field this was an insoluble problem. The economic crunch that P K anticipated was however deferred as Anglo-Indians became heavily employed by the rapidly expanding railways over the next three decades.

In this employment they were given scales of pay above those of Indian subordinates (initially largely manual labourers, but soon including skilled and clerical staff) and below those of Domiciled Europeans and imported Britons/Europeans. The reasons that the British were prepared to price Anglo-Indians in this intermediate bracket might initially have been connected with their greater willingness to be mobile and perform technical work and their literacy in English. Willingness to undertake this level of work in the railways may have been initially lacking amongst Indians who possessed a good command of English. However, British willingness to pay Anglo-Indians what might be argued to be an above market rate was undoubtedly connected with the perception of their security value in such roles. Pockets of urban poverty and unemployment amongst Anglo-Indians persisted, but the problem for the community as a whole was in effect postponed.

A turn of the Century Case Study: Eurasians in the South

Edgar Thurston (1855-1935), a British Anthropologist, Superintendent of the Government Museum in Madras and author of the seven volumes of *Castes and Tribes of Southern India*, wrote on the *Eurasians of Madras and Malabar*. Thurston's interest in

anthropometrics and evident racial attitudes did not prevent him from conscientiously and meticulously collecting empirical data on southern Eurasians. The Census Commissioner Mr. H. Stuart was quoted as saying ‘there is only one Eurasian in every 1,337 of the population of the Madras Presidency, and it is more probable that a considerable proportion of those returned as Eurasians are in reality pure Natives who have embraced the Christian religion, taken an English or Portuguese name, and adopted the European dress and mode of living.’²⁶¹ Thurston added that ‘it has been pointed out to me that (as newspaper advertisements testify) many ladies will employ a Native ayah rather than a Eurasian nurse, and that some employers will take Eurasian clerks into their service, but not Native Christians.’²⁶²

Stuart had also said that Eurasians were mostly urban, ‘the majority of them are clerks, and in ‘the matter of education, or at least elementary education, they are more advanced than any other class of the community, and compare favourably with the population of any country in the world.’²⁶³ Thurston’s own Madras sample of 130, included many other occupations such as 33 fitters, alongside railwaymen, smiths, bakers, boarding-housekeepers, carpenters, evangelists, mechanics, painters, reporters, sadlers, schoolmasters, and stereotypers.²⁶⁴ Thurston’s Calicut sample of 96 Eurasians earned ‘a modest livelihood, ranging from Rs. 35 to Rs. 12 per mensem’ working as bandsmen, compistors, police constables, bootmakers, copyists, weavers, and petition-writers etc.²⁶⁵ 39 were tailors, tailoring being ‘therefore, to the poor Eurasian of Calicut what “fitting” is

²⁶¹ E. Thurston, *Madras Government Museum: Bulletin, Vol. II, No. 2.: Anthropology: Eurasians of Madras and Malabar; Notes on Tattooing; Malagasy-Nias-Dravidians; Toda Petition* (Madras, 1898), 73.

²⁶² *Ibid.*, 74.

²⁶³ *Ibid.*, 73-74.

²⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 74-75.

²⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 98.

to those of Madras.²⁶⁶ Railway, technical and mechanical jobs were common, there are many professions which are absent from other sources, either reflecting a north-south divergence in employment or Anglo-Indian politicians' tendency to overemphasise their reliance on state and railway employment.

Thurston discussed the causes of Eurasian poverty, blaming early marriage for 'a plethora of children, brought up in poverty'.²⁶⁷ Of one hundred married males Thurston found that 74 had been 'married at the average age of 22-23', noting that in only three cases amongst the 74 were there no children, with one couple having had 10 children.²⁶⁸ Thurston waxed Malthusian on 'the number of mouths to be fed... and, whether the rent be paid or no, clothes must of necessity be forthcoming – no mere dhoti, langūti, or sari, but clothes of European device...'²⁶⁹ Claiming that Eurasians were often forced from Government service under 'Rule 39... that "it is undesirable that a man, who is in a chronic and hopeless condition of indebtedness, should be retained...'", citing the past five years of Insolvency Court cases:²⁷⁰

Year.		Number of petitions filed by Eurasians.	Number of petitions filed during the year.	Eurasian percentage.
1893	.. ..	45	233	19
1894	.. ..	55	255	21
1895	.. ..	35	237	14
1896	.. ..	51	268	19
1897	.. ..	53	297	18
	Total	239	1290	18

²⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 75-6.

²⁶⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 76.

²⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 76-77.

Thurston argued that the percentage of Eurasians was ‘certainly very high’ measured against Europeans and the ‘overwhelming majority of the Native community.’²⁷¹ Questions of indebtedness, usury, rent prices and improvident living, were all repeatedly raised by philanthropists addressing ‘the Eurasian problem’.

Anglo-Indian Employment

In 1900 W. Forbes-Mitchell penned *The Gospel of Regeneration of the Anglo-Indian and Eurasian Poor* declaring that ‘the Eurasian class has been ignored and neglected till we are now face to face with such a mass of pauperism that it is both a scandal and a disgrace to our Christianity.’²⁷² Forbes-Mitchell advocated technical and industrial training schemes under charitable auspices to alleviate poverty and unemployment amongst ‘Poor Whites and Eurasians’²⁷³, and efforts to overturn prejudices ‘that mechanical labour is degrading and derogatory’.²⁷⁴ Such notions had been imbibed from both Hindu ‘caste prejudices’²⁷⁵ and European notions of class so that many ‘Anglo-Indian and Eurasian youths... who have passed most difficult college examinations, [were] eager to get work as clerks, &c., on paltry salaries of from 10 to 20 rupees per month— many of these even working for months for nothing, waiting for a chance to be taken on pay, whereas a good blacksmith or fitter cannot be got for less than 40 to 60 rupees per month.’²⁷⁶

Buettner highlights the origins of European schooling in India in fears that an underclass of the poor and the idle of European descent would socio-racially discredit British rule in

²⁷¹ *Ibid.*

²⁷² W. Forbes-Mitchell, *The Gospel of Regeneration of the Anglo-Indian and Eurasian Poor* (Calcutta, 1900), 51.

²⁷³ *Ibid.*, 13.

²⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 33.

²⁷⁵ *Ibid.*

²⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 32-33.

Indian eyes.²⁷⁷ The cost of Anglo-Indian education was a major factor in their higher cost of living. In drawing up a memorandum advocating the creation of a special police reserve composed of Europeans and Eurasians Stevenson-Moore informally interviewed headmasters at European and Anglo-Indian schools on the expected wages and prospects of their students. The headmasters made the following suggestions about terms and salaries sufficient to attract their students:²⁷⁸

School	Expected Earnings	Suggested Salary and Terms
La Martiniere, Calcutta	'Rs. 50 a month' for 'boys who rise to the higher forms'	Room, board and 'pocket money' during training, 'Rs. 50 rising afterwards', assured employment after five year recruitment
La Martiniere, Lucknow	'Very ordinary boys can get Rs. 75 rising to Rs. 100 in one year in the mills of Cawnpore'	'Expenditure on salary would have to be very heavy'
St. Xavier's College, Calcutta	'Boys can get employment in the trades on Rs. 50 to Rs. 75 a month and rise in five years to Rs. 100 or Rs. 150'	'The police would not prove attractive', mentioned trying 'orphanages or free schools' but doubted these could supply the desired 'class of men'
St. Joseph's College, Darjeeling	'Rs. 150 a month'	Educated 'a better class of boys than is contemplated'

Interestingly, well-educated domiciled boys were being attracted by lucrative technical jobs in the private sector. Most Anglo-Indian politicians were advocating this kind of employment for Anglo-Indian youths while arguing that communal employment remained overwhelmingly reliant on railways and Government. Stevenson-Moore noted that:

...the extension of railways and industrial developments which have occurred within recent years have greatly enlarged the avenues of employment for the Anglo-Indian community and... I am of the opinion that the supply of Eurasians which it is sought to tap is limited and they are not likely to be attracted to police service unless they

²⁷⁷ Buettner, *Empire Families*, 76-77.

²⁷⁸ Table constructed from quotations and information in NAI, Political Department, Political Branch (Confidential), 1908. File Number 42, Serial Numbers 1-4., Stevenson-Moore 'Proposal for the Enrolment of Special Police Reserve Composed Mainly of Europeans and Eurasians', Calcutta, 16.

receive in addition to board and lodging to Rs. 20 a month while under training, Rs. 25 when efficient, rising to Rs. 40 within five years and a fairly definite assurance of employment on discharge. This is a low estimate...²⁷⁹

Mr. Dring, Agent of the East Indian Railway, informed Stevenson-Moore that ticket collectors started on Rs. 35 rising to Rs. 65 (rising incrementally as they passed five examinations), that ‘Gunner Guards get from Rs. 50 to Rs. 100 and the Traffic Manager adds that he does not think reliable, decently educated Eurasians can be got for much less than Rs. 60 with prospects.’²⁸⁰ Figures for the ‘subordinate’ posts of the East Indian Railway in 1935 reveal the extent of domiciled railway employment:²⁸¹

Department	Total number of employees	Anglo-Indians & Domiciled Europeans	Percentage
Headquarters and Divisional staff; (Clerks, typists, etc.)	6266	130	2.07%
Operating Department:			
Transportation Branch	5987	744	12.42%
Power Branch	2680	871	32.50%
Commercial Branch	3698	254	6.87%
Rolling Stock	772	63	8.16%
Ferry	1	1	
Civil Engineering	538	167	31.04%
Mechanical Department	1282	388	30.27%
Electrical Department	152	67	44.08%
Stores Department	189	44	23.28%
Colliery Department	243	14	5.76%
Medical Department	250	28	11.20%
Watch & Ward Department	188	17	9.04%
TOTAL	22246	2788*	12.50%

NOTE:— * This total includes, for some unknown reason, 337 Europeans of non-Asiatic domicile, mainly ex-British soldiers and covenanted employees.

²⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 17.

²⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 16-17.

²⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 9.

The domiciled were also prominent in the Telegraph and Posts Department (particularly in the formerly separate Telegraphs section as Telegraphists, Wireless Operators, Engineers and Supervisors of Engineering, Telephones, Electrical and Wireless services. Few were in the Posts section other than Postmasters), and the Customs Preventative Service (of which they accounted for 'about 70%' in 1935,²⁸² in major ports such as Bombay and Calcutta). The Indian Subordinate Medical Department (ISMD, which dropped 'Subordinate' to become the IMD under pressure from Anglo-Indian leaders) was set up exclusively for the community to supply Military Assistant Surgeons for the army at a lower cost (in salaries and privileges) than the Royal Army Medical Corps (RAMC) or the Indian Medical Service (IMS). The Queen Alexandra's Imperial Military Nursing Service (QAIMNS) provided nurses sent out from Britain for British Military Hospitals, but domiciled women alongside an initially smaller number of Indian Christian women saw to the bulk of India's needs. In other departments such as the Salt Department and the Forestry Department and also in provincial government services there were a sprinkling of Anglo-Indian employees.

Indianisation and the Socio-racial Hierarchy of Raj Employment

Following the introduction of the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms, Indianisation became a major issue for Anglo-Indians. The most significant danger was of their being overlooked entirely in the pressure from Indians in the Legislatures to be given access to an increasing share of government employment. An almost as worrying problem was that (notwithstanding Government pronouncements of Anglo-Indians' legal status as 'statutory natives of India'²⁸³) Indian nationalists refused to recognise Anglo-Indians, let alone Domiciled Europeans, as Indians in any meaningful sense. Indian Legislative Assembly

²⁸² *Anglo-Indian Review* (July, 1935), 13.

²⁸³ Indian Councils Act of 1870, 33 Vic. Chapter III.

members such as Mr. Hassan (arguing for increased Muslim employment on the railways) and Mr. S. C. Mitra (on behalf of Hindus), called for Anglo-Indian jobs to go to ‘pure-blooded Indians’.²⁸⁴

Anglo-Indians were employed in positions of relative inferiority below British and European superiors and of relative superiority above Indian subordinates and labourers. From the Indian standpoint it was easy to perceive Anglo-Indians as a privileged class of lackeys and the offspring of their British paymasters occupying lucrative jobs from which Indian subordinates had been effectively barred. The elaborate gradations of employment, remuneration and conditions of service in government departments and the railways often masked a *de facto* discriminatory socio-racial hierarchy of employment of which Indians were seldom oblivious. It was always possible for explanations to be given as to why those coming from Britain needed to be attracted to come out to India on much higher ‘covenanted’ wages than those recruited in India. Higher costs of living as a European in India and the need for those of non-Asiatic domicile to have fares for periodic leave back in Europe were most often cited as legitimate reasons for paying Europeans more.

The justification for employing British born young men directly into positions of authority on the railway was often that they possessed specific mechanical skills representing the latest best practice from Britain, this was no doubt the case during the construction of the railways and the early phase of their operation – such men would have transferred tacit knowledge and skills to Anglo-Indian workers and apprentices. It probably remained the case for a significant number of those hired in Britain for jobs on the Indian railway, but

²⁸⁴ *Volume IIC, Minutes of Evidence, Joint Committee on Indian Constitutional Reform* (London, 1934), 1952.

Nissen claimed that many of these young men had no prior experience and came out to India starting in positions of authority and higher rates of pay than experienced Anglo-Indian and Domiciled European subordinates.²⁸⁵ Hutchins has argued that structures ‘such as railways served larger social ends; their staffing... had social implications... as India became more technologically complex and professionally specialised, ever more experts were needed to fill the jobs thus created... “Helping India” became a vested interest, a form of outdoor relief for the middle classes. The difficulties produced by an influx of Englishmen into lower and lower echelons of the society were frequently pointed out, but inexorable logic that there was always room for one more nephew continued to prevail.’²⁸⁶ ‘Marginal people with small prospects elsewhere’,²⁸⁷ from England, being given higher appointments and remuneration provided a continuing source of grievance to the domiciled.

Though reflective of the racial ideologies of the Raj employers may genuinely have believed: that European employees were worth their higher salaries; that those maintaining a European lifestyle in India (at various levels) be they European or Anglo-Indian required certain minimum wages which reflected their higher cost of living; and that on grounds of economy Indians (of the social classes and castes prepared to undertake menial and low level employment) could and did manage to live on far lower wages in the lifestyle to which they were ordinarily accustomed. Before 1919 this was seldom obfuscated in official pay scales as can be seen on the Eastern Bengal Railway:²⁸⁸

²⁸⁵ Mss Eur R189.

²⁸⁶ F. Hutchins, *Spontaneous Revolution: The Quit India Movement* (Delhi, 1971), 24.

²⁸⁷ *Ibid.*

²⁸⁸ BL, V/9/49, 1418.

Designation.	Pay in 1914.			
	Rs.			
Station Masters (European)	250	300	35	
Assistant Station Masters (European)	200	225		
Station Masters (Indian)	35	- 38	- 41	- 45
	50	- 55	- 60	- 65
	80	- 86	- 93	- 100
Assistant Station Masters (Indian)	30	32		
	35	- 36	- 41	- 45
	50	- 55	- 60	- 65
	80	- 86	- 93	- 100

The starting pay of each grade of employment, the increments of increases in salary (limited by promotion trajectories that blocked particular groups' ascent above a certain level), as well as complicated lists of allowances and privileges separated each group from the others. The incentive structures created by such deliberate racial gradation of occupation clearly impacted upon both the institutional culture and the aspirations and behaviour of the various groups. In this context it is clear why Anglo-Indians who could by reason of their complexion and deportment pass for Europeans (preferably of European domicile) would almost invariably do so. The rewards to be obtained from racial passing within the socio-racial hierarchy of the Raj's public employment – whether it was Domiciled Europeans passing as Europeans, Anglo-Indians as Domiciled Europeans or Europeans, or Indian Christians as Anglo-Indians – made rational sense on the level of the individual.

Most systems were more opaque in structuring employment, but the outcome remained the same – Indians received the lowest grades of employment at the lowest rates of pay, Anglo-Indians received better appointments with better rates of pay, Domiciled Europeans received even better positions and rates of pay and those who could be recognised as of European domicile received the best positions, remuneration and perks (such as periodic

passages 'home'). Nonetheless Indians perceived racial discrimination within the institutional culture, employment hierarchy of both state and company administered railways and in the treatment of passengers. Following the First World War Indian politicians demanded 'a definite declaration from the Government of India to the effect that the connection of Great Britain and India is based on the principle of equal partnership and perfect racial equality'.²⁸⁹

In 1921 Mr. W. Hussanally proposed in the Assembly that railways be instructed to cease reserving separate railway compartments exclusively for Europeans and Anglo-Indians.²⁹⁰ Hussanally was unsuccessful and the matter was brought up repeatedly, with the Government purporting to take the view that the practice would naturally die out of its own accord, but until 1930 some railways persisted in the practice – the last hold outs being the Bengal Nagpur, North Western, Madras and Southern Mahratta, East Indian and Great Peninsula Railways, whose 83 trains with such reserved 3rd class compartments accounted for only 4.4% of the total number of trains in India.²⁹¹ Such reservations could only have been for the benefit of Anglo-Indians and 'poor whites', as neither the official or commercial classes of transient Britons would have considered travelling 3rd class. Nissen remembered such compartments when he was a schoolboy, in 'about 1914, 1918, they used to have a, a... a little coupé, with... printed on top on the door: reserved for Europeans and Eurasians, but that disappeared by about 1916, 17 or 18, that disappeared, we didn't have that... I think that was during the companies days, but when the railways were taken over by the state, one by one, as their contracts fell due, I think that sort of

²⁸⁹ BL, V/9/48, 62.

²⁹⁰ Legislative Assembly (28th Sept. 1921), 1204-1205.

²⁹¹ NAI, Home Department, Establishment Branch: Progs., No. 389, Part-I (1932), 'Memorandum by the Railway Board on the elimination of racial discrimination in railway services', No. 2395-E (23rd May 1929), 15.

thing disappeared.²⁹²

Discrimination——



*It is but natural for those who make a fine
distinction in the matter of Rail travel to —*

Travel East Indian

for

THE PERFECT DURGA POOJAH HOLIDAY

Fig. 2: 1929 *Review* advertisement for the East Indian Railway.²⁹³

²⁹² Mss Eur R189

Shortly after the implementation of the 1919 reforms Indian members of the legislatures began to query government on areas of state employment to which their constituents might hope to gain increased access. Indian nationalists and the British could easily overlook the presence of Anglo-Indians and the significance of domicile for Europeans. Dividing people up into Indians and Europeans made it obvious what was intended to happen under Indianisation (whether some of these Europeans were of Indian domicile or not); it made the individual strategy of passing as European highly dangerous for the collective mass of Anglo-Indians. Mr. Jamnadas Dwarkadas asked Government for the number of ‘Indians and Europeans – on a monthly salary of Rs. 400 and above’ across seven railway companies.²⁹⁴ Colonel W. D. Waghorn’s responded stated that ‘progress has been slow, so far’ as ‘regards the employment of Indians in the higher grades of the Locomotive and Carriage and Wagon Departments... due chiefly hitherto to the distaste of educated Indians to undertake manual labour, and to qualify as mechanical engineers.’²⁹⁵ Waghorn provided aggregated figures by department revealing a European preponderance over Indians in the following ratios: Management (36:6), Auditing (88:37), Traffic (426:46), Locomotive (990:53) and Engineering Departments (450:87).²⁹⁶ This binary division, making no mention of domicile, rendered Anglo-Indians dangerously invisible.

Less dangerous, yet still challenging, were questions about the numbers of Indians, Anglo-Indians and Europeans in particular grades of employment. Mr. Manmohandas Ramji’s question as to the ‘number of new posts of over Rs. 500 per month’ and the ‘nationalities and qualifications of the persons appointed’ elicited the response that there were 82 new posts in non-military Departments, of which 64 had been filled, 25 by Europeans, 20 by

²⁹³ *Anglo-Indian Review* (September, 1929), 4.

²⁹⁴ V/9/49, 1402.

²⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 1403.

²⁹⁶ *Ibid.*

Indians, 13 by Anglo-Indians and Domiciled Europeans not including another 3 by just 'Anglo-Indians' and 2 by just 'Domiciled Europeans' (i.e. 18 by the domiciled), and one by a 'British Officer'.²⁹⁷ The confusion over counting Anglo-Indians and Domiciled Europeans separately in some cases and together in others is characteristic of the available data – government departments responding to requests from civil servants and government for information of this kind (to answer questions in the Legislatures or to respond to complaints and letters from Anglo-Indian leaders and Associations) frequently received different approaches and levels of detail from different services, branches and locales.²⁹⁸ Depending on local conditions and sensibilities these figures would have varied in accuracy and some would overlook the significance of domicile.

We cannot be certain that all those returned as Europeans were of European domicile, nor can we be certain what portion of those returned as Europeans of whichever domicile were Anglo-Indians engaging in racial passing. As the figures stand the Anglo-Indians comprised a solitary Assistant Superintendent of the Government Central Branch Press, Simla (promoted from within the department) and two Assistant Account Officers in the Finance Department (alongside three Indian colleagues, all but one of the four having been promoted from the Sub-Accounts Service); the Anglo-Indians and Domiciled Europeans who had been grouped together comprised nine 'Superior Traffic Officers' of the '2nd Division' and four Deputy Superintendents '(Traffic), 1st Class' (all of whom had been promoted from 'Senior qualified officers in [the] next lower grade except one case in which an official was selected on account of his varied qualifications and powers of physical endurance'); while the two separately listed Domiciled Europeans were

²⁹⁷ V/9/48, 51.

²⁹⁸ For example, the Department of Education, Health and Lands wrote to the Home Department in 1923 requesting clarification of whether Anglo-Indians and Domiciled Europeans should be listed as Indians or Europeans. See NAI, Home Department, Establishment Branch: Progs., No. 389 (1923).

Superintendents of Post Offices (alongside one ‘European’ and nine Indian colleagues).²⁹⁹

Indian members of the Legislative Assembly, such as Mr. Harchandrai Vishindas,³⁰⁰ challenged ‘racial distinctions in law, offices and railway travelling’,³⁰¹ and perceived within the sometimes opaque gradations of service on the railways a concealed discriminatory structure of employment. In response to a ‘threatened strike of guards on the North-Western Railway’ Vishindas asked a series of questions, implying that the top (C) grade of guards were being directly recruited from ‘Europeans and Anglo-Indians only’, while the (B) grade directly recruited ‘Indian Christians and Parsis only’, with only Hindus and Muslims being recruited into the lowest grade (A).³⁰² Waghorn responded that: there had been no direct recruitment to any of the classes of service and that ‘recruitment of Europeans and Anglo-Indians [had been] restricted during the war’; that Indians had been promoted to C class from B class; that Europeans and Anglo-Indians were ‘not appointed in class A nor are any applications received from these classes for such appointments. Indian Christians and Parsis are appointed to class A’; that it was not the case that class B recruited Indian Christians and Parsis directly but not Hindus and Muslims; and that internal promotion [correctly perceived by Indians to favour Anglo-Indians] was ‘made according to the qualifications and capabilities of the men applying without distinction as to race or creed’.³⁰³

Waghorn also provided a breakdown of guards (who were crucial to railway security) employed on the North-Western Railway by community which makes it obvious that the

²⁹⁹ V/9/48, 51.

³⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 203-5.

³⁰¹ *Ibid.*, 139.

³⁰² *Ibid.*, 203-5.

³⁰³ *Ibid.*, 204.

Europeans dominated the highest class (C) at just over 50% and that Anglo-Indians occupied the highest class in significant numbers at around 40% while dominating the middle class (B) at around 48%:³⁰⁴

Class	Europeans	Anglo-Indians	... [Muslims]	Hindus	Parsis	Sikhs	Christians	Jews
C	145	111	2	5	9	1	...	1
B	2	150	32	65	38	11	...	12
A	...	...	179	311	...	68	7	1
Total	147	261	213	381	47	80	7	14

Indian Christians of C and B classes are included in C and B classes under the head

It is clear that Hindus and Muslims dominated the lowest class (A) and only had a sprinkling of positions in the highest class (C). It is also noteworthy that Indian Christians were only found in the lowest class, that Parsis occupied a similar position to Anglo-Indians in proportion to their numbers, and that Jews were nearly all in the middle class (B).

Vishindas' questions also asserted that 'Indian employees getting up to Rs. 100 get from Rs. 7-8-0 to Rs. 10 per mensem as house rent; while European, Anglo-Indian, Christian and Parsi employees on the same pay get a house rent allowance of Rs. 25' and that while 'Indian employees [earning] over Rs. 500' received 'no house rent', 'Anglo-Indian and European employees [earning] over Rs. 250' received a '10 per cent allowance by way of house rent on their pay'.³⁰⁵ Waghorn claimed house-rent was granted to 'Europeans and Indians alike... based on the wages earned by different classes of employees' but his figures revealed that Europeans' minimum allowance was 'Rs. 25 per mensem' as against

³⁰⁴ *Ibid.*

³⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 203-5.

‘Rs. 7-8 per mensem’ for Indians.³⁰⁶

Vishindas asked if ‘Permanent-Way inspectors’ (who were responsible for inspecting railway tracks for damage or sabotage) were chosen from ‘Apprentices selected by the Railway, mostly from among non-Hindus and non-Muhammadans’.³⁰⁷ Unsurprisingly Waghorn’s response revealed high proportions of Europeans and Anglo-Indians among the North-Western Railway’s 97 Permanent-Way Inspectors – ‘50 of whom are Hindus and Moslems, 1 is a Parsi and 46 are Europeans and Anglo-Indians... [They] are recruited from Apprentice Permanent-Way Inspectors, and from promotion of Sub-permanent Way Inspectors. The number of sanctioned appointments of Apprentices is 30 for Europeans and Anglo-Indians and 12 for Indians... The number of Apprentice Permanent-Way Inspectors, is: 4 Hindus. 2 Sikhs. 4 Mussalmans. 22 Europeans and Anglo-Indians.’³⁰⁸

In 1933 the Railway Board issued a memorandum to state and company managed railways with the purpose of eliminating racial discrimination on the railways – as they stated in accordance with ‘definite’ government policy and in response to complaints in the Assembly.³⁰⁹ It covered a range of allegations about employment and treatment of passengers, including: different treatment of European, Anglo-Indian and Indian apprentices; the continued employment from England of young men directly into ‘Upper Subordinate’ posts; and different starting rates of pay, conditions of leave and provision of allowances and accommodation for Europeans and Anglo-Indians as against Indians.³¹⁰ These practices were acknowledged to have existed in the past or to persist on certain

³⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, 205.

³⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 203-5.

³⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 205-6.

³⁰⁹ Progs., No. 389, Part-I (1932), ‘Memorandum’, 1.

³¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 6.

railways, but every assurance was given that where they had persisted until the present they were now being eliminated – with the crucial exception that those hired in the past under privileged pay and allowance conditions would retain these until they retired. The recruitment question of requiring only completion of the Junior Cambridge examination from Anglo-Indians while requiring matriculation examinations from Indians was refuted as an issue of racial discrimination for it was argued the two school systems used different examinations and should an Indian student attend an Anglo-Indian school (which incidentally did happen) they would be eligible with the Junior Cambridge qualification.³¹¹ The document stated that it has been government policy since 1925 to achieve a 75% level of railway employees being of Indian domicile, of course the ‘domicile’ part was crucial as it included both Anglo-Indians and Domiciled Europeans.³¹²

Even in maintaining the official line that Anglo-Indians were statutory Indians the government faced immense pressure in the Assembly and in the Indian press from more politically and numerically important communities to provide jobs to Hindus and Muslims (in fair proportion to each other) at the expense of Anglo-Indians and those who claimed to be Europeans of Indian domicile. Gidney asserted that since ‘the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms, there has also been evidence of a growing tendency on the part of Government to take the line of least resistance and to yield to popular demands....’³¹³ In practice the pressure for Indianisation resulted in the effective transfer of jobs from the domiciled community to Indians, but this was generally effected by opening up rungs of various services, which had been structured through discriminatory hiring and promotion practices to be the exclusive preserve of the domiciled, to competition by other communities.

³¹¹ *Ibid.*, 8-9.

³¹² *Ibid.*, 2-3.

³¹³ NAI, Home Department, Establishment Branch: Progs., No. 389, Part-I (1932), Serial Nos. 1-7, Gidney, Letter to the Secretary of State for India (11th June 1932), 7.

However, as the political climate changed it was still possible to disguise the ways in which these groups were divided and given a hierarchy of employment. Station Masters and Assistant Station Masters salaries could be divided between those in charge of an 'Important Station' or a lesser Station.³¹⁴ Important stations were more likely to be given to a European or failing that an Anglo-Indian Station Master, who were recognised as infallibly loyal to British rule. In 1935 Gidney reflected that 'in the past the system of recruitment and promotion in the... grades ensured that almost all the important trains and stations were under the charge of Anglo-Indian guards and station masters... [but] that under the present system of recruitment and promotions there is no guarantee that Anglo-Indians and Domiciled Europeans will hold a fair number of those important posts which can rightly be called the key positions of the Railways for defence purposes... Guards, Firemen and Drivers of goods passenger and mail trains'.³¹⁵ Different classes of trains could also be given a relative hierarchy of importance and their drivers could also be differentially remunerated.

School-leaving Anglo-Indian youth found obtaining first-time employment increasingly difficult as a result of: retrenchment; downward pressure to equalise wages to Indian levels; increasingly open systems of recruitment by competitive examination with other communities (often with higher educational qualifications); and 'misapplied' Indianisation (under pressure from other communities that contested the 'Indianness' of the domiciled community). Unsurprisingly Gidney focused on the threat of Indianisation to Anglo-Indian employment in successive deputations to the Government of India and the Secretary of State for India, at the Round Table Conferences and finally directly to

³¹⁴ Progs., No. 389, Part-I (1932), 'Memorandum', 2-3.

³¹⁵ *Anglo-Indian Review* (July, 1935), 10.

Members of Parliament engaged in drafting the 1935 Government of India Act. These efforts ultimately achieved fruit in statutory safeguards for reserved proportions of employment in departments of government service in which Anglo-Indians were still prominent.

Reservations

Once reservations had been achieved, Anglo-Indian politicians faced an uphill battle to ensure their implementation. The Secretary of State for India, Lord Zetland's comment that the statutory provisions were 'purely declaratory' and did not 'bind any one to anything' had aroused shock and alarm.³¹⁶ In July 1935 Gidney argued that reservations were not being implemented in accord with the Government of India Resolution of 4th July 1934 and in line with the intentions of Parliament. Gidney detected an 'effort to diffuse the community as clerks, etc. in Branches other than those in which... [they had] been largely employed in the past... contrary to the principle of the Resolution.'³¹⁷ Gidney noted that in the East Indian Railway Anglo-Indians currently accounted for 524 of 1300 Guards (44.2%), 52 of 105 Control staff (49.53%), 546 of 2,249 Firemen, Shunters and Drivers (24.28%), 145 of 153 Inspector Fitters, Section Boiler Makers, Fitters and Trade Apprentices (94.77%), 148 of 1,492 Ticket Checking Staff (10%), 342 of 607 Mechanics (56.34%), and 85 of 154 Permanent Way Staff in the Civil Engineering Department (55.19%).³¹⁸

However, in spite of their prominence in specific departments at much higher percentages Gidney asserted that it was 'the intention of the East Indian Railway as stated in the

³¹⁶ *Anglo-Indian Review* (August, 1935), 3.

³¹⁷ V/9/49, 1403.

³¹⁸ Figures supplied by Gidney in *Anglo-Indian Review*, (July, 1935), 9.

Agent's official orders on the matter just issued... not only to give us a reduced percentage in our aggregate employment on this Railway (*i.e.*, 10% and not 12.5% nor even 11% which is our actual percentage on the Railway if non-domiciled Europeans are excluded), but to diffuse us into all Departments so as to reach what the administration is pleased to describe “the ideal of 10% of appointments in every group and Branch of the service”.³¹⁹ This Gidney asserted was ‘obviously repugnant to the intentions of the Government of India Resolution and contrary to the assurance given by Mr. Butler, Under Secretary of State for India on 4th April, 1935, *viz.*, that the total percentage will be obtained by fixing a separate percentage for each Railway having regard to the numbers at present employed and for each branch or department of the Railway Service’ and would force Anglo-Indians ‘to take up appointments which they have hitherto not sought.’³²⁰

In the Posts and Telegraphs Department the situation was worse. In 1902 the Posts had been a separate department and the Government of India had ‘decided that the proportion of Anglo-Indians and Indians in the Telegraph Department... should be 66⅔% and 33⅓% respectively... which... was rigidly carried out till 1920’.³²¹ The system of recruitment in those days had, according to Gidney, depended on operators directly sourcing Anglo-Indian and Domiciled European recruits ‘through specified Anglo-Indian and European Schools’ and allowing internal ‘step-by-step promotion from the Telegraph Masters and Engineering Supervisors Grade (both of whom in their turn were selected from the Telegraphists grade).’³²² This system had since been replaced with ‘the introduction of open competitive examinations of high academic standards for recruitment to the Engineering Supervisors Grade (Classes I and II)’ in which ‘the Anglo-Indian community

³¹⁹ *Ibid.*

³²⁰ *Ibid.*

³²¹ *Ibid.*, 12.

³²² *Ibid.*

with its very small reservation cannot reasonably hope to have any chance of entrance through this door of competition.³²³ Gidney predictably advocated a return to the old system, but the crux of the matter was that Anglo-Indians could not hope to compete in open competition with Indians who possessed university degrees if those degrees were valued above the practical experience their less academically qualified and far less numerous Anglo-Indian competitors had previously relied upon to achieve promotion.

Gidney again detected a strategy to implement reservation for Anglo-Indians by diffusion into less prestigious and less well remunerated posts in branches that Anglo-Indians had not hitherto occupied in significant numbers. Gidney argued that Anglo-Indians were being deliberately ‘driven out of the more important Telegraph branch and used in larger numbers, as ordinary Postal clerks in the Postal branch in which we to-day hold only 1.17% of appointments.’³²⁴ This policy, Gidney claimed, would result in the eventual loss of 800 appointments previously held by Anglo-Indians in the Operating branch of the Telegraph Department. Gidney reminded his audience of the strategic function of this branch ‘to ensure rapid and reliable communication between the principal ports and provincial towns and military centres during periods of internal disorganization or of war on the borders of India and which... [would be crucial during] any emergencies of a prolonged or far reaching nature.’³²⁵ Gidney then contrasted figures he had obtained on the current Anglo-Indian position in the department and under the new Government plans. First the total number of subordinate posts held by Anglo-Indians and Domiciled Europeans ‘as at 31st December 1933’:³²⁶

³²³ *Ibid.*

³²⁴ *Ibid.*

³²⁵ *Ibid.*

³²⁶ *Ibid.*, 11.

Particulars.	Total Employees.	Anglo-Indian & Domiciled European employees.	Percentage .
Engineering Supervisors, General & Telephones and Electrical Supervisors	290	160	55.10%
Wireless Supervisors and Wireless Operators	143	78	54.50%
Telegraphists and Telegraph Masters	2562	1314	51.30%
Clerical Staff in the Upper Division & Higher Grades (Postal & Telegraph clerks including non-gazetted Postmasters)	28030	329	1.17%
TOTAL	31025	1881	6.06%

NOTE:– The following does not include gazetted staff in which Anglo-Indians and Domiciled Europeans occupy 174 out of 457 posts, the majority being Class II officers.

Then the intended reservations to be made by Government:³²⁷

Particulars	Allotted Percentage	Approximate number obtainable to us
(A) Telegraphists & Telegraph Masters	20.00%	512
(B) Engineering Supervisors General & Telephones, and Electrical Supervisors	Our share as a minority community in the 8 $\frac{1}{3}$ % reserved for minorities other than Muhammadans	A fraction of 24 appointments.
(C) Clerical Staff (Postal and Telegraph clerks including non-gazetted postmasters)	5.00%	1400
TOTAL		About 1912

In addition to the implementation of reservations another key concern expressed by Gidney was drastic cuts in wages that amounted to a levelling down of wages from those previously enjoyed by Domiciled Europeans and Anglo-Indians to the Indian level.

³²⁷ *Ibid.*, 12.

Gidney contended that these changes amounted to ‘starvation wages’ for anyone trying to maintain an Anglo-Indian mode of living and that they would be certain to ultimately drive Anglo-Indians out of these areas of employment.³²⁸ Gidney presented evidence on reductions in wages for railwaymen and telegraphists:

Railways:³²⁹

Designation of Post	E. I. R. Company scale in 1925 [in rupees]	Period taken [in years]	Revised Scales introduced in October 1934 [in rupees]	Period taken to reach Maximum in each rating [in years]
(Locomotive Power)				
Boy Fireman (Cleaners)	Not in existence		10-15	3
Fireman	80-10-120	5	30-5-50	5
Shunters	140-150	2	70-5-80	3
Drivers IV Gr.	...	...	40-5|2-50	5
Drivers III Gr.	...	...	90-10|2-120	3
Drivers II Gr.	160-240	9	140-10|2-160	5
Drivers I Gr.	260-320	8	170-10|2-180	3
(Traffic)				
Ticket Collectors	70-5-120	11	30-3-45|5-60	9
Gunner Guards	85-10-125	5	30-3-45|5-60	9
Pilot Guards	130-10-210	9	65-5|2-85	9
Conductor Guards	100-10-200	11	65-5|2-85	9
Head Ticket Collectors Grade II	180-10-230	5	65-5|2-85	9
Guards Grade I	105|110-10-210	11	100-10|2-120	5

³²⁸ *Ibid.*, 13.

³²⁹ Formatting modified from original, cited in *Ibid.*, 10.

Telegraphs:³³⁰

The Effect of the Revised Scales of Pay for Telegraphists in the Telegraph Department				
Old Rates of pay in force prior to 1925	Average rate per mensem in 22 years	New rate of pay introduced from 1 st July '31	Average rate per mensem in 22 years (new rate)	Average decrease
Rs. 80-5-110|10|250	Rs. 191-3-0 or £3-3-8 per week	Rs. 45|45-3-60|4-120	Rs. 82-10-8 or £1-7-7 per week	Rs. 108-8-4 or £1-16-1 per week (a reduction of 56.6%)

Gidney asked:

... how does Government expect a fireman to live on Rs. 30 p.m. and a boy fireman on Rs. 10 p.m. less than the wages earned by an Indian coolie... A driver or a shunter will reach this minimum figure of Rs. 75... in his tenth year of service... he cannot be with his parents till his 10th year of service for he must be transferred... [Despite] drastic reduction in salaries, Anglo-Indian education is still admittedly many times costlier than Indian Education... Even the charges an Anglo-Indian has to pay as an in-patient in a Railway Hospital are three times that charged... [to] an Indian... If Government expects a special defence service which demands a high standard of physical fitness from the community alone, it is its bounden duty that a special consideration is due to us as regards wages.³³¹

This was one of the few arguments Gidney could make as to why Anglo-Indians should be paid more. When arguing Gidney also suggested a levelling up of Indian wages to the Anglo-Indian standard rather than the reverse – perhaps thinking this unlikely he suggested that if neither of these options were practicable that the responsibility should be recognised as Britain's rather than India's and that the 'British Government [should] seriously and sympathetically... consider the advisability of making an annual subsidy with a view to grant Anglo-Indian workmen a special allowance to cover the undeniably higher standard of living... [and if] this is not possible I respectfully submit that Parliament should, in its kindness, encourage the community with a liberal loan or subsidy, the

³³⁰ *Ibid.*, 13.

³³¹ *Ibid.*, 11.

interest on which could be used to provide employment in new pastures, e.g. the giving of a large tract of land suitable for colonization on a massive scale, or the creation of an Anglo-Indian and Domiciled European State where we can live and establish ourselves.³³² In making this case Gidney was weaving together almost all of the major strands of the Anglo-Indian question and its possible solutions – the higher cost of living, the higher cost of education, the role as defenders of the Raj, the threat to their economic livelihood and the demand for continued preferential treatment, or failing that support towards colonization. Reflecting on the implementation of reservations in 1938 Gidney complained that ‘In some departments of Government service Anglo-Indians were expected to subsist on the small wages of Indians’ and ‘spoke of the valuable part the Anglo-Indian, the best mechanic in India, could play in the work of mechanization of the Army. The men of the community were prepared to take a rate of pay between that of the European and the Indian soldier; but offers of the Indian rate would be refused point blank.’³³³

Anglo-Indians had a tendency to look back towards a golden age of better employment prospects and fairer treatment, when their lot had been inextricably linked with that of British and European fathers. This was an idealised image both of their economic situation and of the socio-racial values of that earlier age of the British imperial presence in India. However, Anglo-Indian’s construction of their own history was central to their sense of entitlement, of grievance, and their numerous petitions to government for redress.

³³² *Anglo-Indian Review* (July, 1935), 11.

³³³ ‘Difficulties of the Anglo-Indians: Sir Henry Gidney’s Appeal’, *The Times* (London, December 5, 1938), 9.

After the end of East India Company rule the British had increasingly created an elaborate socio-racial hierarchy of rule and of employment within India.

Early voices on the community's behalf defined the central problem for Anglo-Indians as an economic one – they demanded a higher standard of living than Indians for doing the same work. This they could only receive from state or quasi-state employment, where the British perceived their value as an English speaking intermediary class of loyal supporters whose presence would buttress the security of British rule. Thurston's evidence suggests that the Association's claim that Anglo-Indians were almost exclusively employed in state and quasi-state sectors may have been overstated in order to boost their political case for preserved jobs in areas which were clearly central to the economic life of a substantial proportion of the community.

In this chapter we have seen how the socio-racial hierarchy of Raj employment explicitly (and later, after the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms, increasingly opaquely) structured, through elaborate gradations of rank and remuneration, a discriminatory framework which rewarded Britons who had come out on covenanted contracts with the top positions and salaries, and placed beneath them a layer of loyal and supportive Domiciled Europeans and Anglo-Indians to supervise and manage junior Indian clerks and menial workers. Domiciled Europeans and Anglo-Indians were employed in areas of state and railway service which provided a strategic underpinning to the security infrastructure of British rule and administration.

Fulfilling this strategic role for the British, Anglo-Indians enjoyed a period of relative economic prosperity during the policy of Europeanisation in the wake of the Indian

Mutiny, through the intense security and manpower demands of the First World War until the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms. During that era young men had been brought out to India from Britain, sometimes lacking in experience or useful skills, and given commanding and better remunerated posts on the railways above experienced members of the domiciled community. Domiciled European and Anglo-Indian resentment towards the 'covenanted-wallahs' proved to be the least of their worries after the 1919 Government of India Act. The Reforms set up legislative assemblies in which Indian nationalist voices would soon be heard challenging the existing socio-racial hierarchy of Raj employment.

Official policies of Indianisation, and demands from Indian nationalists that they be applied to Domiciled Europeans and Anglo-Indians (by refusing to recognise their status as 'Statutory Natives of India' or by simply overlooking their existence or the importance of domicile in simple binary demands to take European jobs and give them to Indians) increasingly threatened the security of Anglo-Indian employment from 1919 on. This study has revealed that far from being a matter of simply transferring elite jobs in the I.C.S. and armed forces from Britons to Indians Indianisation extended right down the employment spectrum to debates over guards and ticket inspectors on the railways. General retrenchment following the Great Depression further exacerbated Anglo-Indian unemployment and underemployment.

During Gidney's examination before the Joint Committee on Indian Constitutional Reform in 1933 while some Indian colleagues and questioners evinced sympathy towards the community's plight, several such as Sardar Buta Singh, Sir Hari Singh Gour and Mr. Zafrulla Khan attempted to pick apart Gidney's figures and to suggest that the Anglo-Indian community was not suffering disproportionately in a generally harsh economic

climate.³³⁴ Obviously discriminatory structures of employment had to be slowly phased out or hidden more effectively and as neither railways or government could afford to level up all wages to the higher levels hitherto enjoyed by Domiciled Europeans and Anglo-Indians there was a downward pressure on Anglo-Indian wages at the same time as increased competition (often by competitive examination) was opened up to Indians who often possessed superior academic qualifications.

Anglo-Indian leaders responded by calling for economic safeguards in the form of reservations for Anglo-Indian employment in existing areas of state and railway employment. After vigorous campaigning in India and at the metropole, reservations were achieved in the 1935 Government of India Act. However, Anglo-Indian leaders faced an uphill battle in having what they believed to have been promised to them implemented in practice in the face of continuing demands from various Indian communities and the acquiescence of colonial administrators to those demands.

³³⁴ *Volume IIC, Minutes of Evidence, Joint Committee on Indian Constitutional Reform, 2007-8.*

Chapter IV: Loyal Defenders of the Raj

Anglo-Indians were generally loyal to the Raj and cast themselves as its defenders in order to claim special consideration for their community during successive phases of constitutional change. Anglo-Indians viewed themselves as the descendants of those who had fought to establish and maintain British rule in India. In doing so they usually omitted to make any distinction between a wholly British or European paternal forbear and their own position as an Anglo-Indian – in an earlier period they believed there had been no such distinctions, until the egregious terms half-caste and Eurasian had been affixed to them. Here we will evaluate their objective contribution to the Raj in war and peace and examine British assessments of the potential of the domiciled to bolster Raj security.

In 1791 the East India Company (EIC) largely disbarred the mixed offspring of its servants and soldiers from serving in the armed forces. Many skilled military men of mixed ancestry (such as Colonel James Skinner³³⁵) responded by entering into the service of the Indian princes. When the British appealed for their support during wars with the princes many defected to the British. Identification with European ancestry and with England (or Britain) especially made Anglo-Indians, in their own eyes, an intrinsic part of the British presence in India, even whilst they recognised their own ostracism from its fold.

Though they had some advocates and supporters amongst transient Britons, Anglo-Indians were usually perceived from these quarters as an embarrassing adjunct of ‘poor

³³⁵ Founder of Skinner’s Horse, and described by R. D. Mangles, an experienced civil servant, before a House of Lords select committee in 180 as wealthy and ‘of great influence among the native population... [capable of raising] 10,000 men at any time’ – cited in Ballhatchet, *Race, Sex and Class*, 98.

relations',³³⁶ to be grouped with poor whites into a problematic class of people who might potentially bring British rule and racial prestige into disrepute amongst Indians of all classes. David Arnold's work explored this view of 'poor whites' and Anglo-Indians, whilst also emphasising that the military value of the domiciled to the Raj was recognised: orphan asylums gave military training to boys in recognition that 'Men trained in arms and of unquestionable loyalty to the colonial state might be a vital military asset, especially in the critical period between the outbreak of revolt and the arrival of reinforcements from overseas.'³³⁷ Anglo-Indians' position as a wartime reserve of potential soldiers in times of crisis, their prominence in the railway and the telegraphs, which served as a crucial transport and communication network for the British army and state in India, and their extensive (often compulsory) inclusion in part-time auxiliary forces that could be deployed in times of emergency or to quell civil unrest or strikes, provided strategic value to the Raj. Discriminatory differentially remunerated grades of employment that placed them between Europeans and Indians, reflected British willingness to pay Anglo-Indians more than Indians, presumably on account of their security value rather than for philanthropic motives.

Anglo-Indian Views

Phyllis McGill Thompson, an Anglo-Indian born in Allahabad in 1907 who moved to England in 1948 and onto Australia in 1967, reflected:

For the greater part of the Raj, from East India Company days, our people were loyal subjects and in my opinion, the backbone of the Jewel in the Crown... We were ready to move at a moment's notice from one outpost to another... We soon outnumbered the Europeans, but with them rested the power to give or take away work, to restrict movement, enterprise and social life. When it suited them we were

³³⁶ 'Phyllis McGill Thompson, born 1907', an Anglo-Indian from Allahabad recounting her life, cited in G. Moore, *The Lotus and the Rose: An Anglo-Indian Story* (Melbourne, 1986), 93.

³³⁷ Arnold, 'European Orphans and Vagrants', 112.

“Indian”; in a crisis we became “British”. They made a convenience of us all.³³⁸

Phyllis’s grandfather was Major George McGill (1828-1909), born in Trichinopoly, of the Madras Fusiliers who had fought on horseback during the Indian Mutiny. George was of European appearance, but married Mary Anne Fitchett, an Anglo-Indian of Indian complexion.³³⁹ George’s father Captain John McGill came out to India from Midcalder, Scotland on the *Inglis* in 1812.³⁴⁰ Phyllis’s mother Eva Cummings McGill (1880-1924), born in Ganeshkind, recalled ‘Victoria’s reign [which] had sealed the Indian Empire; I had been reared to love and honour it as noble. In our military-style school we had been conscious of the sacrifices which we might be called upon to make; we must be prepared to fight and die for it, and for its head.’³⁴¹ Eva recalled the ‘second great Durbar’ of 1911: ‘It was a highlight of our lives, considered to be a great honour... a glorious pageant... The lives of father and Major George seemed so vivid at moments like these; they had been part of it in a special way – they had risked their lives so that this great Empire could be won.’³⁴²

Alongside European ancestors, there were some martial Anglo-Indians like the young Telegraph Operator George (William) Brendish, surrounded by mutineers and the only survivor of his post, who before escaping got off the last crucial telegraph which reputedly saved the Punjab and won him the Medal of the Victorian Order.³⁴³ The La ‘Martinière schoolboys’ (a ‘European school’ catering to the domiciled) defended the Residency

³³⁸ Cited in Moore, *Lotus and the Rose*, 93.

³³⁹ Based on photographic evidence in Moore, *Lotus and the Rose*, 36.

³⁴⁰ Moore, *Lotus and the Rose*, 27.

³⁴¹ Cited in *Ibid.*, 61.

³⁴² Cited in *Ibid.*, 64-65.

³⁴³ S. Brendish, ‘George (William) Brendish and the Indian Mutiny of 1857 by Steve Brendish’, *International Journal of Anglo-Indian Studies* 7: 1 (2003) [online], available at <http://home.alphalink.com.au/~agilbert/paintin1.html>

during the siege of Lucknow.³⁴⁴ A self-proclaimed 'Indo-Briton' wrote to the *Daily News* in 1857 emphasising that 'while the loyal East Indian has always been oppressed' by the Company 'my countrymen have always been with the English government... demonstrated by the Eurasians rallying around it, and forming a militia, which has intimidated the thousands of disaffected natives, who might have crushed Madras, while it was protected by only a handful of European soldiers.'³⁴⁵ Herbert Alick Stark recounted such stories in *The Call of the Blood, or, Anglo-Indians and the Sepoy Mutiny* and Anglo-Indian politicians invoked them as evidence of fitness for military service.

In 1879 Dr. Chambers, President of an early Anglo-Indian Association (a forerunner of 'the Association') advocated Eurasian admission into the Army on European pay and conditions emphasizing the loyalty of the 'poorest and most despised East-Indian; his one drop of European blood, diluted as it is, and his creed, imperfectly practised as it may be'.³⁴⁶ Invoking the Mutiny Chambers' suggested that settled Europeans and Eurasians were a potential security asset for service in 'confidential departments'.³⁴⁷ Far from being discouraged from remaining in India retired soldiers should be encouraged to settle in hill stations as 'compact centres of European colonization, whence, in times of political emergency, little hosts of English arms might be brought forth to serve the State.'³⁴⁸ Foreshadowing later experiments model colonies could develop brewing, 'vine-growing, wine-manufacturing... cheese-making, European fruit-growing... and cattle acclimatizing from foreign stock'.³⁴⁹ Retirement in India could be made more attractive to soldiers through encouraging their employment on the Railways, which could be converted 'into a

³⁴⁴ J. Gorman, *The Siege of Lucknow* (London, 1941), 10.

³⁴⁵ *Daily News* (London, November 4, 1857), 2.

³⁴⁶ Chambers, *Anglo-Indian Prospects*, pamphlet, 10.

³⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 11.

³⁴⁸ *Ibid.* 11-12.

³⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 12-13.

Reserve Military Service' that would also attract 'the better class of East Indians to join the ranks of the Local European Army' and similar arrangements could be made for 'converting the Indian Telegraph Department into a Military service.'³⁵⁰

Mizutani argues that during this period 'A substantial element of opinion advocated the creation of a segregated colony in the northern hills where the soldiers would marry and live with working-class white women. The colonial middle-class feared that in the plain regions of India, soldiers and ex-soldiers would relate with native women and stay on in the country with their native wives and mixed-race offspring.'³⁵¹ However, being hostile to miscegenation and the growth of the domiciled community, whom they looked upon as a conjoined group outside the boundaries of whiteness,³⁵² transient Britons were ultimately swayed by attacks on such 'wild schemes for colonising the Hills with poor Europeans' as expensive and likely to increase 'the evil in almost geometrical progression, by leading the class to propagate itself in the country.'³⁵³ Building on Ballhatchet's work Mizutani argues that the military authorities preferred to redirect soldiers' sexual desires towards 'regulated prostitution' in order to avoid fruitful 'miscegenation'.³⁵⁴

The Objective Contribution

When the First World War broke out Anglo-Indian political organisation was fragmented. Mr. J. H. Abbott was President in Chief of the Anglo-Indian Empire League (later to become the All India Anglo-Indian and Domiciled European Association, or 'the Association') and had been nominated to the Imperial Legislative Council by the Viceroy,

³⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 13-14.

³⁵¹ S. Mizutani, 'Rethinking Inclusion and Exclusion: the Question of Mixed-Race Presence in Late Colonial India', *University of Sussex Journal of Contemporary History*, 5 (December, 2002), 8.

³⁵² *Ibid.*

³⁵³ *The Friend of India* [Weekly], 2 September (1876), 795, cited in *Ibid.*

³⁵⁴ Mizutani, 'Rethinking Inclusion', 8-9.

Lord Hardinge (who would later assert the significance of Anglo-Indians to the war effort and defence of India during this time). Descendants of Abbott engaging in family genealogical research suggest that ‘Captain John Harold (Arnold) Abbott’ was born in 1863 in Edinburgh and died in ‘1945 in Kumaon Hills, Abbott Mount, India’.³⁵⁵ Abbott’s father, William Lumsden Abbott was born in 1828 in ‘Newton, Midlothian, Scotland’, and went out to India with the army, becoming a Quartermaster Sergeant. William married Abbott’s mother Margaret S. Lambert in 1853 in Lahore. Abbott’s mother was born in an unknown location in 1840.

During the Indian Mutiny (1857-58) William ‘and his wife with an infant daughter were stationed at Sitapur’; William, along with his Officers, ‘were all shot down on parade and left for dead on the Barrack Square. William was severely wounded in the right hip’ but survived and ‘escaped into the jungle’ and managed to reach Lucknow.³⁵⁶ Abbott’s mother, then only seventeen, was trapped in the siege of Lucknow and lost her baby daughter, and this appeared in the records of the survivors of the Siege (under her married name).³⁵⁷ Abbott’s father was then given ‘a pension of 1 shilling and 3 pence per day from the Lord Clive Fund’ and returned to Edinburgh with his wife to recuperate.³⁵⁸ Abbott was the third of six additional children and was born in Edinburgh, but based on the padre’s account at Abbott’s memorial service in 1945 the family returned to India in 1866 and his younger brothers claims to birth in Scotland may have been made falsely to assert higher status within India. Abbott began to build houses in Jhansi and in partnership with two of

³⁵⁵ Based on evidence from his birth certificate and gravestone, see B. Abbott, ‘Captain John Harold (Arnold) Abbott (b. January 10, 1863, d. June 28, 1945)’, *Geneology.com* [online], available at <http://familytreemaker.genealogy.com/users/a/b/b/Warren-B-Abbott/WEBSITE-0001/UHP-0075.html>

³⁵⁶ B. Abbott, ‘Quartermaster Sergeant William Lumsden Abbott (b. July 26, 1828, d. August 25, 1880)’, *Geneology.com* [online], available at <http://familytreemaker.genealogy.com/users/a/b/b/Warren-B-Abbott/WEBSITE-0001/UHP-0241.html>

³⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

³⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

his brothers, trading under the name ‘Abbott Brothers, Irrigation and Building Contractors’,³⁵⁹ became a relatively wealthy man. Abbott was eulogised for his philanthropic donations, including to his own Methodist Church. Abbott rose to be the closest thing in his own time to an acknowledged leader of Anglo-India (until acrimoniously displaced by Gidney).

As the title of Abbott’s Empire League indicated Anglo-Indians identified strongly with the British Empire:

From amid the wattle of the Australian Bush... the golden grain fields of Canada... where-ever Britain's sons had dared, back came the ever-increasing response – “for England, Home and Glory.” Nor were Anglo-Indians a whit behind their more favoured brethren. On the 5th of August 1914 the Hon'ble Mr. J. H. Abbott... at once wired His Excellency, the Commander-in-Chief, offering to raise an Anglo-Indian Regiment for service abroad. As well as a Corps of women Nurses... in a few days over five thousand names of volunteers had been registered, while some hundreds of women, trained and untrained, had applied for permission to serve as nurses. Incredible as it must ever be Mr. Abbott’s offer was declined.³⁶⁰

Eventually in March 1916 an Anglo-Indian Force (henceforth AIF) was sanctioned.³⁶¹

Anglo-Indians also attempted to enlist for war service in various ways, mainly by passing as European if they were of fairer complexion, some proceeded to Britain in order to enlist

³⁵⁹ NAI, Legislative Department, Assembly Council Branch, Progs., No. 85, Feb 1921 Part-B. This file contains: ‘Notes: Representation from Mr. J. H. Abbott, Jhansi for a nominated seat in the Indian Legislature’, documents and letters relating to Mr Abbott’s representation, a pamphlet entitled *The Anglo-Indian Force* (‘Allahabad 1st January 1918’, amended ‘Allahabad: 11th June 1919’) [which explores in detail the political processes leading to the sanctioning of the AIF, the different units and officers of the AIF, and the efforts and feedback of its recruiting agents], and a supplemental pamphlet entitled *List of Domiciled Europeans & Anglo-Indians Who Have Rendered War Service Other than in the Anglo-Indian Force* (‘Allahabad: 9th July, 1919’) [providing a series of extensive lists compiled by different bodies such as Schools and the Railways with varying biographical and other details of the individuals serving in various theatres and occupations during WWI], both compiled by C. T. Robbie who was listed in the first pamphlet as a recruiting agent for the UP, Central India, and Rajputana, and additionally from August 1917 Madras and Bangalore, representing the Empire League (in contrast to some of the other recruiting agents who represented the Federated Associations). Henceforth cited as *Anglo-Indian Force*, pamphlet, and *List of Domiciled Europeans & Anglo-Indians*, pamphlet.

³⁶⁰ *Anglo-Indian Force*, pamphlet, 6.

³⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 3.

and many managed to enlist in British regiments stationed in India. C. T. Robbie of Allahabad attempted in 1919 to compile a list of Domiciled Europeans and Anglo-Indians who 'have rendered War Service other than in the Anglo-Indian Force' in response to denials of the 'claim at from 8 to 10,000 Domiciled Europeans and Anglo-Indians had seen service in one or other of the various War Zones', claiming it was 'far short of the actual number as several Schools and Railways have not yet submitted lists.'³⁶²

Separating Anglo-Indians and Domiciled Europeans based on Army lists and the records supplied by schools and railways is problematic, as is identifying Anglo-Indians engaged in racial passing. Some of the men listed had travelled to England, such as two O'Dowds who had enlisted at Sandhurst as 2nd Lieutenants in the Royal Military.³⁶³ Others joined British regiments at centres in India.³⁶⁴ Many more were attached to a wide array of other military or war related services such as: the Electrical Mechanical Section; the Royal Engineers; the Motor Ambulance; the Telegraph, I.E. Force, "D."; the Interpreters Section; and the ISMD Field Force.³⁶⁵ Other domiciled men were described as: despatch riders, mechanics, carbiners, examiners, attached to government departments (such as Medical, Electrical, Loco, Traffic and Audit) to railway service or to an 'Ambulance', telegraphists, 'On Govt. Service', clerks for 'Inland Water Transport', doing 'Munition work under Govt.' or doing various jobs at hospitals (such as 'Store-keeper').³⁶⁶ Most were serving in India or Mesopotamia, some managed to reach the Western Front such as Lieutenants R. Lutter and H. Oppenheimer who had enlisted in Maymyo.³⁶⁷

³⁶² *List of Domiciled Europeans & Anglo-Indians*, pamphlet, cover page.

³⁶³ *Ibid.*, 7.

³⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 1-10.

³⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

³⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

³⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

Lists of domiciled men were furnished by railways, the Post Office, the Telegraph Department and 21 'European schools'.³⁶⁸ The Jodhpur-Bikaner Railway reported three of its men as serving overseas on railways in East Africa and Mesopotamia.³⁶⁹ The Darjeeling Himalayan Railway had staff in East Africa 'on Railway work' as well as an Electrician working as Gunner in the Motor Machine Gun Battery in Rawalpindi and an Assistant Engineer who had joined the 'Indian Army Reserve of Officers.'³⁷⁰ La Martiniere (Calcutta) had: four men in the Canadian Army; and two in the Australian; sixteen commissioned British Army officers; nine commissioned Indian Army officers; 58 on the Indian Army Reserve of Officers; two in the British navy; 16 British Army Non-commissioned Officers (NCOs) or privates; and 33 Indian Army NCOs or privates.³⁷¹ Dehra Doon's list included nine 'ladies' of the station – mostly engaged in hospitals, though Miss H. Carroll was a clerk at Army Headquarters in Simla, and Mrs. C. C. Burns was Head of the station's Ambulance Brigade and in charge of Munro Soldiers canteen.³⁷² Some Lucknow La Martiniere alumni were deployed to the Dardenelles.³⁷³ Other schools' alumni appeared in British East Africa, Egypt, Aden, Palestine and France, and a large number were 'captured at Kut' during the Mesopotamian campaign.³⁷⁴ Casualties included victims of gas, 'heatstroke', 'disease', torpedoes and drowning.³⁷⁵ A few had received the military cross, the D.S.O., the D.C. Medal or the Military Medal or were mentioned in despatches.

³⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 14-28.

³⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 13.

³⁷⁰ *Ibid.*

³⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 14-16.

³⁷² *Ibid.*, 29.

³⁷³ *Ibid.*, 16.

³⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 16-18.

³⁷⁵ *Ibid.*

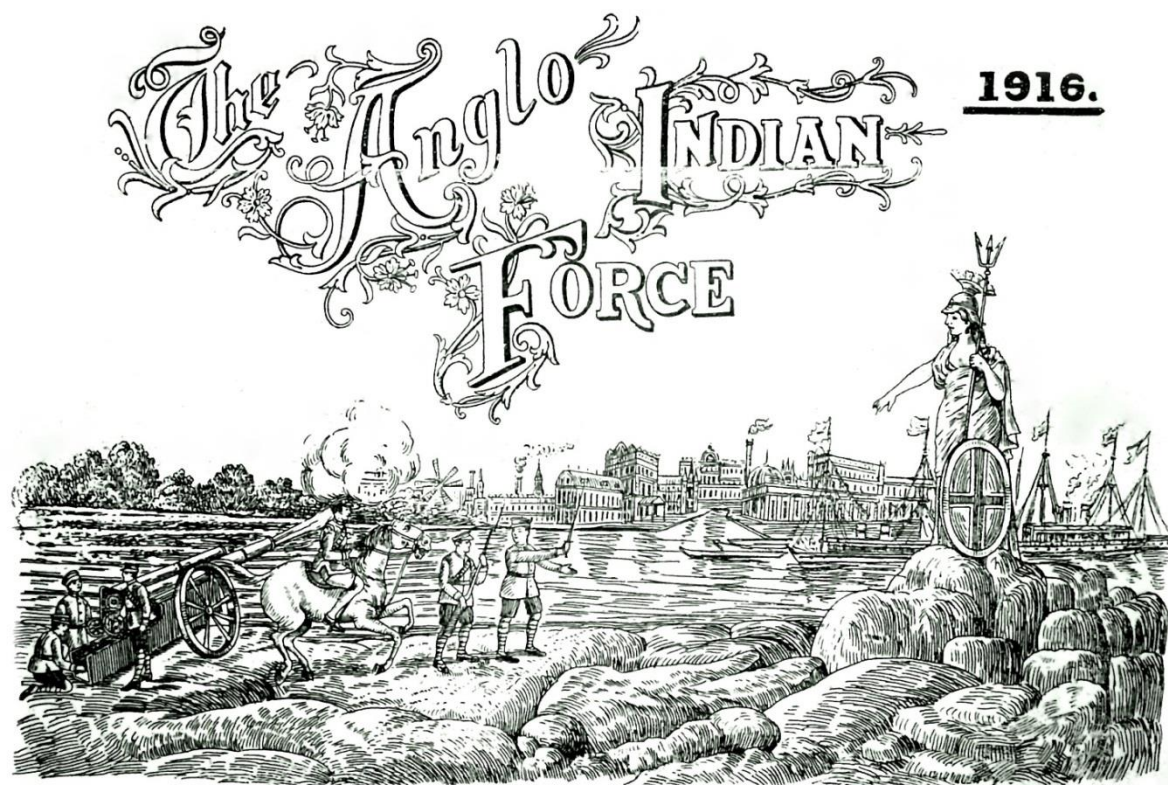


Fig. 1: The AIF, 1916; illustration depicting Anglo-Indian infantry, cavalry and artillery advancing towards Britannia whose arm is outstretched towards them.³⁷⁶

The AIF itself was belatedly sanctioned in 1916. In the same year the Government of India had issued Order No. 6293, which removed impediments to Anglo-Indians joining British regiments. Some had done so already through racial passing, but with the bar removed large numbers joined the Dorset Regiment before the AIF began recruiting. The recruiters lamented that only ‘members of the community can correctly gauge the strength of the temptation to the Anglo-Indian to be considered a European and while it was possible for Anglo-Indians to join British Regiments as Europeans the wonder is that any of the fairer men came forward for the Anglo-Indian Force at all... Picture to yourselves the poor Anglo-Indian, with invariably several dependant on his earnings for support having to choose between the Anglo-Indian Force with its bare Rs. 25/- per mensem and’: the Nursing Orderly Corps at Rs. 70 per mensem; the Supply and Transport at Rs. 168 per

³⁷⁶ *Anglo-Indian Force*, pamphlet, cover page.

mensem (restricted to Europeans but ‘well known’ to contain ‘some hundreds of Anglo-Indians’); the Mechanic Corps at Rs. 195; the Machine Gun Sections, Volunteer Artillery and Despatch Riders ‘all more highly paid, and without the stigma which in some quarters attaches to the Anglo-Indian Force’; as well as lucrative railway work in East Africa and Mesopotamia.³⁷⁷ Nonetheless Anglo-Indian leaders mounted a determined recruitment campaign, for the purposes of which the two largest communal ‘organisations were federated into one’ under the leadership of Abbott as chief recruiting agent, in charge of fourteen regional recruiters.³⁷⁸ The Government refused to pay these recruiting agents, only assisting with their travelling expenses.

In the first instance the AIF was to be established with two Field Troops of Cavalry (each comprising one 2nd Lieutenant and 30 non-commissioned officers and men), one Section of Field Artillery (with one 2nd Lieutenant and 70 non-commissioned officers and men), and 16 Platoons of Infantry (each with one 2nd Lieutenant and 60 non-commissioned officers and men). The AIF offered enlistment for the duration of the war to single men from 18-35. The officer for the AIF's Artillery Battery was Abbott's son Roy. After a short period of training the Battery was dispatched for active service in Mesopotamia on the 10th of October 1916, less than a year later on the 8th of October 1917 the leaders of the Anglo-Indian community were sent a letter by the Adjutant General in India informing them that the ‘General Officer Commanding Force “D” has reported favourably on the services rendered by Anglo-Indian units in Mesopotamia, and has stated that he would be glad to have more of them if available’.³⁷⁹ The Anglo-Indian Cavalry units were converted into Cavalry Signal Troops in 1917. Geographic, socio-economic and racial

³⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 8.

³⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 5.

³⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 13.

communal tensions surfaced during the efforts to raise 960 men for the Anglo-Indian Infantry Platoons. As many Anglo-Indians had already been recruited into other services or were being retained by the 'Telegraph and Railway Departments' recruiters felt the need to scrape the barrel, conceding that:

... quality was sacrificed to quantity with the result that the poor stock sent up from the South had a retrograde effect on recruiting in the North... the class enlisted in Northern India is on average considerably superior not only in physique but in birth and education to those who came from down South, but all the same the reports that non-Anglo-Indians were being enlisted wholesale have been proved to be utterly without foundation... all who were proved to be unsatisfactory... were got rid of... Of the 601 enlisted for the Infantry... 47 had been discharged. As a whole the Anglo-Indian Infantry is a Force of which the Community may well be proud. Colour there is in abundance, but there is also a counter balancing ability, and side by side with men from the lowest range of the social ladder, school teachers, undergraduates, and graduates, professional, and business young men are striving to uphold the honor of the Community...³⁸⁰

Internal stratification amongst Anglo-Indians, linked to fears of infiltration by Indian Christians, and based upon colour is apparent in this account. The apparently darker complexion of southern Anglo-Indians was thought to be a drawback, which lowered the attractiveness of the unit to other potential Anglo-Indian recruits.

Increased wartime manpower demands allowed Anglo-Indians to pass as Britons or Europeans more easily (probably with the connivance of recruiting agents). Gidney would later claim that during the First World War when the call came, hundreds of Anglo-Indian nurses were freely enlisted in the British Army and went to all theatres of war; many of them getting honours. The moment the War was over the door was closed and they were demobbed. To-day the rules prevent an Anglo-Indian nurse being employed by the British

³⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 19-20.

Army...'³⁸¹ Anglo-Indian women made an even greater contribution to the Second World War serving as nurses and in the Womens' Auxiliary Corps (India) (henceforth WAC(I)). During the Second World War Anglo-Indians again engaged in racial passing in order to serve, but some new areas were opened out to them. In 1939 Gidney detailing his efforts to have as many avenues of service opened up and pointed out the resulting opportunities to the 'youth of the community':

Most of the trades in the R. A. F. are such as would make an immediate appeal to the Anglo-Indian considering that the pay and prospects are... suited to [the] Anglo-Indian standard of living. I appeal to [our] young men... Join it to-day – England and the Empire urgently need every one of you... stand loyally by the Empire, regardless of what is in store for us in the future... As true citizens of India and loyal subjects of His Majesty it is our duty...³⁸²

The contribution of Anglo-Indians overseas was undoubtedly significant relative to the size of their population. More significant to the maintenance of the Raj was their function as an additional line of defence, a pool of loyal subjects prepared to act against their fellow Indians during civil or industrial unrest and strategically placed amidst the vital transport and communication infrastructure of the state. If during either of the Two World Wars they may have tipped an internal security balance allowing the Raj to deploy more of its strategic military manpower abroad this was probably more decisive than the direct contribution Anglo-Indians made to Britain's already vast imperial manpower reserves. However, their own willingness to serve the empire in this fashion was more significant for Anglo-Indians themselves as a source of pride and a basis for claims upon the government they had loyally served.

³⁸¹ *Volume IIC: Minutes of Evidence*, 2015.

³⁸² *Anglo-Indian Review* (January, 1940), 7.

Nissen (1905-2002), the self-identified ‘Domiciled European’ of ‘swarthy complexion’ who may have been an Anglo-Indian engaging in racial passing, but in any case mainly associated with Anglo-Indians also gives interesting testimony on his military service.³⁸³ As a schoolboy during the First World War he had already been inducted into some kind of volunteer unit: ‘I was a cadet, and that was called the volunteers, and my father was in the volunteers, and then at the beginning of the war before he joined up the volunteers were changed to IDF (Indian Defence Force), IDF, then its name was changed to AFI (Auxiliary Force India)...’³⁸⁴

At Bishop Cotton’s School Nissen described how ‘in 1920, 21, when Gandhi was at his, at his height, and things were pretty bad’ he and his fellow schoolboys ‘had to turn out there at night to guard the’ nearby ‘rather exclusive girls school’ run by the wife of ‘a Major in Army Headquarters’.³⁸⁵ Even orphan schoolboys received such ‘military training [which] was intended to enhance their value as a reserve’ in any crisis on the scale of the Mutiny.³⁸⁶ Gidney later asserted that enlistment into ‘the Railway Battalions of the Auxiliary Force is a compulsory term of employment for Anglo-Indians... In this capacity we are frequently called upon to protect Railway property, to quell strikes and to preserve law and order’ creating conflict with ‘our Indian brothers’.³⁸⁷ Nissen confirms that on joining the East Indian Railway he ‘was given a piece of paper to sign’ with ‘only three conditions’, including that he ‘would join the, the Auxiliary Force’ and the ‘Railway Institute’.³⁸⁸ Nissen explained that ‘each railway had its own regiment, and I was, I was taken in as a full blown private in the Auxiliary Force, and I could not become an officer

³⁸³ Mss Eur R189.

³⁸⁴ *Ibid.*

³⁸⁵ *Ibid.*

³⁸⁶ Arnold, ‘European Orphans and Vagrants’, 112.

³⁸⁷ *Anglo-Indian Review and Railway Union Journal* (April, 1931), 11.

³⁸⁸ Mss Eur R189.

there, because, unless I was a railway officer I could not have a commissioned office...³⁸⁹

Nissen described how he had progressed from being a ‘carbiner’ to a ‘junior cadet rifleman, with live ammunition’ when he went to school in Simla, and ‘had to do 60 parades in a year, each parade consisted of an hour, and then we did camp, which counted as... nearly 30 parades, 10 days camp...’³⁹⁰ After leaving school Nissen was inducted into the AF(I) as a condition of his railway employment, and paid by the railway for time spent in camps which ‘would be spread over a period of about nearly 4 months during the winter, ‘cause we had to go in batches, there were hundreds of us, there were 3 battalions...’³⁹¹

Clearly a large amount of logistical organisation and preparation was involved in maintaining AF(I) units such as the ‘Bombay Light Horse, Calcutta Light Horse, [and] Calcutta Scottish’ as an adjunct to the British Army in India and in order to safeguard the railways.³⁹² During the period when they were private companies and once they came under government control the railways paid and instructed domiciled men to undergo this training, hold regular parades, and remain in readiness. Nissen reflected on the AF(I): ‘only Europeans and Anglo-Indians, Auxiliary to the British Army... That was a show that was kept going, we were the buffer, whenever there was, any, any civil disobedience, not to have another Jallianwala Bagh, Amritsar, not to have another affair like that, we, we, we used to be called out... for any civil disobedience...’³⁹³

³⁸⁹ *Ibid.*

³⁹⁰ *Ibid.*

³⁹¹ *Ibid.*

³⁹² *Ibid.*

³⁹³ *Ibid.*

W.A.C.I

CHOOSE YOUR OWN JOB IN THE

THERE is a job to suit every woman in the W. A. C. (I). Large numbers have already volunteered, and have thus helped to release officers and other ranks for combatant duty. Many more are required. Men of the United Nations, among whom stand the men of India, require the help of their womenfolk. Now is the time to come forward and take your place in the war machine, and thus help to bring the day of victory nearer.

LIST OF POSTS AVAILABLE Staff—2nd Grade, such as D.A.A.G., etc.—3rd Grade such as Staff Capt. Aides-de-Camp, Dieticians, Mess Caterers, Officers-in-charge Officers' Shops, Platoon Commanders, Quartermasters in Hospitals, Secretaries.

Censors, Cipher Clerks, Cipher Operators, Clerks General Duty, Dispensers, Draughtswomen, Drivers (motor), Driver-Mechanics, Height-finders, Laboratory Assistants, Masseuses, Modellers, Markers, Mess Sergeants, Operating Room Assistants, Operators Switchboard, Operators Fire Control, Operators Special W/T Photographers, Predictor Nos., Plotters and Tellers, Radiographers, Radio Mechanics, Readers (field censorship), Spotters, Storekeepers, Storewomen, Stenographers, Translators, Typists and Telephonists.

TERMS OF SERVICE Posts are available for Local and General Service. Persons who enrol for Local Service can live in their own homes and are not liable to transfer. Those who enrol for General Service are given food and Government provided or approved accommodation free. They are liable for transfer to any part of India if necessary.

PAY	.. Rs. 150-500 p.m.
Officers	.. Rs. 145-155 p.m.
Warrant Officers	.. 85-140 p.m.
Auxiliaries { Tradeswomen	.. 65-140 p.m.
{ Non-Tradeswomen	.. 65-140 p.m.

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- | | |
|---|---|
| Abbottabad, Hoti House. | Karachi Saddar, 10/1, Fowler Lines. |
| Ahmedabad, Lal Darwaza, Mirzapur Road. | Khandwa, Military Barracks. |
| Ambala Cantt. 31, Alexandra Road, Near Butchery. | Lahore, 30, Davis Road. |
| Bangalore, Cornwallis Barracks, Trinity Road. | Ludhiana, Sheepshank Road. |
| Belgaum, Old Telegraph Office, Bungalow No. 39. | Lucknow, Hazratganj. |
| Bezwada, Congress Office Road, Governorpet. | Madras, Puduket Lines, Mount Road, P.O. |
| Bombay, Esplanade Maidan (North), Dhobi Talao. | Narayanguni, Tan Bazar Road. |
| Caleutta, 3, May Road, Hastings. | Nagpur, Assembly Rest House. |
| Campbellpore, Opposite Supply Depot. | Patna, Exhibition Road. |
| Coimbatore, Trichy Road. | Peshawar Cantt., Jamrud Road. |
| Delhi, No. 1, Lothian Road, Kashmir Gate. | Poona, Staunton Road. |
| Hyderabad (Sind), Bungalow No. 12, Near Bhai Band Club. | Quetta, C/o The Administrative Commandant. |
| Jhelum, Jada Road. | Rawalpindi, 125, Market Road |
| Jullundur Cantt., 1, Cantonment. | Sargodha, No. 2, Civil Lines. |
| | Sialkot, Krishna Lodge, Near Bhed Nala Bridge, Kachehry Road. |
| | Trichinopoly, Madura Road. |
| | Trivandrum, Bharat Bldg., Railway Station Road. |

or to the nearest Platoon Commander W. A. C. (I).

UNIFORM According to regulation. Indian personnel can wear Saris instead of skirts, if preferred. A uniform allowance of Rs. 200 for Officers and Rs. 140 for Auxiliaries will be made, plus in both cases, an additional allowance of Rs. 40 for winter uniform in stations where it is ordered to be worn. An annual allowance of Rs. 80 for replacement after uniform has been completed and in use for 12 months, plus Rs. 10 per month for cleaning and repairs for auxiliaries.

LEAVE In accordance with normal rules for B. O. Rs. if the exigencies of the service permit. Further 31 days leave may be granted if the husband of W.A.C. (I). returns to India from Overseas. Free railway vouchers once a year from place of duty to place of leave admissible and half fare on other occasions for all personnel.



And **FORM THE INNER WALL OF INDIA**

Fig. 2: Review advertisement for the WAC(I), 1943.³⁹⁴

³⁹⁴ Anglo-Indian Review (April, 1943), 7.

When the war started Nissen received ‘an emergency commission’ but was demoted to ‘2nd lieutenant, in the first battalion of the East Indian Railway regiment’ upon its conclusion.³⁹⁵ Nissen was finally ‘called upon by army headquarters’ to resign his commission ‘on the 15th of August 47’, so his military service extended continuously from childhood until independence.³⁹⁶ He was disappointed not to get the ‘Independence Medal’, which his domiciled female friend who served in the WAC(I) until her demobilisation had received.

In presenting his case for special economic protections for Anglo-Indians at the First Round Table Conference Gidney claimed that they had given 80% of their Manhood to serve in the First World War and formed ‘27,000 out of an auxiliary force of 34,000’.³⁹⁷ Gidney argued in a note to other delegates that the AF(I) was ‘the second line of Defence of the British Army in India, and as such... [was] largely responsible in maintaining the internal peace and security of the country during civil disturbances’, and that Anglo-Indians contributed about ‘three-quarters of the AF(I) and a little less than one-third of the British Army in India.’³⁹⁸ Gidney declared that ‘with India seething with civil disobedience and revolution, you will find at all important railway stations our men standing behind sandbags with rifle in hand, protecting British and Indian lives and property.’³⁹⁹

³⁹⁵ Mss Eur R189.

³⁹⁶ *Ibid.*

³⁹⁷ *Anglo-Indian Review and Railway Union Journal* (April, 1931), 14.

³⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 11.

³⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 14.

The British Assessment

The Viceroy during the First World War, Lord Hardinge of Penshurst would later played a crucial role in advocating the Anglo-Indian cause in the run up to the 1935 Government of India Act and retrospectively claimed that Anglo-Indians had been crucial to security during his regime. A memorandum drawn up in 1907 by Mr. C. J. Stevenson-Moore of the ICS, the Officiating Director of Criminal Intelligence proposed, in response to recent rioting in the Punjab, the establishment 'of special police reserves to be composed mainly of Europeans and Eurasians'.⁴⁰⁰ To cover Bengal, Assam, UP, Punjab, Bombay and Madras the plan proposed the formation of nine European companies, five Eurasian companies, and '3 Native' companies.⁴⁰¹

Stevenson-Moore asserted that while the Gurkha Military Police were a great asset in Bengal they could not be deployed everywhere and that other native police did not 'command the confidence of Europeans on the occasion of widespread political unrest' so 'consequently the special reserves would have to be drawn from the European or Eurasian community, for there is no other class on whose loyalty the absolute reliance can be placed under all circumstances.'⁴⁰² Stevenson-Moore recounted the history of Eurasian military service:

The proposal to form an Eurasian corps was last taken up officially by the Government of India in 1899... During the mutiny three local corps were formed, viz., Lahore Light Horse, the East Indian Regiment and the Eurasian battery of Artillery... They were disbanded after a short existence – the 1st in 1864, the 2nd in 1865, the 3rd in 1870 on the ground –

- I. that the Eurasian corps cost as much as British troops;
- II. that while the same confidence was not felt in them as in British troops, they

⁴⁰⁰ NAI, Political Department, Political Branch (Confidential) 1908, File No. 42, Serial Nos. 1-4, 'Proposal for the Enrolment of a Special Police Reserve Composed Mainly of Europeans and Eurasians', 2.

⁴⁰¹ *Ibid.*, 19.

⁴⁰² *Ibid.*, 13.

could not take up the duties of native troops and required all the elaborate commissariat arrangements necessary for British soldiers.

III. that it was impossible to obtain sufficient recruits to maintain even three small corps aggregating less than 700 men;

IV. that the enforcement of discipline in these corps (indeed the very existence of such corps) was of doubtful legality.

Inefficiency or unsuitability for military service was not a ground advanced for the action taken. On the contrary Lord Canning, Sir Hugh Rose and Lord Napier of Magdala were strongly in favor of the employment of the Eurasians in the military system of India and the excellent services rendered by them during the mutiny and the Bhutan campaign were freely acknowledged by the Government.⁴⁰³

Stevenson-Moore went on to outline how the ‘various Anglo-Indian and Eurasian Associations in India have attempted on several occasions since the disbandment of these corps to induce Government to throw open military service to their community.’⁴⁰⁴ The Secretary of State rejected a proposal of this kind from the Anglo-Indian Aid Association of Bangalore and Mysore in 1875. The ‘Calcutta Association’ made repeated attempts to lobby government on the subject in 1879, 1883 and 1884.⁴⁰⁵ Similar representations were made by the Allahabad Association in 1883 and in 1884 from Madras. The 1892 Pauperism Commission put forward an Anglo-Indian regiment as a means of alleviating Anglo-Indian poverty in Calcutta, though Stevenson-Moore emphasised that his proposals were not motivated by philanthropy.

‘In 1894 the Lieutenant Governor of Bengal recommended that selected Eurasians should be admitted to British regiments, “it having been ascertained that there is in Calcutta a fairly large number of suitable Eurasians who it is believed would gladly enlist and who it is believed could make good soldiers...”’⁴⁰⁶ A joint representation of various Anglo-

⁴⁰³ *Ibid.*, 13-14.

⁴⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, 14.

⁴⁰⁵ *Ibid.*

⁴⁰⁶ *Ibid.*

Indian Associations in 1897 was rejected in 1900 as an expensive experiment ‘which in the opinion of many of the highest military authorities, no commensurate return in the shape of increased military strength would be obtained.’⁴⁰⁷ In 1901 Lord Curzon endorsed making India’s defence more independent of the need for reinforcements from Britain through ‘...the enlistment of time-expired men with the pick of Eurasians as an Indian garrison reserve... Viewed from a military standpoint our need is a second line of Europeans and Eurasians, distinct from our field troops, discharging other duties in times of peace but available on emergency to replace these troops should their services be called for beyond the frontier...’⁴⁰⁸

However, the Governors of the Punjab and Bengal rejected the idea on the grounds that such a body would usurp police functions while being less suited to them. Stevenson-Moore judged ‘that if the right class were attracted’ he had ‘personally no doubt whatsoever’ that ‘Eurasians would prove an efficient agency as special police reserves’.⁴⁰⁹ European schools paid ‘considerable attention to their physical training’.⁴¹⁰ Stevenson-Moore cited previous estimates from the Government of India (in 1899) to the Secretary of State that a Eurasian company of garrison artillery would cost ‘Rs. 1,06,571 per annum as against Rs. 1,68,450, the cost of a European company or say 1/3 less’ and from the 1892 Pauperism Committee report which estimated: ‘cost of European regiment Rs. 4,00,326, cost of Eurasian regiment Rs. 2,94,495, cost of native regiment Rs. 1,61,340. Thus a Eurasian regiment would cost about a quarter less than a European regiment and about... double a native regiment.’⁴¹¹

⁴⁰⁷ *Ibid.*

⁴⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 14-15.

⁴⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 15.

⁴¹⁰ *Ibid.*

⁴¹¹ *Ibid.*

Based on interviews of headmasters at 'European schools', Stevenson-Moore proposed that Eurasians of 17 or 18 whose 'physical qualifications are superior to their mental' would be attracted by: a five or six year engagement, including a year of training on Rs. 60, with the option of another five years on Rs. 45 to Rs. 50 and a small gratuity on discharge, with those taking their 'discharge on expiry of the first term... [receiving] no gratuity, but' having employment secured for them in the railways 'and other Government departments.'⁴¹² Stevenson-Moore compared the cost of a company of special reserves of native police (Bengalis) at Rs. 20,000 per annum or Rs. 30,000 in Eastern Bengal and Assam with a similar company composed of Eurasians anticipated at 'about Rs. 60,000 to Rs. 70,000 per annum.'⁴¹³ Stevenson-Moore argued that the cost differential was more than compensated for by the advantages for 'one or two companies of police recruited for this class would strengthen very considerably the hands of a local government, for their loyalty could be relied on absolutely while their knowledge of the people and the language would render them very useful for work in small bodies in the interior. The latter was an advantage on which those with mutiny experiences fresh in their minds laid great stress.'⁴¹⁴

In 1912, in response to an Anglo-Indian petition, the Government of India established a Committee to consider recruiting an Anglo-Indian regiment which again interviewed

⁴¹² Stevenson-Moore, 'Proposal', 15.

⁴¹³ *Ibid.*

⁴¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 18.

headmasters about the suitability of 'Anglo-Indian lads' for military service.⁴¹⁵ Stevenson-Moore's proposals were not enacted, nor was an Anglo-Indian regiment sanctioned until 1916. However, the large number of Anglo-Indians on the railways were viewed by government as 'European British Subjects' for defence purposes (even while their status as 'Statutory Natives of India' was upheld for employment purposes) and were for the most part compulsorily drafted into the AF(I) which brought them into industrial and other conflict with their fellow Indians, but helped the imperial state to maintain the security of the railways and to break strikes that could render British and Indian Army units immobile in a crisis.

Hutchins has argued that as the British were 'unable to ignore' Anglo-Indian claims to identification with 'the dominant racial community... they tried to find ways to use them to advantage... [by creating] an area of reserved employment for Anglo-Indians at the lower, technical levels of British Government, most notably in the railroads. The status level was appropriately marginal, but respectable, and such a reservation served the further purpose of lodging the strategic technical services in compulsively loyal hands.'⁴¹⁶ The strategic importance of railways for Raj security was amplified by the fact that there were never enough British or even Indian Army units to effectively combat widespread civil unrest.

The British had developed plans in meticulous detail to quell and combat a major and widespread uprising, based on their experiences during the Mutiny, involving 'movable

⁴¹⁵ NAI, Political Department, Miscellaneous Branch (Confidential), 1912, File No. M/25, Serial Nos. 1-2, 'Question of Raising From the Domiciled Anglo-Indian Community a Regiment for Military Service in India', 5.

⁴¹⁶ Hutchins, *Spontaneous Revolution*, 26.

columns' of regular and auxiliary troops.⁴¹⁷ Garrisons were placed in military cantonments (often on the outskirts of cities) intended to remain where they were and to hold vital positions that would awe the surrounding population, while 'movable columns could be deployed to aid civil power anywhere away from their usual base and at short notice.'⁴¹⁸ Cantonments were considered crucial to the maintenance of peace and civil order, their presence, like that of visual displays of marching regular or AF(I) troops, would, the authorities believed, deter uprisings or potentially dangerous public gatherings. 'Full-fledged cantonments existed in Allahabad, Banaras, Kanpur, Fategarh, Lucknow, Bareilly, Dehra Dun, Meerut and Agra.'⁴¹⁹

One particularly vital link in Raj security was the 'Fort cantonment in Allahabad' which as 'the "only wireless installation between Calcutta and Delhi"' was the most important wireless installation in northern India.⁴²⁰ The city itself had a garrison of two British battalions of infantry, 'three companies of Indian infantry guarded the railways, and a further two British infantry battalions, a squadron of Indian cavalry and a section of RFA served as movable columns positioned in cantonment areas for rapid redeployment in any crisis.'⁴²¹ Strategic locations usually had city garrisons, military companies specifically tasked with protecting the railways and movable troop columns which often outnumbered the garrison troops. 'In Gorakhpur, one armoured train was positioned to facilitate rapid troops movement across several eastern districts, which did not have any internal security troops at all.'⁴²²

⁴¹⁷ G. Kudaisya, *Region, Nation, "Heartland": Uttar Pradesh in India's Body Politic* (New Delhi, 2006), 97, 100-101.

⁴¹⁸ *Ibid.*

⁴¹⁹ *Ibid.*

⁴²⁰ *Ibid.*

⁴²¹ *Ibid.*, 97-98.

⁴²² *Ibid.*, 98.

These plans for an extreme circumstance, but also actions which were actually implemented to combat more localised episodes of unrest during the last decades of the Raj, relied upon safe and secure railways to rapidly redeploy troops from the strategic junctions at which they were based to hotspots of trouble. Both the Army and the Police were thinly stretched. 'The UP government was', for example, 'not confident about the defence of communication and railway lines' and the Indian infantry or auxiliary battalions which comprised much of the movable columns 'were often regarded as second-rate.'⁴²³ The Raj often relied on bluff to maintain its internal security – the highly visual parading of troops to cow the population, even when total troop numbers were just barely enough to put on such a show.⁴²⁴

On grounds of economy both the Pownall Committee (which reported in 1938) and the Chatfield Committee (appointed in 1938 and whose recommendations were implemented the following year) found it necessary to advocate reductions in British internal security troops. The Pownall Committee argued that 'greater mobility of the internal security garrison as a result of enhanced means of transport and communication' would reduce the impact of the reductions (further emphasising the security importance of railways and telegraphs).⁴²⁵ The Chatfield Committee planned for a 'worst case scenario' of a 'world war accompanied by hostilities on the Frontier and widespread civil unrest' and recommended that the first priority was the 'protection of the strategic railway which is essential to safeguard... the armed forces'.⁴²⁶

⁴²³ *Ibid.*, 99.

⁴²⁴ See *Ibid.*, 94-95, 104-106.

⁴²⁵ *Ibid.*, 112.

⁴²⁶ "Paper on the Reservation of Defence (Indian RTC) and the Expert Committee on Defence of India, 1931-39", IOL/L/Mil/5/886, cited in *Ibid.*, 113.

Gidney and Nissen's evidence supports the contention that when Anglo-Indians joined the railways they were virtually conscripted into the AF(I) as a term of their employment. So in addition to securing the day to day functioning of the railways through their loyalty, Anglo-Indians too could provide a very visual presence on the railways in their topees (or pith helmets) with their rifles at the ready whenever they needed to be called in during a crisis as a second line of defence. Colonel Tony Mains of the 9th Gurkhas, who would ultimately become Chief Intelligence Officer of Central Command India in 1946, travelled extensively by rail in India and commented that 'The Senior railway Officers were mostly Europeans, but the remainder of the staff were Indians, except for a sizeable minority of Anglo-Indians... They were found as Drivers and Firemen in the top links and as Foremen in the Railway Workshops – a few were Stationmasters of the more important stations and the Conductors on Mail trains were invariably Anglo-Indians.'⁴²⁷

It is interesting that Anglo-Indians tended to be placed in charge of more important stations and that they were more prominent on the Mail than the passenger trains, as like the telegraphs the Mail trains were crucial to the Raj's communications infrastructure. In the context of such a thin line of security, often involving a degree of ostentatious bluff,⁴²⁸ a small minority of loyal Anglo-Indians employed in large proportions in key strategic services could and did make a critical difference to the maintenance of Raj security. That the security significance of the railways and telegraphs was also recognised by violent nationalists is highlighted by figures provided by Hutchins: prior to October 1942 damage to railway tracks 'was so widespread... and varied so greatly in extent, that it is impossible

⁴²⁷ A. Mains (1994), *A Soldier with Railways* (Chippenham, 1994), 17.

⁴²⁸ Kudaisya, *Region, Nation, "Heartland"*, 108.

to give detailed figures. The cost of such damage was approximately Rs. 9 lakhs'.⁴²⁹ Hutchins was able to give statistics 'connected with the Congress Disturbances for the Period Ending 31st December 1943' during which 332 Railway Stations were 'destroyed or seriously damaged'; there were 268 'cases of serious damage to rolling stock'; 66 'derailments or other accidents resulting from sabotage'; and during one year alone 411 Railway tracks were seriously damaged. The estimated loss to Railway property was Rs. 52,00,000. Similarly 945 Posts and Telegraph offices or sub-offices were 'destroyed or severely damaged' and there were 12,286 'cases of destruction or serious damage to other property (telegraphs and telephones)'.⁴³⁰

The fact that Anglo-Indians were so heavily employed in vital strategic services (Railways, Telegraphs, Customs) often on rates of pay (more or less disguised by elaborate gradations of rank and remuneration) higher than Indian counterparts can be argued to be mere historical accident, but it would seem unusual when the British put so much thought into the management and maintenance of their empire in India for this to be mere accident. Back in 1879 Dr. Chambers, the President of the Anglo-Indian Association (a forerunner to 'the Association') read a paper entitled 'Anglo-Indian Prospects in India' in which he argued for:

the conversion of the *Railways* into a *Reserve Military Service*... By having a Military Reserve employed in such a largely ramified service as the railways, India could safely dispense with a portion of her standing European Army... So would the military reserves be an attraction to the better class of East Indians [Anglo-Indians] to join the ranks of the *Local European Army*. Besides the Railway I would urge the importance of converting the Indian Telegraph Department into a Military service... The Railway and Telegraph services are always under military requisition and of the greatest political importance during war or civil disorder. These two services should

⁴²⁹ 'Statistics Connected with the Congress Disturbances for the Period Ending 31st December 1943. Source: NAI, File No. : 3/52/43 Poll. (I). Part II.', cited in Hutchins, *Spontaneous Revolution*, 339.

⁴³⁰ *Ibid.*

be absolutely and entirely under military regulation. [author's emphasis]⁴³¹

British rule was a far more fragile affair than it appeared at the time or even with hindsight; it had always relied substantially on the consent and acquiescence of the ruled. The paper-thin line of armed force and policing which secured that rule frequently relied on bluff and spectacularly visual displays of force. In that context, ensuring the transport and communications of an Army that needed to be rapidly redeployed by rail in the event of a crisis and providing an additional line of defence to guard this key strategic infrastructure of rule, fulfilled a vital function in Raj security.

We have seen in this chapter that Anglo-Indians contributed in impressive numbers to Britain's efforts in the First World War. There is also significant evidence that Anglo-Indians made similar contributions in the Second World War. The limited focus of this chapter has been to emphasise a record which Anglo-Indians used to foster a sense of communal pride and identity and which Gidney deployed extensively in his arguments for special protection and consideration from the British. The significance of the AF(I) in peacetime has also come into sharp focus. We have seen that there are sources which reveal British assessments of the important role a small, but loyal, community could play in buttressing the security of the Raj and its strategic infrastructure. More significantly, it has been argued that the logic of Anglo-Indian and Domiciled European employment (with higher remuneration than their Indian colleagues and subordinates), in the key strategic services (alongside compulsory AF(I) service) of the railways and telegraphs (the transport and communication infrastructure of the Raj) which were crucial to the rapid and secure redeployment of a limited and overstretched number of British troops in movable

⁴³¹ Chambers, *Anglo-Indian Prospects*, pamphlet, 13-14.

troop columns, cannot have been mere accident. The preoccupation of even those, such as Stevenson-Moore, who advocated wider use of Anglo-Indians and Domiciled Europeans in Raj security, with justifying all proposed measures with cost-savings and on grounds of economy, help us to make a powerful case that the differential pay of the Raj's socio-racial employment hierarchy was calculated and deliberate. Anglo-Indians role as defenders of the Raj resulted in distrust and disapprobation from Indian nationalists and wider Indian society.

Chapter V: Political Strategies

From around the turn of the century until the end of the First World War, the Anglo-Indian community enjoyed the most favourable economic and employment prospects that they ever would in India. The decades that followed were to prove an increasingly difficult environment in which to adapt to declining levels of recruitment into government services, and Gidney, president of the Association and nominated representative of the community in the Legislative Assembly from 1920,⁴³² was to present a picture of dire decline relative to the first two decades of the 20th Century in a manner which might lead us to think that hardship was something new for Anglo-Indians – it was not.

Anglo-Indians had to adapt to unforeseen and major changes initiated by the 1919 Government of India Act (bringing with it Indianisation policies and pressure on Anglo-Indian state and railway employment from the legislatures which had been set up), followed by world-wide economic depression during the interwar years and resulting retrenchment for the Government services. Feeling the economic pressure of these changes Anglo-Indians sought greater political organisation and unity in order to present their case in the run up to the 1935 Government of India Act, as well as devising a range of strategies to deal with their increasingly difficult circumstances. Amidst fear and uncertainty the more escapist options of colonisation and emigration provided two powerful alternatives to the general thrust of Anglo-Indian political activity.

⁴³² *Anglo-Indian Review and Railway Union Journal* (June, 1931), 7.

The Nineteenth Century

In 1829 the Ricketts petition to Parliament complained of Eurasians' exclusion from the legal protections afforded to 'British subjects', and from most employment by the Company. Though the Company had earlier officially encouraged unions between its soldiers and Indian and mixed race women as a way of grounding them in India,⁴³³ the swelling population of the offspring of such unions had come to be regarded as potentially dangerous in light of the behaviour of mixed race populations in leading insurrections against colonial rule in the Americas as had happened in Haiti. The competition of such mixed race offspring for employment also deprived the Company of additional patronage.⁴³⁴ Anglo-Indians like Kenneth Wallace later argued that 'the Directors of the East India Company... were mere avaricious people, determined to keep the gains to themselves and their own kind, with the result that Eurasians were shut out of the service of their fathers...'⁴³⁵

Hawes has argued that Anglo-Indian authors engaging in 'polemical' political advocacy postulated 'a deliberate policy of destruction, formulated by the British and aimed at eroding opportunities for the Anglo-Indian community... but there are many cases of repression which were cited by Stark and Anthony that are misleading.'⁴³⁶ Appearing 'before select committees of both Houses of Parliament' Ricketts' cogent and detailed responses were countered by William Chaplin, who had served the Company in western India, and who claimed that high caste Hindus, owing to their distaste for caste

⁴³³ 'The marriage of our soldiers to the native women of Fort St. George... is a matter of such consequence to posterity, that we shall be content to encourage it with some expense, and... to appoint a pagoda to be paid to the mother of any child... if you think this small encouragement will increase the number of such marriages.', Dispatch from 'Court of Directors to the President of Madras... 1687', cited in E. Hedin, 'The Anglo-Indian Community', *American Journal of Sociology*, 40:2 (Sep., 1934), 166-167.

⁴³⁴ Ballhatchet, *Race, Sex and Class*, 97.

⁴³⁵ *Anglo-Indian Review and Railway Union Journal* (March, 1931), 25.

⁴³⁶ D'cruz, 'Christopher Hawes in Conversation'.

intermarriage, particularly despised Eurasians.⁴³⁷ Ricketts countered this claim with examples of outstanding Eurasian military officers in the Company's service and that of various Indian rulers.⁴³⁸ Ballhatchet argues that prevailing stereotypes played against the Eurasian case – they were regarded as feckless, deficient in character and morals, lacking in enterprise, ability and energy – and that these paralleled those which would be 'applied to Western-educated Bengalis, or *babus*, later in the century.'⁴³⁹ Both groups, with their knowledge of India, might otherwise have had stronger claims to responsible posts in Company service than some of the newly arrived Englishmen.⁴⁴⁰

Occasionally their anomalous legal status could work to Eurasians' advantage as one letter to a newspaper complained in 1823: 'what no *English* editor could have printed, without risking immediate banishment from the country, was printed by the Indo-British Editor with confidence, from his being exempt from this arbitrary power...'⁴⁴¹ The Charter Act of 1833 also mollified some of the restrictions on Eurasians' employment and extended to them the protections of English Civil Law.⁴⁴² The 1879 Chambers paper, noted that since Ricketts' petition 'no combined movement appears to have been made until 1876, when... an Association was formed for promoting the social and intellectual advancement of domiciled Europeans and Eurasians, and last year, a weekly newspaper – *the Anglo-Indian Guardian* – was started...'⁴⁴³ Chambers lamented that this Association though three years old had so far 'failed to enlist the cordial sympathy of the powers that be.'⁴⁴⁴ Chambers argued that it was not tenable to blame Eurasians for the lack of provision for their

⁴³⁷ Ballhatchet, *Race, Sex and Class*, 98.

⁴³⁸ *Ibid.*

⁴³⁹ *Ibid.*, 99.

⁴⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

⁴⁴¹ *The Morning Chronicle* (London, September 4, 1823).

⁴⁴² Sutherland, *Grievances of the East Indian Community*, pamphlet.

⁴⁴³ Chambers, *Anglo-Indian Prospects*, pamphlet, 1.

⁴⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

educational needs:

Old records of Government offices, and even the Mercantile service, show that East Indians at one time almost entirely monopolized appointments of writers, accountants, and general assistants... Even so late as 1861, scholarships... to the Bengal Medical College students were exclusively reserved for Natives... The feeble efforts of the Eurasian and Anglo-Indian Association... have already been directed towards subsidizing a few Schools and paying the fees of several poor children...⁴⁴⁵

Chambers' focus was finding 'the means for the employment of the daily increasing Eurasian and domiciled European population.'⁴⁴⁶ Chambers attacked the deportation of 'poor whites' to Europe noting that many 'a soldier marries among the East Indians, and many there are who would gladly do so if they saw the prospects of making a happy home in the country.'⁴⁴⁷

Chambers' paper encapsulated an embryonic set of ideas and strategies for the advancement of what he saw as a poor and ill-treated community. His concerns were more philanthropic and in contrast to later phases of Anglo-Indian political engagement foresaw no significant constitutional change that would further threaten the livelihood of what he thought of as a conjoined Eurasian and Domiciled European community. Chambers' emphasis had continuity with later Anglo-Indian political developments – education and employment were key. Chambers' call for Eurasian admission to the armed forces continued to be made. Chambers' description of model hill station settlements foreshadowed Anglo-Indian colonisation schemes. His arguments for the railways and Telegraphs constituting a reserve military force closely mirrored the manner in which the AF(I) came to compulsorily conscript Anglo-Indian and Domiciled European railwaymen

⁴⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 4-5.

⁴⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 6.

⁴⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 12.

to break strikes and provide security for the Raj and its railways.

The Start of the Twentieth Century

By the start of the Twentieth Century there were an assortment of Anglo-Indian Associations and bodies serving various functions in different parts of the country, often headed by Britons or Europeans and retaining their foundational philanthropic emphasis. Abbott headed the Anglo-Indian Empire League (henceforth Empire League), which had loosely federated with several Anglo-Indian Associations to organise wartime recruitment. However, in 1916 the Federal Council of four Anglo-Indian Associations and the General Council of the Empire League ‘each addressed the Government of India directly independent of the other.’⁴⁴⁸ In 1917 Abbott, prompted by ‘the impending visit of Mr. Montagu to India... took steps to institute a single united Council’ under a new broader Federation.⁴⁴⁹ It had a Federal Council made up of members from the Empire League’s branches at Bombay, Karachi, Lahore, Rangoon and the United Provinces and Anglo-Indian Associations at Allahabad, Calcutta, Madras, ‘Mysore and Coorg’.⁴⁵⁰

The Federation was far from including all then-extant Anglo-Indian organisations; there was, for example, another prominent League in Burma.⁴⁵¹ The Empire League functioned as one body with four votes on the Federal Council (and in 1918, the President was Abbott of the League who held an additional vote *ex-officio*) while the four regionally based Anglo-Indian Associations were only loosely affiliated with each other under their own Federal Council and each held a vote, thus balancing the voting power of the Empire

⁴⁴⁸ L. Ingels, *Anglo-Indian Amalgamation: the Pressing Need of the Community*, pamphlet (Calcutta, 1918), 21-22.

⁴⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 23.

⁴⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 30.

⁴⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 21.

League with the Associations and giving the tie-breaker to the President of the Federal Council.⁴⁵²

Reverend Oswald Younghusband, presumably a philanthropically-minded Briton, the President of the Punjab Provincial Branch of the Empire League, penned a note circa 1918 which argued that as the existing 'Federation could not deal with political matters without endangering the position of the league and the Associations... that the Government be approached with a view to allowing the Federation to be the political mouth-piece of the community'.⁴⁵³ The previous December a decision had been taken by the Empire League that it 'would not interfere with politics' which effectively made the Federation, of which it formed a part, non-political in nature.⁴⁵⁴ The issue of the political or non-political nature of Anglo-Indian organisations retained significance until independence as an impediment to implementing amalgamation raised by Anglo-Indian leaders who purported to support amalgamation in principle. The real issue underlying these power struggles was which body would effectively assimilate the other, on what terms, with which geographic headquarters and with which leader ultimately being in charge of the new amalgamated organisation.

Political or non-political status was however made of key significance by British attempts to control and channel Anglo-Indian organisation as part of a wider attempt to shape colonial politics. 'Government Servant's Conduct Rules' (specifically 'rule 21') prohibited government servants from taking part in or subscribing 'in aid of any political

⁴⁵² *Ibid.*, 32.

⁴⁵³ Cited in *Ibid.*, 22-23.

⁴⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 23.

movement in India or relating to Indian affairs.’⁴⁵⁵ Such rules could easily be justified as ensuring the neutrality of government employees, preventing their using their positions for political purposes (through acts of office or merely through the prestige they acquired from their office), and preventing the infiltration of government by political agitators. However, they also served the wider purpose of limiting the growth of political movements in the colonial setting and preventing a large amount of potential political patronage through donations or subscriptions by employees of the state. These rules were not formulated with the Anglo-Indians in mind, but neither were Provincial and Central Government prepared to relax them in the Anglo-Indian case, even though Anglo-Indians were proportionally prominent in the employment of the state and allied services such as the railways which were in the process of being nationalised during the early 20th Century. This created a very real problem for Anglo-Indian political organisation as most of the potential leaders of the community and those most able to fund Anglo-Indian political efforts, were the more successful Anglo-Indian employees in state service.

In 1914 the Government of India examined the question of government servants being members of the Empire League and judged that they could be so ‘As long as the *activities of the League are confined to the social or material advancement* of the Domiciled and Anglo-Indian Community’ such as ‘the promotion of agricultural colonies for Anglo-Indians, or the enlargement of careers for Anglo-Indian youths, whether in the Army or otherwise. If, however, the League embarks on any political agitation, *e.g.* for its electoral representation in the Legislative Councils or *for or against* measures advanced by Government or by members of other communities, then the Association of Government

⁴⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 35.

servants with the League at once becomes objectionable.’⁴⁵⁶ [Original emphases] By withholding any relaxation of the rules the Government sought to shape Anglo-Indian communal efforts towards its long-standing preference for philanthropic activities (including, interestingly, Agricultural Colonisation Schemes). However, exceptionally in 1910 the Government of Bengal relaxed the rules to allow state employees to join the Calcutta Anglo-Indian Association, and even become office-bearers, provided that they ‘abstain from taking any part in’ any political activities by the Association.⁴⁵⁷

Such rules retarded the growth of effective and unified Anglo-Indian political organisation and structured a context in which early Anglo-Indian political infighting would take place. This context created contradictory incentives, where the organisations which declared themselves non-political were able to attract more members and funds, while those which declared themselves to be political limited their membership, funding and growth potential but retained the right to speak on behalf of the community. Most Anglo-Indian bodies (the Empire League and the Associations of Madras, Allahabad, ‘Mysore and Coorg’) had opted to declare themselves non-political by 1918,⁴⁵⁸ while owing to the exceptional stance of the Government of Bengal the Calcutta Association sought to maintain its significance by remaining political so that it could purport to represent all Anglo-Indians to the Indian Government. As the most prominent leader of the largest unified organisation in Anglo-India Abbott clearly would not consent to more effective amalgamation unless he remained in charge of the new body and absorbed the Associations.

⁴⁵⁶ Cited in *Ibid.*, 35-36.

⁴⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 19.

⁴⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 25.

Lionel Ingels, President of the Calcutta Association, wrote a book in 1918 arguing for amalgamation and presenting the following case for his own organisation becoming the ‘parent body’: his organisation had remained political and been allowed by the Government of Bengal to admit government servants, even as office-bearers, provided they abstain from political activities; was recognised ‘by the Bengal Government’ and ‘also by the Government of India as the responsible and representative body for domiciled interests’; was founded in 1876 and had ‘a good record of 42 year’s work in the interests of the domiciled community’; and was headquartered in Calcutta, the former imperial capital which had the ‘largest number of the domiciled community’.⁴⁵⁹ As President of the Federation wielding five votes (including his *ex officio* vote) to Ingels one vote, Abbott had no reason to agree to amalgamation under the Calcutta Association. Ingels, perhaps rightly, accused Abbott of ‘saying he was in favour of amalgamation, whilst tacitly opposing it...’⁴⁶⁰

Abbott and C. T. Robbie (of Allahabad, the Secretary of the Federation) responded that choosing a ‘head office for all India’ for the Federation or any future amalgamated body could not be done on the basis of eight Councillors votes but ‘would have to be referred to each of the 70 odd branches, and then rest on a majority of votes’ asking Ingels if was ‘confident enough’ that Calcutta would be chosen, and declaring that he himself would be happy to abide by the outcome of such a vote.⁴⁶¹ In 1918 Abbott offered to host Federation annual meetings in Jhansi, at the same time another potential rival, ‘the Bombay Councillor... Gidney’ made an early power play by offering to entertain the other councillors if the Federation would opt to have its meeting in his geographic base of

⁴⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 19.

⁴⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 9.

⁴⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 14.

Bombay.⁴⁶² Abbott and Robbie rejected other of Ingels' proposals for amalgamation on the basis that they were 'infinitely more ponderous and utterly impracticable' than the existing Federation, as 'in the event of amalgamation, there would now be 65 to 70 branches, and this number might very soon be largely increased' making Ingels' suggestion that 'each branch send two members as occasion requires to attend Council meetings' a financially and logistically unrealistic exercise merely in terms of train tickets and housing.⁴⁶³ The geographic spread of Anglo-Indians was emphasised as Abbott and Robbie pointed out that the Empire League's Annual Conference struggled to do this for around '40 delegates', while Ingels was suggesting more regular gatherings of '140 delegates'.⁴⁶⁴

Abbott's Leadership

In 1920 Major Hankin gave a speech at 'an Extraordinary General Meeting of the Jhansi Branch' of the Empire League:

...we had no Communal Organisation of any recognised standing untill [sic] in 1910, Mr. J. H. Abbott O.B.E.,⁴⁶⁵ V.D.,⁴⁶⁶ shouldered the Cause of our people, as President-in-Chief of the Anglo-Indian Empire League, which he has gradually built... till it eventually came to be recognised by the Governmentt [sic]... Mr. Abbott spared himself no trouble and expense... toured the length and breadth of India, opening out branches everywhere... All of us here know what a busy man Mr. Abbott is, being a member of the Cantonment Committee, a Municipal Councilor, and having an extensive business to control...⁴⁶⁷

⁴⁶² *Ibid.*, 31.

⁴⁶³ *Ibid.* 13.

⁴⁶⁴ *Ibid.*

⁴⁶⁵ 'Officers of the Civil Division of the said Most Excellent Order' of the British Empire, 'India', appearing in 'Supplement to the London Gazette', *London Gazette* (8 January, 1919), 452-461, available [online] at <http://www.london-gazette.co.uk/issues/31114/supplements/461/page.pdf>

⁴⁶⁶ Volunteer Officers' Decoration (1892-1908), for 'efficient and capable' officers of the Volunteer Force, precursor to the Auxiliary Force (India)

⁴⁶⁷ NAI, Legislative Department, Assembly Council Branch, Progs. No. 85, Part-B, Speeches (Feb. 1921): 'Anglo-India in the Imperial Legislative Council. 1913-14, 1914-15, 1915-16. During the tenure of Office of the Hon'ble Captain J. H. Abbott, V.D.', 2nd Edn., Jhansi, Printed at the Albion Press, 1920, pamphlet.

Abbott had complex family ties to India, but had certainly married into the domiciled world, where he was unusual in having a successful family business. Trading under the name ‘Abbott Brothers, Irrigation and Building Contractors’ alongside G. C. Abbott and Captain R. L. Abbott they had managed work on various dam projects ranging in cost from around ‘Rs. 35,00,000’ to ‘Rs. 10,00,000’.⁴⁶⁸ Abbott used his personal wealth to pursue politics, and had apparently rescued the finances of the Empire League's Central Office (alternately located in Calcutta and Bombay) four times, as in 1918 when he personally settled liabilities of Rs. 3000, temporarily relocated the operation to Jhansi (where he resided) and within six months achieved a surplus of Rs. 8000.⁴⁶⁹ Under Abbott’s leadership the League was built up to 70 branches across India, all of which sent delegates to attend a 1916 Conference at Abbott’s Jhansi home.⁴⁷⁰ Between 1913 and 1916 Abbott was nominated by the Viceroy, Lord Hardinge, to serve on the Imperial Legislative Council. Hardinge’s successor Lord Chelmsford wrote confidentially to Abbott in 1916 regretting that though Abbott had acquitted himself with ‘distinction’ on the Council, he had felt compelled to recognise the services of the ‘His Majesty's Indian Army’ instead of renominating Abbott.⁴⁷¹

During his time on the Council Abbott urged the government to: admit Anglo-Indians to the commissioned ranks of the armed forces and to create Anglo-Indian units; to attach their volunteer railway units to regular British Army units for periodic training; to improve the pay and conditions of service in the Indian Subordinate Medical Department and to drop the term ‘Subordinate’ from its name (henceforth IMD); to ‘consider the advisability

⁴⁶⁸ NAI, Legislative Department, Assembly Council Branch: Progs. No. 85, Part-B (Feb. 1921): Letter from J. H. Abbott to W. S. Marris, 27. 7. 1920.

⁴⁶⁹ ‘Anglo-India in the Imperial Legislative Council’, pamphlet.

⁴⁷⁰ *Ibid.*

⁴⁷¹ NAI, Legislative Department, Assembly Council Branch, Progs. Nos. 85, Part-B (Feb. 1921): ‘Letter from Chelmsford to J. H. Abbott’.

of aiding and supporting Anglo-Indian Settlements in India and encouraging British soldiers and Territorials on the completion of their service to settle in them⁴⁷²; to prevent educational scholarships for Anglo-Indians being given to Indians with English names; to furnish information on Anglo-Indians in the Police Department and the Post Office, their rates of promotion and whether they were ‘debarred from appointments as Superintendents merely on the ground that they are Anglo-Indians and have not the necessary social qualifications for higher appointments’⁴⁷³; to extend house rent allowance to members of the Local Service of the Telegraph Department; to grant pensions, furloughs, better pay and conditions for women teachers at Anglo-Indian schools and to encourage men to enter the profession through the establishment of training colleges for male teachers; to ascertain whether ‘Indians in the guise of European costume and names enter for examinations purely intended for Europeans and Anglo-Indians, and passing the examinations are stamped as Anglo-Indians’⁴⁷⁴; to address the University of Madras on the question of why, unlike other Indian universities they refused to accept the Cambridge Senior Examination Certificate as equivalent to the Matriculation Examination for admission; to respond to various memorials from Anglo-Indian Associations that retired officials, widows and orphans be exempted from income tax on pensions; to improve the pay of subordinate grades of railway employment; to allow promotion from the subordinate to the superior grades in the railways and the Military Accounts Department; to provide information on decorations granted to Anglo-Indian subordinate officials in state and railway service; to consider wartime reemployment of Anglo-Indian pensioners from the Railway, Telegraph, Police, Salt and Forest Departments and from Civil, Mechanical and Electrical Engineering professions in the manufacturing of munitions; to

⁴⁷² *Ibid.*, 6.

⁴⁷³ *Ibid.*, 15.

⁴⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 19.

encourage large scale irrigation projects (in which Abbott's own business was concerned, and which opened up the possibility for new land colonisation schemes); to oppose further nationalisations of railway companies; and to improve the diets of children in European Boarding Schools.

Abbott's work on the Imperial Legislative Council primarily concerned the interests of Anglo-Indians in education and employment, particularly their pay and promotion prospects. Abbott's suggestion for further training for the Volunteer Force was not adopted but he was 'chosen to assist the Select Committee which sat at Delhi to consider the I.D.F. Bill.'⁴⁷⁵

The Rise of Gidney

A political challenge emerged to Abbott from Henry Albert John Gidney (1873-1942), who ran against him to become President of the Anglo-Indian Empire League. Anglo-Indian writing about prominent Anglo-Indians has a tendency towards hyperbole and Manichean expressions of hagiography and scathing personal criticism. This appears to be due in part to the close-knit size of Anglo-Indian communities, even when scattered across such a large geographic space, which intensified personal rivalries. Hero-worship of leaders of the community amongst their supporters was likely fostered by the awareness of the stakes involved in communal fratricide. Anglo-Indians felt themselves already subjected to racially discriminating social condescension from transient Britons, which materially affected their lives and prospects – they therefore seemed to possess an acute awareness of the cost of internal strife. As a numerically tiny minority Anglo-Indians needed to convey a straightforward and unitary message to government and the press,

⁴⁷⁵ 'Anglo-India in the Imperial Legislative Council', pamphlet.

support of whoever was at the helm of Anglo-Indian efforts to secure concessions from government during phases of constitutional reform was deemed essential, which encouraged what Anglo-Indians themselves sometimes called ‘dictatorship’ by their leaders and sycophancy from supporters.

As Gidney would later revealingly comment in 1935 it was ‘no time for petty differences of opinion... no time for the exercise of personal jealousies or self-aggrandisement. More than ever to-day we need unity, and the subordination of personal ambition in community matters to the common good. Everywhere I look in India I see other communities making hay with the grass that grows under our feet.’⁴⁷⁶ Even with a clear message and no discordant notes of dissent Anglo-Indians demands might easily be overlooked in any negotiation between larger and more significant communities. Seats granted to Anglo-Indians in provincial legislatures were often uncontested, and Association-endorsed candidates were likely to have a walk-through in any actual contest. In this context the attempt by Gidney to wrest control of the Empire League from Abbott was extremely acrimonious and left lasting bitterness with the defeated Abbott.

The theme of Anglo-Indian leaders sacrificing their health and personal finances in gallant defence of communal efforts – conducting vital campaigns from their sickbed against medical advice – is an oft repeated one. The pamphlet compiled on the Anglo-Indian Force begins with a biographical account of Captain Abbott depicted in military attire and his gargantuan efforts to recruit for and get government to sanction the Force.⁴⁷⁷ Lieutenant-Colonel Gidney, President of the Bombay Branch of the Empire League

⁴⁷⁶ *Anglo-Indian Review* (January, 1936), 17.

⁴⁷⁷ *Anglo-Indian Force*, pamphlet, 3.

appears on page 55 also in military attire with an impressive array of postnominals and described thus:

Though practically unknown to the Anglo-Indian Force... few have been more to the front in connection with its “welcome home” than... Gidney [who]... received his early education at Baldwin's High School, Bangalore, and thereafter at St. Peter's, Bombay. In 1890 he entered the Calcutta Medical College... [secured] that much coveted distinction the “Blue Ribbon of Science”, numerous] gold medals... and... an ‘honours in every subject’ record... [and] his diploma in 1894... [Gidney] was at once posted... to the Civil Medical Department... he was [later] granted 6 months' furlough to England... passed the L.S.A. (London)... [then] the L.M.S... returned to India in 1898 as a Lieutenant in the I.M.S.... served in the notorious Boxer rising in China... distinguished himself in the Tulu Explosion when single handed he saved many lives... was invalided to England... obtaining his F.R.C.S. He entered Cambridge University and there secured the D.P.H. Degree... In 1910 he passed the D.O. Examination, Oxford... [where] he was post graduate Lecturer at Oxford University in Ophthalmology... For research work in connection with cataract[s he was]... elected an F.R.S. in 1911... [Later] he was posted as Civil Surgeon of Kohima... [participating in] the punitive expedition against the Naga tribes... [where] with only a sub-assistant surgeon and an orderly defended a stockade from 10 a.m. till about 7 p.m. against overwhelming odds... In January 1917... was complemented by the Commander-in-Chief who declared Col. Gidney's Hospital for Indian Troops the best he had ever seen... [Since retirement] he has taken an active part on the Recruiting Committee... [and] has been specially thanked by the Governor of Bombay... When... Anglo-Indians secure representation on the Legislative Assembly few champions would be found better fitted to represent their claims...⁴⁷⁸

Lord Lloyd who was to help Gidney secure an amendment to the 1935 Government of India Act in the House of Lords giving statutory safeguards for Anglo-Indian employment and education, had been the Governor of Bombay and later recalled before an Anglo-Indian Luncheon in London in 1935 how ‘it was under my aegis that Sir Henry first abandoned a lucrative medical practice in which he had achieved distinction as an ophthalmic surgeon in order to champion the cause in 1919... of the then ill-organised and scattered Anglo-Indian community... I remember well – I was going to say to my cost – and also pleasure, the energy and assiduity with which in the earliest days of his public

⁴⁷⁸ *Anglo-Indian Force*, pamphlet, 55-56.

career, he espoused the cause of those members of the community in Bombay who, on the demobilisation of the Anglo-Indian Units from Mesopotamia and elsewhere, found themselves confronted by economic disabilities and difficulties.⁴⁷⁹

However, the claim which Gidney often repeated through his postnominals that he had been elected as a Fellow of the Royal Society was false,⁴⁸⁰ in contributing to the British Medical Journal he later deployed the letters 'F.R.S.Ed' indicating that he had meant to say the Royal Society of Edinburgh.⁴⁸¹ While in London courting the international press Gidney was not shy in embellishing his achievements, giving interviews to Australasian newspapers describing his exploits as a tiger-hunting ophthalmologic surgeon in grandiose hyperbole: 'One half of my day I endeavoured to devote to killing and the other to curing. But one day I had to perform 62 operations for cataract, finishing by the light of candles... and felt I deserved a little jungle excitement.'⁴⁸² Gidney went on to describe shooting two tigers in quick succession without reloading, in the presence of the 'late Maharajah of Mymensingh', and claimed a total of 53 tiger kills to his name.⁴⁸³

The pamphlet on 'Anglo-India in the Imperial Legislative Council... During the tenure of Office of the Hon'ble Captain J. H. Abbott...' seems to have been compiled in order to bolster Abbott's position as leader and within it the Chairman's Speech in 1920 declared

⁴⁷⁹ *Anglo-Indian Review* (January, 1936), 12-13.

⁴⁸⁰ Gidney is absent from: The Royal Society, 2007, 'List of Fellows of the Royal Society 1660 – 2007: A complete listing of all Fellows and Foreign Members since the foundation of the Society', *The Royal Society: Library and Information Services* [online], 137, available at

http://royalsociety.org/uploadedFiles/Royal_Society_Content/about-us/fellowship/Fellows1660-2007.pdf

⁴⁸¹ See BMJ Publishing Group, 'Front Matter', *The British Medical Journal*, 2:4171 (Dec. 14, 1940), 1.

⁴⁸² The Queenslander (Brisbane, Qld.: 1866-1939), 'Surgeon's "Bag" of 53 Tigers: Ambidexterity and Shooting Help Him to Operate' (2 January 1936), 4, [online], available at <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article23379997>

See also The Evening Post (Wellington, NZ: 1865-1945), 'Hunting Surgeon: Record of Tigers Shot', CXXI:24 (29 January 1936), 10, [online], available at <http://paperspast.natlib.govt.nz/cgi-bin/paperspast?a=d&cl=search&d=EP19360129.2.50&srpos=1&e=-----10--1---2hunting+surgeon->

⁴⁸³ *Ibid.*

that he had known Abbott 'for 50 years' since he was seven years old and asked if 'any of our would be leaders [could] show such a record of service to the Community?'⁴⁸⁴ After dwelling on Abbott's achievements at length he commented that we 'are in the unique position of having had Colonel Gidney amongst us for about three years, and most of us have known Mr. Abbott for several. Mine has been a life long association with him, and I have no hesitation in putting my faith in him as the Leader best fitted to esqouse [sic] the cause of our people on the Legislative Assembly...'⁴⁸⁵

Abbott forwarded several letters along with the two pamphlets on the Anglo-Indian Force and his work on the Imperial Legislative Council to William Marris of the ICS at Simla in 1920 in an effort to be selected for the Legislative Assembly over Gidney. The notes of civil servants on the file state that they have received similar from Abbott already and should issue the same response as before, commenting 'Col. Gidney is also a rival candidate for nomination to the Legislative Assembly... As the interests of different classes will have to be considered... it would perhaps be inopportune to say anything more than that Mr. Abbott's claims will be duly taken into account...'⁴⁸⁶ Most branches of the Empire League sent in recommendations that Abbott be nominated as their chosen representative, but the Central Council passed a resolution that both of their names 'be put forward...'⁴⁸⁷

Another unspoken dimension of this contest was that it was between a man, Abbott, who was apparently European in appearance, could claim Scottish birth and domicile (though from an 'empire family') and who had chosen to marry into the domiciled community and

⁴⁸⁴ 'Anglo-India in the Imperial Legislative Council', pamphlet.

⁴⁸⁵ *Ibid.*

⁴⁸⁶ NAI, Legislative Department, Assembly Council Branch, Progs. No. 85, Part-B (Feb 1921).

⁴⁸⁷ *Ibid.*

a man who was clearly by birth and complexion a mixed race Anglo-Indian (Gidney).
Gidney's defeat of Abbott in communal elections may therefore have marked a shift in Anglo-Indian politics where those who were definitively Anglo-Indian took over communal leadership from religiously or philanthropically minded Britons and Domiciled Europeans. As if to mark this shift at the 1918-1919 Annual Conference of the Empire League, held at Allahabad, a resolution was passed to change the name of the organisation to the Anglo-Indian Association and drop any reference to Domiciled Europeans:

...some Domiciled Europeans demanded to know why the "Domiciled European" had been left out and as there were many covenanted and Domiciled European members of the Association who were obviously not Anglo-Indians, another Resolution was put forward, rescinding the former Resolution and declaring that the name of the Association be Anglo-Indian & Domiciled European Association. There was a very heated and prolonged discussion and by a small majority the Resolution was passed. The hope that some Domiciled Europeans entertain that, if they form their own Association, they will be more kindly looked upon by covenanted Europeans – "our more fortunate brethren" ...is utterly vain... [There] are to-day many hundreds of coloured Anglo-Indians, enrolled in the European Association... [On] the Railways where many of these so-called Domiciled Europeans are employed... there are cases, where, one, the white brother, is called an European, while the coloured brother is enlisted as an Anglo-Indian... many an upper subordinate Domiciled European who is retained as Statutory Native of India, on getting his promotion to the official grade promptly puts on airs and spends his time nursing a sick headache to get the Lee Commission concessions. The Anglo-Indian... would rather be called... [what] he truly is, than... be a camouflaged Domiciled European or European... [The] moment we see signs of a separatist movement we shall know what to do... The Community will see to it... that no one will obtain the economic advantages of "Statutory Natives of India" unless he declares himself as such and is down on the Anglo-Indian electoral roll.⁴⁸⁸

This outburst covered much ground beyond the Association's name – the prevalence of racial passing as Domiciled Europeans, the economic significance of claiming Indian domicile in the face of Indianisation, and the desire of the Association to conjoin the two groups it believed shared the same economic interests in order to maximise the numerical

⁴⁸⁸ Retrospective account in *Anglo-Indian Review* (June, 1928), 2-3.

strength of its constituency.

The Anglo-Indian and Domiciled European Association, All India and Burma

After the bitter contest, Gidney tried to secure unity and began campaigning for further amalgamation. Amalgamation was a lengthy and on-going process into the 1930s, and even after this there remained separate Anglo-Indian organisations. For example, the Southern Association with a large presence in Madras and the London Association which advertised in the *Review* calling on Anglo-Indians to support their 'Home Association by joining as an Overseas Member' with an 'Annual Subscription [of] 5 shillings only' to be sent to '88, Merton Hall Road, Wimbledon, S.W.19.'⁴⁸⁹ The advert directly appealed to the widespread sense among Anglo-Indians that Britain was their true 'home', a belief which was inculcated in children by their parents even when the family had never left India. Alongside a small resident population in England a few wealthier Anglo-Indians managed to visit for education or holidays, but presumably some Anglo-Indians who would never have a hope of making such a trip signed up. The two external bodies variously cooperated with and argued with Gidney's Association, but generally backed his efforts during key phases of constitutional change. Attempts were also made to set up new rival organisations such as the 'Anglo-Indian Federation' to represent break-away factions.

Amalgamation was important to the Association demonstrating its representativeness and the greatest numerical base of support in any negotiation. Amalgamation was also a weapon against dissent and factionalism within the Anglo-Indian community – as an 'Eye Witness' to the 1928 All India Conference of the Association commented the 'pages of

⁴⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 12.

Anglo-Indian history have been marred with the pitiful fact that any great effort on the part of the community to ameliorate its lot or safeguard its future generations has been hindered and discounted by internal dissensions [sic] and counter movements.⁴⁹⁰ Building up the Association into a larger body which could more effectively serve as a mouthpiece for dissemination of a single message to the scattered Anglo-Indian populations across India could also combat another perceived problem – that of widespread apathy and lack of understanding of the great social, political and constitutional changes that were taking place and their implications for Anglo-Indian employment.

Apathy and indifference to communal affairs and the work of the Association were frequently bemoaned in the reports of various branches across India. In some tiny stations (usually railway outposts and colonies) where there was a small Anglo-Indian population there was no Association branch, while in others there could be surprisingly vigorous and engaged branches. Major cities had larger branches, but not always very active ones in proportion to the Anglo-Indian population that lived there. The *Review* commented: ‘It is truly lamentable to notice the absolute indifference of the community, as a whole in Calcutta, towards any purely communal activity. Our smallest Branch could be an object lesson to them in communal *esprit-de-corps*.’⁴⁹¹ The report of the Bangalore branch in 1928 declared:

...40 members and 2 visitors attended, yet, it is pitiful that such a record should be one for congratulation considering there are 300 names on the membership roll, and 10,000 members of the domiciled community in Bangalore... We cry shame on those, who covertly expect to gain by Col. Gidney's humanitarian and superhuman

⁴⁹⁰ *Anglo-Indian Review* (June, 1928), 4.

⁴⁹¹ *Anglo-Indian Review* (‘Nov.-Dec.’, 1928), 8.

efforts while they skulk out of the way, too proud or too indifferent... It was imperative that we as a Community should take an active interest in political questions, relative to the community even though our *Association* is not a political body... [The] non-members... have taken so much out of Anglo-India and refused to give anything back in return, for the pitiful fear of being known as Anglo-Indians.⁴⁹²

Local branches of the Association did often function more like social clubs, organising charitable events (though the Bangalore branch President emphasised ‘that the A. I. Association is *not* a charitable institution’, instead its role was to ‘educate the deserving’⁴⁹³), but the assertion of non-political status was once more connected with the rules for government servants. Undoubtedly many Anglo-Indians joined the Association for primarily social purposes, to attend local dances, whist drives and other events such as the ‘Tennis Tea held at the Railway Institute on the 24th March [1928] given by the Saidpur Branch.’⁴⁹⁴

Amalgamation was often initially opposed on grounds that it would reduce the autonomy of local branches. The *Review* responded:

Opponents... have... long made capital of the fact that amalgamation was a “one man show” while Federation alone gave the Provinces complete Provincial autonomy... [However] they are reluctant to take it... a circular letter was recently issued to the Provincial Branches appealing to them to carry out their duties... and thereby relieve the Central Office of much of its work. The Rules... also demand that... each Province should be represented. Up-to-date, the Kolar Gold Fields Branch is the only Provincial Branch which has a nominee on the Governing Body...⁴⁹⁵

As well as amalgamating with existing Anglo-Indian organisations the Association was busily encouraging the setting up of additional branches or the revival of defunct ones

⁴⁹² *Anglo-Indian Review* (June, 1928), 10.

⁴⁹³ *Ibid.*

⁴⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 21.

⁴⁹⁵ *Anglo-Indian Review* (‘Nov.-Dec.’, 1928), 9.

through the work of its Travelling Secretary who went on periodic tours of far-flung footholds of Anglo-India. Each Province had a Provincial branch and other branches underneath it. There were also sub-branches, for example in 1928 Adra Branch opened ‘two sub-branches at Anara and Bhojudih’.⁴⁹⁶ The *Review* commented that there was ‘certainly scope for an independent branch at Bhojudih, where one existed previously and we feel confident that once the Bhojudih Branch is alive and active again, Adra will lose no time to give it its independence.’⁴⁹⁷ Amalgamation and the setting up of new branches had by 1929 increased the total number of branches from 70 to 88. This process continued through the 1930s alongside membership drives to enrol larger numbers of members within each branch of the Association.

Local branches often took up individual employment cases and acted almost like a trade union for Anglo-Indians working in government or railway service, only a few of these cases were forwarded to the central office. In addition to their social function and charity towards local causes, local branches were vital to fund-raising for the central office and Gidney’s work. Gidney represented the Anglo-Indian community in the Legislative Assembly and in various deputations and missions to the Government of India, the Secretary of State for India and at a later stage to the British Parliament. While Gidney was representing Anglo-Indians on the national stage there were also local Anglo-Indian leaders representing the community in various provincial Legislative Councils, such as Mr. L. T. Maguire, M.L.C., who spoke in the Bengal Legislative Council in 1928 on the ‘Revival of the Calcutta Rent Act’ advocating the cause of poor tenants paying unreasonably high rent in overcrowded conditions over that of monopolistic landlords.⁴⁹⁸

⁴⁹⁶ *Ibid.*

⁴⁹⁷ *Ibid.*

⁴⁹⁸ *Anglo-Indian Review* (November, 1929), 14.

The Anglo-Indian & Domiciled European Association, All-India & Burma.



Fig. 1: The 88 Branches of the Association in 1929, Including Four in Burma.⁴⁹⁹

⁴⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 22.

The Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms and Indianisation

Following the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms Gidney was nominated by the Viceroy to represent the Anglo-Indian community in the new Indian Legislative Assembly ('the Assembly'), where he contributed a great deal to debates, not surprisingly, especially on Anglo-Indians, matters affecting them and the various services in which they were prominent. As soon as the Assembly began to meet, the Government faced probing questions into its finances and public spending, and after a short time the proportion of Britons, Europeans, Anglo-Indians and members of different Indian communities employed in the various government services, as well as their positions and remuneration.

Anglo-Indians were prominently employed in the: railways; Telegraph and Posts Department; Customs Service; nursing; and in the IMD, which was almost exclusively staffed by Anglo-Indians and received lower pay than those in the Indian Medical Service (IMS). Both these organisations provided military surgeons and assistant surgeons for the use of the army and army hospitals playing the same role as the Royal Army Medical Corps (RAMC) which Anglo-Indians eventually infiltrated in large numbers during World War II. When on the reserve list, members of the IMS and IMD were paid a retainer and left to seek civilian employment in private practice or in provincial government hospitals (a particular Anglo-Indian grievance was the increasing exclusion of IMD men from civil employment by the Provinces once power over such decisions had been devolved to legislatures where Indian nationalists could exert pressure).

Anglo-Indians were predominantly employed in the 'subordinate services' which included officer grades below official or gazetted officer grades; such elaborately gradated ranks of

employment served to separate Anglo-Indians, Domiciled Europeans and transient Britons who usually came out on 'covenanted' salaries with perks. Anglo-Indians (especially those of fair complexion) frequently attempted to pass as Europeans. The Raj's socio-racial hierarchy of employment (transient Britons and Europeans at the top, followed by Domiciled Europeans above Anglo-Indians, with Indians at the bottom) created huge material and social incentives for successful passing and claims to European domicile. Racial passing proved easier (presumably with the connivance of recruiters) under the manpower needs of the First and Second World Wars, resulting in peaks in Anglo-Indian employment.

Racial passing amongst the domiciled encouraged Indians to see them as aliens, and the jobs which they occupied from which Indians had been discriminatorily barred as ripe for Indianisation on the basis of open competition. When the spotlight was shone on their employment by Indians in the Legislative Assembly it was easy to depict the Anglo-Indian position as one of privilege, government favour and patronage founded upon racial, religious and social discrimination. That Anglo-Indians were victims too of their own circumstances and history was not unsurprisingly overlooked by the Indian press and Indian nationalists. Anglo-Indians, through no fault of their own, had grown to be largely reliant on government employment and like the martial races, disproportionate employment in areas for which they had hitherto been deemed to have a particular aptitude (as well as for reasons of security). When Indians contested Anglo-Indians' government-sanctioned status as statutory natives they threatened through Indianisation to take their existing jobs.

A short paragraph in the Montagu-Chelmsford Report recognised the need for special

protection for Anglo-Indians and the 1919 Government of India Act which followed placed a special obligation on provincial Governors in the 'Instruments of Instruction' to prevent any rapid dislocation of Anglo-Indians from the government services which they then occupied. Gidney would later claim that this safeguard had been worthless – that it had not prevented the 'misinterpretation of "Indianisation"' as no Governor had been able to resist the pressure from the legislatures to provide employment for 'Indian-Indians' in the government services at the expense of hitherto privileged Anglo-Indians.⁵⁰⁰ Reflecting on the ten years following the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms, Gidney argued that provincial governors 'have readily enough yielded to the pressure and clamorous demands of the extreme Indian politician who views the Anglo-Indian, for employment purposes, as no less an alien than the European.'⁵⁰¹

Protests from Anglo-Indians that they were facing a serious loss of employment as a result of Indianisation resulted in a standard response from Government that Anglo-Indians were legally speaking Indians by statute and therefore Indianisation would not be at their expense. Some Anglo-Indians may have lost jobs due to retrenchment and Nissen's testimony suggests that more were probably transferred into less lucrative branches of service,⁵⁰² but generally jobs were not being taken from the domiciled to give to other communities. The threat came mostly from increased competition for the rungs of employment in which the domiciled had hitherto been predominant, sometimes effected by a reduction in internal promotions and the introduction of direct entry to different levels through competitive examination. Doubtless on the ground the confusion of some recruiters over Anglo-Indians' and Domiciled Europeans' status relative to Indianisation in

⁵⁰⁰ *Anglo-Indian Review and Railway Union Journal* (March, 1931), 6.

⁵⁰¹ *Anglo-Indian Review and Railway Union Journal* (April, 1931), 13.

⁵⁰² Mss Eur R189.

the context of mounting political pressure to provide statistical evidence that more Hindus and Muslims were entering various grades of state and railway employment did materially threaten Anglo-Indian employment. However, the bulk of the threat came from Indians pushing for open competitive entry to all grades of service, which threatened young Anglo-Indians (with educational qualifications no higher than the Senior Cambridge school-leavers examinations) seeking first-time employment with unprecedented competition with Indian graduates.

A few Anglo-Indians already in senior positions might benefit through the possibility of promotion to ranks hitherto restricted to transient Britons and Europeans, but at the expense of the next generation of Anglo-Indian youth being effectively largely shut out of these avenues of employment altogether as their recruitment slowed to a trickle. Gidney cited the 1921 Census, which reported that in that year there were between six and eight hundred unemployed Anglo-Indians to contrast with his own assertion that ten years later (after the Wall Street Crash) there were '14,000' or one third of all Anglo-Indian men unemployed.⁵⁰³ In a climate of retrenchment there were also downward pressures to equalise Anglo-Indian wage scales down to the Indian level.

In Gidney's 1933 Memorandum before the Joint Committee on Indian Constitutional Reform he described thousands 'of Anglo-Indians, including many with a fine record of military service... dependent on charity' and:

hundreds of young men... unable to secure employment anywhere, except at a wage

⁵⁰³ *Anglo-Indian Review and Railway Union Journal* (March, 1931), 12.

on which they cannot possibly exist, but which many have been forced to accept rather than starve –e.g., Anglo-Indian and Domiciled European young men, whose education cost their parents on an average over Rs.50/- per mensem, are, to-day, told they can only be engaged in the Loco. Department of the Railways, on a pittance of Rs.10/- p.m. or about 5d. per diem; this because the Indian can subsist on this wage and we are told to take it or leave it...⁵⁰⁴

The small luxuries, culinary and sartorial, to which Anglo-Indians clung as the minimum vestige of their European identities, were costly. Anglo-Indians who found their situation sadly reduced following independence complained that they could no longer afford to eat the European loaves of their childhood and had had to adapt to eating chapatis.

In the first few decades of the Twentieth Century Anglo-Indians were not normally regarded as genuinely or culturally Indian by other Indian communities or by most Anglo-Indians themselves. During the First Round Table Conference Gidney declared: ‘I address this Conference in a dual capacity as an Indian, speaking for India, and as a member of the Anglo-Indian community’.⁵⁰⁵ Gidney was attempting to shift Anglo-Indian self-perceptions by identifying Anglo-Indians as ‘an Indian community devoted to our Motherland [– India] but, it must be admitted, under some suspicion because of our unflinching loyalty and devotion in the past to our Fatherland [– Britain].’⁵⁰⁶ Blunt referred to this ‘dual affinity’ through which ‘Gidney sought to embody the imperial bond between the two countries, to make this imperial bond personal and familial... and to chart an identity that was distinctive in its duality.’⁵⁰⁷ As Blunt went on to argue ‘such images

⁵⁰⁴ ‘Memorandum 73 by Lieut.-Colonel Sir Henry Gidney, M.L.A., I.M.S. (Retd.) on behalf of the Anglo-Indian and Domiciled European Association of India’, in *Volume IIC: Minutes of Evidence given before the Joint Committee on Indian Constitutional Reform* (1934), London: H.M. Stationary Office, 1945.

⁵⁰⁵ *Anglo-Indian Review and Railway Union Journal* (April, 1931), 13.

⁵⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, 15.

⁵⁰⁷ Blunt, ‘“Land of our Mothers”: Home, Identity, and Nationality for Anglo-Indians in British India, 1919-1947’, *History Workshop Journal* 54 (2002), 58-59.

were contested and resisted by many Anglo-Indians.⁵⁰⁸ Additionally, whether Gidney emphasised the persistence of that loyalty to Britain varied depending on his audience, but he seems to have rejected the notion that these two loyalties might conflict. Clearly even this formulation was a step too far for some Anglo-Indians who did not at all identify themselves with Indians, and Gidney faced internal opposition throughout his leadership.

While in London attending the Round Table Conferences in 1931 he made the following revealing remarks to Anglo-Indians resident in London: ‘You who left India years ago do not realise the change that has come over the country. Hitherto, we have lived in communal isolation, with a parochial outlook. Your social and political orientation must alter... You must walk hand in hand with your Indian brother till you attain that goal... Dominion Status...’⁵⁰⁹ Four years later at a Luncheon hosted by the London Association Gidney reiterated a similar message with less pleasant undertones:

It is essential also that the community learns to alter its political and social angles of vision. It is only when we become more self reliant and ready to treat the Indian as our kith and kin that future India and the Indian of to-morrow will want us... Let me give this word of warning to our English cousins and to certain sections of Anglo-Indians and Domiciled Europeans. India to-day has no place for and will no longer tolerate any-one – man or woman who struts across the land with an assumption of superiority based on the colour of his skin... that type has become a definite menace to Britain and the Empire. Fortunately the mutual consciousness of the colour-line is disappearing and I am happy to say that the Anglo-Indian Association has played an honourable part in bringing it into disrepute. But much remains to be done...⁵¹⁰

Indianisation was not confined to the military, judiciary and the elite Indian Civil Service (ICS). Anglo-Indians had rarely obtained judicial appointments, and despite the Association’s attempts to lobby the Viceroy in 1919 to appoint an Anglo-Indian to the ICS

⁵⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 59.

⁵⁰⁹ *Anglo-Indian Review and Railway Union Journal* (March, 1931), 31.

⁵¹⁰ *Anglo-Indian Review* (January, 1936), 12-13.

the two Anglo-Indian candidates that were nominated for service in 1920 (Mr. Pinto by the Madras provincial government and Mr. Suldanha by the Bengal provincial government) were rejected – officially owing to their lack of military service, though successful Indian candidates also lacked military experience.⁵¹¹ In the June 1933 issue of the *Review* it was also mentioned that ‘Mr. Wilbur Gomes’ who had studied his Junior Cambridge at ‘Philander Smith College, Naini Tal’ and his Senior Cambridge at La Martiniere, Lucknow and received a 1st in his B.A. at ‘Lucknow University at the age of 20’ was proceeding ‘to England to appear for the I.C.S. examination.’⁵¹² Subsequently the ‘D’Souza Scholarship’ was established with a bequest in order to fund Anglo-Indian young men travelling to England to compete for the ICS exams there, though according to Anthony ‘only 5 Anglo-Indians’ had succeeded by 1947.⁵¹³

As Anglo-Indians were almost entirely absent from such elite occupations (including Gidney’s own IMS) these were areas in which Gidney was able to publicly support Indianisation in order to win sympathy from Indians: ‘if I were to see even the vestige of an attempt on the part of the Government of India to thwart the aspirations of Indians for getting into the Indian Medical Service, believe me, I would expose it and denounce it...’⁵¹⁴ However, Anglo-Indians generally felt that Indianisation was a policy targeted at them as much as the British, and in 1931 the *Review* looked back on the ‘ravages of Indianisation as introduced by the [1919] Reforms Scheme’.⁵¹⁵

Gidney’s arguments about Indianisation did not emphasise the usual means by which jobs

⁵¹¹ NAI, Proceedings of the Home Department (1920), ‘Representation re: appt. of two Anglo-Indians to the I.C.S.’, Nos. 357-358.

⁵¹² *Anglo-Indian Review* (June, 1933), 7.

⁵¹³ *Anglo-Indian Review* (November, 1947), 3.

⁵¹⁴ Legislative Assembly (28th Sept. 1921), 1177.

⁵¹⁵ *Anglo-Indian Review and Railway Union Journal* (June, 1931), 7.

were being effectively transferred from the domiciled to other communities – i.e. the opening up to competition of rungs of employment from which other communities had hitherto been discriminatorily barred. Neither were Gidney's appeals to the British, for protection on the basis of Anglo-Indians' role as loyal defenders of the Raj, best calculated to win the admiration of Indian nationalists:

The records of Railway administration will show to what extent the Government has, and does even to-day, rely on Anglo-Indian loyalty in the administration of its Railways, for, whenever certain sections of Indian workmen go on strike, as evidenced by the 1928 East India Railway strike, the Bengal-Nagpur Railway strike of 1927, the East India Railway and the North Western Railway strikes of 1920 and 1925, the Anglo-Indian community has always come to the assistance of Government, but... after we have broken these strikes and restored traffic, the Indian strikers, in response to pressure brought to bear on the Legislative Assembly by their representatives, are re-engaged and our services are dispensed with.⁵¹⁶

Gidney had previously stated that 'It seems that the greatest crime of the Anglo-Indian community has been its loyalty to England... our greatest disqualification, as viewed by certain sections of Indians, is our untarnished loyalty to England. The whole trend appears to be: Get the English out of India, and then get their offspring, the Anglo-Indians, out.'⁵¹⁷

Gidney still viewed the British as the power brokers and font of any possible protection the community might hope to receive. Gidney's rhetoric was shifting in an attempt to please all camps, but he could not take the Anglo-Indian community far beyond the ideological ground on which it was comfortable, especially in a time of crisis when he faced internal opposition to his leadership from traditionalists, and it was unthinkable that he should enact a major reversal in the history of Anglo-Indian identity and behaviour when the British were still at the helm and when he felt Anglo-Indians could hope for little

⁵¹⁶ 'Memorandum 73', 1961.

⁵¹⁷ *Anglo-Indian Review and Railway Union Journal* (March, 1931), 12.

sympathy from Indian nationalists. Gidney wrote in a letter to the Railway Board in 1932 that it:

...must be confessed... perhaps to our detriment... that after roughly eight generations of British rule under which we were first brought to birth as a community... we are still viewed as aliens by the other communities... albeit we are natives of the soil, and this view is entertained chiefly as a result of our avowed confidence in Great Britain, our pride in our British descent and our trust in the inviolability of those pledges that we hold from Great Britain as the price of our call to duty when British India was in the making and when other communities were unfit or refused to help and of our unwavering allegiance to her.⁵¹⁸

Most Anglo-Indians did not self-identify as Indians, feeding the Indian view that if Anglo-Indians wanted to be treated as Indians they should cease to ape Europeans or to claim to be Domiciled Europeans. Even in 1933 Gidney described the ‘three main communities... [as] Hindus, Muslims and *Europeans-cum-Anglo-Indians* [my emphasis].’⁵¹⁹ In railway debates Indian members called for “‘pure blooded Indians,” that is, Indian-Indians for the Railways, not Anglo-Indians’.⁵²⁰

Gidney sought to underplay the efforts made by his predecessor Abbott while arguing in an 1933 memorandum that ‘The Community was certainly not prepared for the introduction of the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms, for none of us foresaw the sweeping changes that were implied in these Reforms and we believed that any changes which might be introduced, would be gradual and would allow us time to prepare ourselves to run a level race with the Indian...’⁵²¹ Gidney described the community as having ‘lulled itself into a sense of security in the lap of the Government’ prior to the implementation of

⁵¹⁸ NAI, Home Department, Establishment Branch Progs., No. 389, Part-I (1932): ‘Letter from Lieutenant-Colonel Sir Henry Gidney, President, Anglo-Indian and Domiciled European Association, All-India and Burma, Calcutta, to the Secretary, Railway Board, Simla, dated the 10th June 1932’, 8.

⁵¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 1964.

⁵²⁰ Quoted by Gidney in *Ibid.*, 1952.

⁵²¹ ‘Memorandum 73’, 1954.

the reforms and unready for ‘such a sudden awakening into an altogether changed condition of things, against which it was powerless either to stand or protect itself’.⁵²² By contrast Gidney’s preparations and efforts during: two deputations to the Secretary of State; the Simon Commission; the Round Table Conferences; and the passing of the 1935 Government of India Act, were gargantuan.

The Anglo-Indian Deputations of 1923 and 1925

The first Anglo-Indian deputation to the Secretary of State for India in 1923, before Lord Peel, produced no noticeable effect. In the second in 1925 before Lord Birkenhead, Gidney’s memorandum outlined the ‘difficulties, economic and otherwise, with which the Community is confronted since the inauguration of the Reforms and the rapid process of Indianisation.’⁵²³ The memorandum expressed anxiety about Anglo-Indians’ future, fearful that if matters continued to proceed as they were, Anglo-Indians would become a ‘depressed class’.⁵²⁴ It expressed Anglo-Indians’ desire to live in ‘peace and amity’ with other Indian communities, to ‘co-operate with any Party in India whose object is to obtain self-government on constitutional lines within the British Empire’, and acceptance that Indians had the right ‘to secure a larger share in the administration of their own country, and that, in the realisation of this, the interests of other communities must, to a certain extent, be prejudicially affected.’⁵²⁵

Also expounded, as it would be in Gidney’s later memorandum before the Round Table Conference, was the state of limbo induced by a ‘trinity of existence’ within which Anglo-Indians found themselves in which they were known as Anglo-Indians for social purposes

⁵²² Mss Eur D/925, 5.

⁵²³ *Ibid.*, 2.

⁵²⁴ *Ibid.*, 4.

⁵²⁵ *Ibid.*, 3.

(their Census designation since 1911), defined as ‘statutory natives of India’ for the purposes of employment and official interpretations of Indianisation, and ‘European British subjects’ for defence of empire purposes.⁵²⁶ Birkenhead seems to have understood this to reflect an uncertainty emanating from Anglo-Indians about their place in India perhaps suggesting a future outside of India and was eager to affirm to them that their true home and only future lay in India. While affirming no desire to ‘cut ourselves adrift from our British connections’ Gidney clearly recognised that ‘with the yearly increase in the devolution of power from the British to the Indian, that in the near future, Indians will occupy the majority of important administrative appointments in India, and that it would be to the economic interests of the Community and the future of coming generations for us to associate ourselves more closely with our Indian brethren’.⁵²⁷ Gidney asked for specific protections and action by government to safeguard the Anglo-Indian community and cushion it economically from the dramatic changes he claimed were already taking place.

Among the requests made in Gidney’s memorandum were: that all ranks of the British Army be opened up to Anglo-Indians; the formation of Anglo-Indian Army companies and an Anglo-Indian unit or battery or signal Corps; that Anglo-Indian women be recruited into the Queen Alexandra Military Nursing Service; that Anglo-Indians’ future on the railways be ‘permanently safeguarded’; that all agents of the railway be informed that Indianisation should not take place at the expense of Anglo-Indians; that colour prejudice by Europeans working on the railways against darker skinned Anglo-Indian employees be stamped out; that either the practice of making it compulsory for Anglo-Indian but not Indian employees of the railway to join the AF(I) be ended or that Anglo-Indians be

⁵²⁶ *Ibid.*

⁵²⁷ *Ibid.*, 5.

rewarded for this additional service by retaining their higher pay rates;⁵²⁸ that upper subordinate ranked Anglo-Indians in the railways be allowed promotion to official grades of service often reserved for Europeans not domiciled in India; better educational opportunities for children of railway workers; a railway representative in the Legislative Assembly; similar protections for Anglo-Indians in the Telegraph Department from Indianisation and to preserve a share of future appointments; protection of grants to Anglo-Indian schools which as transferred subjects were threatened by cuts from the Provincial Legislatures; that the European and Christian character of Anglo-Indian schools be maintained and the percentage of Indian students wishing to attend them continue to be restricted, by returning such schools to the status of reserved subjects for central and not provincial government; the right for all people in India to choose whether to be tried by an Indian or European jury [while professing that no distrust was felt towards ‘our Indian brethren’, this request, couched in the language of equality, was plainly intended to protect Anglo-Indians from the ‘demonstrated evidence of racial hostility’ found among some Indian juries];⁵²⁹ the admission of members of the IMD into the IMS and protection of Anglo-Indians in the IMD or IMS from discrimination in terms of appointments by Provincial Legislatures; improvements in the pay of women (largely Anglo-Indian and Indian Christian) in the Junior Women’s Medical Service; that Anglo-Indian lads be allowed to join the British Navy and be involved in any future scheme for an Indian Navy; and lastly that something be done to combat the colour prejudice that affects Anglo-

⁵²⁸ Though when the Government of India did later grant ‘Anglo-Indian members of the Auxiliary Forces who were public servants... allowances bringing their total income to Rs.60... [Gidney] objected to this back-door arrangement, which was not equitable... since it did not apply to all Anglo-Indian employees of Government’, in ‘Difficulties of the Anglo-Indians: Sir Henry Gidney’s Appeal’, *the Times* (London, December 5, 1938), 9.

⁵²⁹ Cf. controversy over the Ilbert Bill of 1883-1884, which was attacked by Europeans (perhaps including some Eurasians engaging in racial passing) in gendered and racialised terms as risking the subjection of ‘English’ and ‘Eurasian’ womanhood to violence with impunity from Indians and to injustice at the hands of native judges. See *The Ilbert Bill. A Collection of Letters, Speeches, Memorials, Articles, & c., Stating the Objections to the Bill* (London, circa 1883), 110.

Indians seeking to emigrate to the white dominions.⁵³⁰

The response to the 1925 deputation issued on in 1928 was: that the ‘position of the community, as intermediate between pure Europeans and pure Indians, no doubt gives rise to certain anomalies, but these anomalies arise from the attempt to accord recognition to its exceptional position and therefore cannot... constitute a grievance’; that ‘the suggestion that the community be treated as constituting a third category with status distinct from both Europeans and Indians’ was not ‘practicable or likely to be advantageous to the community’ given that it had ‘a permanent stake in India and in no other country’ and therefore would be best served by ‘achieving for themselves an integral part in the economy and society of the country in which they live’; and that their legal status as ‘natives of India’ was ‘essential’ to their own employment interests in the context of Indianisation, but that acceptance of such status was in no way ‘inconsistent with the maintenance of their individuality as a separate social entity, or with the position which is theirs by virtue of their ancestry, history and peculiar conditions and aptitudes’.⁵³¹

Government policy in the years following the deputation of 1925 did make very clear in public pronouncements that Anglo-Indians were to be treated as statutory natives of India for the purposes of recruitment and of all Indianisation schemes for the public services, and a clear declaration to that effect was issued in 1928. However, Gidney’s other hopes were largely frustrated as the same letter declared that the:

Government of India have never been prepared to set aside any definite percentage of appointments for any particular community. Their policy has been restricted to

⁵³⁰ Mss Eur D/925, 1925.

⁵³¹ Cited in *Anglo-Indian Review*, Supplement (September, 1928), i.

securing that no one community should obtain an undue preponderance; and reservation of posts has been made for qualified members of minority communities generally. This reservation of one-third of the total number of appointments has been accepted by the Central Government, and the Anglo-Indian community will share with the other minority communities the protection that it secures. The Government of India realize that the Anglo-Indian case is special in so far as the community has tended from natural causes to flow preponderatingly into certain channels of employment... [Though] increased competition from Indians proper must tend to diminish the field of employment of Anglo-Indians in the public services... they should endeavour to open out for themselves a wider range of employment and depend less completely on Government service... improved standards of education... are likely to provide the true remedy...⁵³²

The avowed intention to prevent undue preponderances while simultaneously acknowledging that existing Anglo-Indian public sector employment consisted of such preponderances did not evince any particular intention to cushion Anglo-Indians from a harmful pace of change. The Anglo-Indian future was envisaged as merely one of many minorities who would compete to retain a portion of one third of the jobs in the services they were currently employed in. As Muslims were perceived as a minority community with important and growing needs that had to be met, Anglo-Indians' outlook within this framework was poor.

The Home and Army Departments responded by claiming some of the concerns over education were 'groundless' and many on other subjects were impossible to remedy 'in existing financial conditions'.⁵³³ The Government of India regretted its inability to issue instructions to any service which fell under local Government jurisdiction, such as the Burma Forest Service. The grievances of the IMD elicited a worse response:

... [These points] inevitably raised the question whether it might not now be the case

⁵³² NAI, Home Department, Establishment Branch Progs., No. 389, Part-I (1932): 'Representations from the Anglo-Indian and Domiciled European Association, All-India and Burma, regarding the employment of Anglo-Indians, in the public services', 16-17.

⁵³³ Cited in *Anglo-Indian Review Supplement* (September, 1928), iv.

that the Department had outlived its usefulness... It was appreciated by the deputation themselves, though they complained of the clerical and 'menial' duties which members of the Indian Medical Department were called upon to perform, that these were duties which should more appropriately fall to nursing sisters and ranks of the Royal Army Medical Corps; and the solution they suggested was that the status of Indian Medical Department officers should be raised and that they should be used to replace junior Royal Army Medical Corps and Indian Medical Service officers. It is hardly necessary to point out that this solution would itself spell the doom of the Indian Medical Department... [The IMD] is the only Department that is exclusively reserved for Anglo-Indians and members of the domiciled community. It is... rightly regarded, in your own words as "the community's proudest Department"; and both the Secretary of State and the Government of India were predisposed to avoid laying stress on arguments tending towards the abolition of a Service which your community has made so peculiarly its own... For the present it is hoped that the main decision to retain the... [IMD] will prove a source of some satisfaction...⁵³⁴

So the answer on the IMD was that it could continue to exist as an Anglo-Indian and Domiciled European Department as long as its pay and conditions were not further improved, but that if elevated any further towards parity with the IMS it would have to be abolished. Official responses to Anglo-Indian lobbying were often at best pious, insubstantial declarations and at worst a refrain that unfortunately nothing much could be done.

Civil servants noted that the measures being brought in to reserve a specific percentage of vacancies in the Superior Railway Services for the Muslim community would further weaken the position of Anglo-Indians – C. M. Trivedi noted in 1933 that the 'reservation of one-third of vacancies for minority communities is not likely to help the Anglo-Indians to any considerable extent, since 25 percent of total vacancies will now be reserved for Muslims, unless of course, a special case can be made out for reserving a smaller percentage for Muslims of which I am doubtful... I do not see what more could be

⁵³⁴ *Ibid.*, vii-viii.

done'⁵³⁵ M. G. Hallet replied saying 'I regret that I had forgotten the existence of this file during the discussion regarding recruitment for the public services which have now resulted in the decision that a percentage should be fixed for Muhammadans.'⁵³⁶

Trivedi went on to say in a subsequent note in the same file that:

Recruitment of Anglo-Indians for the Telegraph Service has at the moment ceased, that the system which admittedly gave them very preferential treatment has not only been reduced as was contemplated in 1927 and 1928, but is now to be completely abolished, and that the new system... "will not preclude the employment of Anglo-Indians and that nothing will be done to discourage their admission". This assurance is not one on which we can lay much stress. Anglo-Indians have at the very least equal rights with other communities... and we cannot take credit for the fact that they will not be precluded from employment and their admission to the services will not be discouraged. The intention of the correspondence of 1927-28 was that they should be helped over a difficult transition period, and that necessary reductions in recruitment should be made gradually. The recommendation of the Services Sub-Committee of the Round Table Conference on which the Secretary of State desires our views was that their special position should be recognised and that special consideration should be given to their claims.⁵³⁷

Now to be scrapped was the General Service, a branch of the Telegraphs for Anglo-Indians which granted them higher pay on the presumption that their loyalty would buttress Raj security through ensuring reliable communications for the civil and military administration.

⁵³⁵ 'Representations from the Anglo-Indian and Domiciled European Association, All-India and Burma, regarding the employment of 'Anglo-Indians, in the public services', 4.

⁵³⁶ *Ibid.*

⁵³⁷ *Ibid.*, 5.



HINDUS: (200,000,000) "Come back all of you. We must start level."
 MOSLEMS: (68,000,000) } "No. We are smaller than you and we will start from here or not run at all. This is a
 DEPRESSED CLASSES: (52,000,000) } handicap race."
 ANGLO-INDIANS & DOMICILED EUROPEANS; (200,000). "They are much bigger than I, anyhow; and I only want a small start".

Fig. 1: 1928 cartoon arguing for the reasonableness of Anglo-Indian demands for temporary safeguards. Note the ethnic caricatures, with the British depicted as umpires holding the starting gun, and a very European looking boy representing Anglo-Indians and Domiciled Europeans.⁵³⁸

Gidney in London and the 1935 Government of India Act

Gidney made strenuous efforts to present the Anglo-Indian case before the Simon Commission. Other prominent Anglo-Indians who were sometimes his rivals (E. T. McCluskie and H. A. Stark) closed ranks to put forward a united front when submitting the community's memorandum to the Commission. Anglo-Indians were reminded by the President of the Hyderabad Branch of how important establishing their numerical strength

⁵³⁸ [My digital enhancement of original] from *Anglo-Indian Review* (December, 1928), 17.

would be – ‘the Revd. Mr. Hobson, the South Indian delegate... said he had the good fortune of saying a few words to Sir John Simon when the Commission visited Madras:– The first question he put him, was, “What is the strength of your community in this part of India?” “Twenty Thousand” was the reply. Whereupon, Sir John drew from his waist coat pocket his pocket book, and while jotting it down, remarked, “Thanks, I’m glad to know this, for I had it down as fifteen thousand.”’⁵³⁹

Gidney travelled to London to attend the Round Table Conferences and again to lobby the British Parliament when the 1935 Government of India Act was being deliberated upon. During this time he conducted a vigorous campaign to disseminate his message and educate (or propagandise) the British public and Parliamentarians on the Anglo-Indian community and its moral claims upon Britain. Gidney pressed his case through the *London Times*,⁵⁴⁰ for example attacking Gandhi for having ‘challenged the right of representatives of some of the communities concerned to speak in their name’ and intimated that he would ‘campaign to detach these communities from the claims made on their behalf’ and for allegedly having said ‘during his discussions with the Muslim group’ that Gidney did ‘not represent the claims of Anglo-Indians.’⁵⁴¹

In response to the Nehru Report’s suggestion of a ‘single electorate’ the *Review* responded with a leading article entitled ‘The Minority Block’, arguing that ‘the Hindus are in such an overwhelming majority that there would be a serious danger of the interest of the minority communities being overlooked. Obviously such complete identification with an infinitely larger unit, whose average is admittedly very much below par, would be fatal to the progress and prosperity of the Anglo-Indian community...’⁵⁴² The minority block strategy foresaw the necessity of ‘Muhammadans, the Depressed Classes, the Indian

⁵³⁹ *Anglo-Indian Review*, (‘Nov.-Dec.’, 1928), 21.

⁵⁴⁰ See for example ‘Anglo-Indian: A Misused Term’, *The Times* (London, September 12, 1933), 8.

⁵⁴¹ ‘Mr. Gandhi’s Claims’, *The Times* (London, November 20, 1931), 15.

⁵⁴² *Anglo-Indian Review* (October, 1929), 5.

Christians, the Europeans, the Anglo-Indians, the Parsis, the Sikhs and others... closing their ranks and showing a united front.’⁵⁴³ After the first Round Table Conference this strategy evolved to exclude the Muslims who it soon became clear to Gidney were ‘not a minority in the strict sense of the word’ and ‘with a total population of nearly 70 millions... [were] quite able to look after’ themselves as they had ‘done in the past.’⁵⁴⁴

Gidney feared that the concerns of the smaller minorities might be overlooked as the focus was almost entirely on the Hindu-Muslim issue. At an Empire Parliamentary Association meeting in 1931 he warned against overlooking the ‘problems of the other minorities’ which are ‘of almost equal importance to that of the Hindu-Muslim’ declaring that ‘unless these are dealt with in a resolute and generous manner, the new conditions in India will result in the creation of a number of Ulsters.’⁵⁴⁵ Gidney demanded adequate safeguards and guarantees that the economic rights of the minorities be secured by statute of the British Parliament and that Parliament remain responsible for ensuring their enforcement under any new constitution. While in Britain Gidney did not hold back on emotive claims upon Britain, arguing for:

...the special claim the Anglo-Indian community has upon the British Parliament and... public. We are the sons of those pioneer Britishers who went to India... We have shed our blood in the building up and maintenance of the British Government in that country. The history of the development of India and its communications will tell you better than I can the great and abiding part the community has played and the loyal services it has rendered to both India and England... [which] on account of its steadfast loyalty to England, is to-day looked upon by certain sections of Indians as no less alien for employment purposes than the purest European. The past few years have shown how the advance of self-government in India has prejudiced... [our] economic position... We have given our best to England... Will England desert us in our hour of trial and need?⁵⁴⁶

⁵⁴³ *Ibid.*, 6.

⁵⁴⁴ *Anglo-Indian Review* (May, 1931), 7.

⁵⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 9.

⁵⁴⁶ *Anglo-Indian Review* (May, 1931), 11.

Gidney argued that the Government of India had in its recent pronouncements effectively acknowledged its inability to protect Anglo-Indians' economic position and 'has placed us as a special obligation on the British Parliament.'⁵⁴⁷ Gidney went on:

...H.R.H. The Prince of Wales... on his visit to India in 1923... said: [“]...You may rest assured that I now understand the conditions under which you live in India and the useful and honoured place which you fill as citizens in the British Empire... You may be confident that Great Britain and the Empire will not forget your community, who are so united in their devotion to the King-Emperor and who gave such unmistakable tokens of their attachment to the Empire by the great sacrifices in the War.[”] I now ask the British Parliament to honour that promise... All we ask for is adequate protection till we get on our feet, after which we are prepared to sink or swim with the rest of India.⁵⁴⁸

Gidney met with numerous sympathisers in both houses of Parliament, many of whom he persuaded to speak up on behalf of Anglo-Indian claims. His support mainly came from Conservative die-hards, and those with a religious interest in the well-being of Christianity within India, as well as amongst old India hands who had prior acquaintance with Anglo-Indians. In preparing to give his evidence before the Joint Committee in 1933 Gidney appears to have had substantial input from prominent British supporters, such as the former Viceroy Lord Hardinge. Hardinge submitted his own concise and cogent memorandum in 1934 and supplied readymade testimonials in support of Gidney in the guise of questions during Gidney's examination before the Committee – for example among questions about Anglo-Indian contributions to the Great War, and to Government Service in India during strikes and crises, was the following 'question':

I should like to ask Sir Henry whether he agrees with this: The Anglo-Indian and domiciled community in India is a small community in numbers but it has a fine record and has been a source of strength in the past. Now it is being slowly but surely sacrificed on the altar of political expediency, and unless special measures are taken for the protection of their economic future they must necessarily disappear; but it is to be hoped that Parliament will not repeat the error made in Ireland in regard to the Irish Loyalists in the South. What is needed is that their representation in the various Government Departments, both Central and Provincial, should be

⁵⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

⁵⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

guaranteed to them for a certain number of years, and in view of their great services to India in the past this does not appear to be an exaggerated demand. It should, if possible, be part of the Constitution of India. I wish to know whether Sir Henry agrees with that statement?⁵⁴⁹

Gidney followed with the uncharacteristically succinct response 'Entirely'.⁵⁵⁰ There was also strong support from the non-official British community in the form of a memorandum submitted by the Associated Chambers of Commerce of India, which closely buttressed Gidney's claims and provided significant details to support its argument that the sought after protections were 'a very reasonable request, to which there should be little, if any, opposition.'⁵⁵¹

Gidney's 1933 memorandum made a series of points. Gidney demanded that Anglo-Indians dual status be resolved so that they could no longer be treated as non-Indians for the purposes of Indianisation and prevented, as Indians, from enlisting in British Regiments (even if equally contradictory Gidney would have preferred the opposite to have been the case, though if Anglo-Indians could have been elevated to a status that would allow them to join Britons in the armed forces in large numbers Gidney might have been happy to abandon their status as statutory natives). Gidney asked for safeguards by statute in the new constitutional Act including maintenance of their existing numbers in the railways and particular sections of the Telegraphs Department, with at least fifty annual domiciled recruits to the Telegraphist Section and fifty per cent of appointments in the Preventative and Appraisers Sections of the Customs Service, for a period of at least thirty years. Gidney complained that Anglo-Indians were being excluded from Provincial Services under the influence of Indians in the Legislatures. Gidney renewed longstanding demands for an Anglo-Indian Unit, Battery or Signal Corps, an opening of all ancillary branches of the Army an increase in commissions for the community in the AF(I), and for improvement of the terms of service in the IMD. Gidney demanded that Anglo-Indians be guaranteed equitable representation in any new services being established. Gidney

⁵⁴⁹ *Volume IIC Minutes of Evidence*, 1992.

⁵⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

⁵⁵¹ 'Memorandum on the Anglo-Indian and Domiciled European Community Submitted by the Associated Chambers of Commerce of India' in *Volume IIA, Minutes of Evidence Given Before the Joint Committee on Indian Constitutional Reform* (1934), 660.

reiterated demands that every European or Indian British subject should have the right to choose whether he will be tried by a European or Indian jury, though was challenged by Indian questioners who saw that this demand reflected Anglo-Indians' desire to be tried by European juries. Gidney asked for a clearer definition of Anglo-Indians in the electoral rules, and suggested one calculated to bolster Anglo-Indians' numerical strength. Gidney also began to reveal his 'minority block strategy' by demanding collective representation for the smaller minority communities by at least one member in all Cabinets and Public Service Commissions. Finally Gidney demanded the Governor-General should have a Councillor holding a portfolio to ensure the implementation of Minority interests.

Lloyd described Gidney going from 'conference to conference, from India Office to House of Commons; House of Commons to House of Lords, and all the way back and between, educating and assisting those sympathetic to his cause, and gathering the views of those who supported him...'⁵⁵² When Gidney's Commons supporters failed to achieve any amendment to the Bill he obtained the support of Lloyd and others in the House of Lords in order to secure a critical amendment ensuring statutory protection for Anglo-Indian employment and education.

Gidney called the amendment Anglo-Indians' 'Magna Carta', but warned the community to heed Lloyd's words 'to be active, united and ever vigilant, if it is to secure that in spirit as well as in letter, the Government's pledges are fully honoured in India by the Indian Government...'⁵⁵³ Back in India Gidney soon felt the force of these words, as the Government of India was bombarded with messages from provincial Association branches and the central office in order to make sure that the guarantees were manifested into definite percentages of reserved posts in the railways for Anglo-Indians that would secure

⁵⁵² *Anglo-Indian Review* (January, 1936), 13.

⁵⁵³ *Ibid.*, 13.

the maintenance of their existing proportion as the amendment had called for. The Government of India had attempted to backtrack by arguing that the provisions were merely of 'declaratory' value rather than legally binding, but was soon forced to issue actual quotas for that would maintain average numbers of Anglo-Indians employed across the relevant services.

The 'Domiciled European' Question

'Domiciled European' was still part of the name of the Association in 1940 when Gidney began to challenge those Anglo-Indians passing as Domiciled Europeans and Domiciled Europeans passing as transient Britons or Europeans. Some had joined European Associations. The Association entered into correspondence with the President of the Calcutta Branch of the European Association on the subject persuading him to declare publicly 'that the interests of Domiciled Europeans and Anglo-Indians would best be served by the Anglo-Indian Association.'⁵⁵⁴

In response Mr. Marklew, a 'Domiciled European of the fourth or fifth generation... resigned from the European Association' and announced in the press that he had formed 'an organisation called the "Society of Indiamen"... for the benefit of Domiciled Europeans.'⁵⁵⁵ Gidney responded in the press by challenging the need for such an organisation when his Association was already protecting the economic interests of Domiciled Europeans, in spite of the fact the 'beneficiaries themselves... [had] persistently refused to acknowledge it.'⁵⁵⁶ Marklew retorted that Gidney was 'frightened of losing the support of the Domiciled European community' but had never really had their support to

⁵⁵⁴ *Anglo-Indian Review* (February, 1940), 3.

⁵⁵⁵ *Ibid*, 3.

⁵⁵⁶ *Ibid*.

begin with.⁵⁵⁷ Gidney highlighted everything the Association had done for the economic interests of Domiciled Europeans and attacked racial passing, warning:

...Marklew and those of his ilk to stop talking of white and black men... [and] of the possible dangers to the Domiciled European himself arising from this separatist movement. Realising the psychological defects of these misguided and impractical men who still talk of their "old country" (referring to England)... But the Domiciled European... will find it hard to establish his connection with the "old country" except by the colour of his skin, and so it is with the many unpigmented Anglo-Indians (of mixed blood) who call themselves "Domiciled Europeans." [Where]... is the distinction to be drawn between an Anglo-Indian of mixed blood and one of *supposedly* unmixed blood... When they have nothing but their white skin to establish their attachment to the "ruling race", they keep on talking of the "old country" and of the HOME abroad lest they be mistaken for the ruled though, in fact, they belong to the latter class. Two annas will take them by bus or tram to their true HOME.⁵⁵⁸

The *Review* emphasised the safeguards had been secured 'for the benefit of Anglo-Indians of both mixed and unmixed European parentage' and argued that had the British settled in India the Anglo-Indians would now be a powerful landowning community alongside 'the Domiciled Europeans of the third, fourth and fifth generation if indeed they are truly still "Domiciled Europeans" of unmixed blood.'⁵⁵⁹ It pointed out that the 'second generation of Domiciled Europeans... are the sons of that class of Briton who must needs come out to India to earn a livelihood in a subordinate capacity... [while the] son of the Briton belonging to the Indian Civil Service and other superior services in the country does not settle down in India. Ordinarily he receives no part of his education in India, even if he was born here.'⁵⁶⁰ This analysis dovetails closely and perceptively with the anxieties from the other side of the socio-racial hierarchical spectrum from the British parents of *Empire Families* about their children not being tainted by racial suspicion through too much

⁵⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

⁵⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 3-4.

⁵⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 5.

⁵⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

education in India.⁵⁶¹

Anglo-Indians would have been better placed to recognise their own and the phenomenon of racial passing, but of course Gidney and his Association had much to gain from increasing the numerical strength of a conjoined community, joined with those of higher socio-racial status (Domiciled Europeans) rather than those with less social capital (Indian Christians). Gidney argued correctly that the economic interests of the two groups were closely aligned if not identical. Anthony would later denounce the term “Domiciled European” and drop it from the name of the Association, which increased his unpopularity amongst Domiciled Europeans, and Anglo-Indians who claimed unmixed descent.

Gidney and the Indian National Congress

The *Review* voiced strong criticism of the Congress’ position of seeking to use support for Britain in the conflict as a bargaining tool to extract further concessions, accused Gandhi of inconsistency, and argued it was irresponsible of a party seeking self-government to force the suspension of the 1935 Government of India Act in seven provinces. An article on ‘Congress and the Minorities’ which appeared in December of 1939 expressed strong anxieties about a future under ‘a Hindu Raj, perhaps tolerant of the Muslims, but certainly intolerant of the other numerically weak minorities.’⁵⁶² It was argued that ‘Congress Governments even when working under the limitations placed on them by the protective provisions of the India Act have succeeded in causing more than a stir in the minds of the minorities’,⁵⁶³ furthermore Congress had never even tried to understand the peculiar problems and needs of each minority. No fear was expressed on account of cultural, social

⁵⁶¹ See Buettner, *Empire Families*.

⁵⁶² *Anglo-Indian Review* (December, 1939), 5-7.

⁵⁶³ *Ibid.*, 5.

or religious oppression, but rather the safety of economic and educational safeguards which were each minority's 'bread and butter'.⁵⁶⁴ This pointed to the specific privileges Anglo-Indians had won in the 1935 Government of India Act – 'We would recall, at this stage, the statement of the Deputy Leader of the Congress Party in the Central Legislative Assembly, Mr. S. Satyamurti who, last year in the public press in India, described the Anglo-Indian demands based on the Government of India Act 1935 as 'insolent.' This, therefore, is just where the shoe will pinch each community when it advances its respective claims.'⁵⁶⁵

There was also anxiety that as 'a community with military traditions and traits, Mr. Gandhi may not consider the Anglo-Indian a minority at all according to his standard of assessment of minorities'.⁵⁶⁶ Gidney asserted that 'The Anglo-Indian, therefore, while willing to march hand in hand with other communities in India, in an effort to attain Dominion Status on constitutional and evolutionary lines, declines to place any trust in the present policy of the Congress and will with Muslims and other minorities fight to the last ditch.'⁵⁶⁷ Gidney himself went further:

I regret... the absence of any realisation of this vital part that we play in the life of this country on the part of those who profess to speak for the nation... To them we do not exist... It was recently stated by Mr. Gandhi... that no community in India needed help except the Depressed classes who were the only real minority... the Anglo-Indian does not fear the loss of the right to practice his religion... he fears... the deprivation of his right to live and thrive in the country of his origin and development into an Indian community with British traditions and traits... The other day, the Education Minister of the Government of Madras declared that... a readjustment between the grants of Anglo-Indian Schools and Indian Schools may be effected. Let those who claim self-determination... declare their preparedness to sacrifice something in order to ensure the bread and butter of others... [Then] I have

⁵⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 8.

⁵⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

⁵⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

⁵⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

no doubt that the Anglo-Indian will join hands... in the attainment of the goal *i.e.* Dominion Status for India, but as a partner in the British Commonwealth of Nations. But under no circumstances can we surrender our birthright, our loyalty to Great Britain, our family traditions, our standard of living and our mode of life, the maintenance of which in turn depend on our protected existence in the economic sphere. If the new order should demand the surrender of these, we shall become the Ulster of India and fight to the last ditch. In any case, our co-operation with a party which has adopted a bargaining attitude in the matter of according support to the King Emperor when His Majesty is at war is entirely out of the question...⁵⁶⁸

It is clear from this martial speech that Gidney had a very different understanding of what might come into being on the basis of Britain's promises of Dominion Status than the nation which was to emerge less than a decade later. The article on Congress and the Minorities had also highlighted Gandhi's statement in an article published in *Harijon* that 'if the English were to withdraw all of a sudden it might be said that the Punjabis, Muslims and Sikhs and others would overrun India and that the Gurkhas would throw in their lot with the warriors of the Punjab' and that such a scenario was prevented by 'British bayonets' alone.⁵⁶⁹

The level of uncertainty about what would happen was demonstrably immense. Gidney appears to have still believed in 1940 that the British would deal out the cards, could safeguard constitutional provisions for minorities under some kind of Dominion Status and that India would be unlikely to leave the Commonwealth. Without partition a federal or looser India with autonomous Princely States, autonomous Muslim Homelands and autonomous Anglo-Indian colonies, perhaps even an Anglo-Indian state might all have seemed plausible, even likely. Gidney was perhaps buoyed with the excitement and fortunes of war, and seemed to be establishing a strong negotiating position with the expectation that the Hindus, no matter how tiny the Anglo-Indian community was, might

⁵⁶⁸ *Anglo-Indian Review* (January, 1940), 6.

⁵⁶⁹ *Anglo-Indian Review* (December, 1939), 7.

be forced to the bargaining table under British invigilation. The shift in Anglo-Indian policy after Gidney's death when Anthony realised the necessity of supplication to the Congress Party in the hope of small favours could not have been more profound.

Frank Anthony

Gidney's death on the 5th of May 1942, at the age of 68, may not have been entirely unrelated to his disappointment at the stark message he had received from the Cripps mission about a month before that Anglo-Indian employment reservations would come to an immediate end. According to a memorial in the *Review* a year later Gidney received tributes from leaders 'of the different parties in India and of all shades of political opinion'.⁵⁷⁰ Anthony made his own tribute: 'He weathered all the storms on behalf of the Community and brought us through every conceivable obstacle to place the Community definitely on the political and economic map of India. It is no exaggeration to say that few persons have ever had to face and surmount the obstacles that beset him both in his public and private life – obstacles largely placed in his way by his own people.'⁵⁷¹

After taking the helm, Anthony and the editorial voice of the *Review* immediately initiated a radical shift in tone and rhetoric, and more gradually a shift in the message. Anthony spoke frankly and did not pull his punches, beginning with some sharp criticisms of Anglo-Indians who remained aloof from or opposed to the Association. If Gidney had adopted a softly-softly approach to shifting the self-identification and problematic elements of Anglo-Indian socio-racial attitudes, Anthony issued more ultimatums and firm instructions and warned of dire consequences should he be ignored. Anthony also

⁵⁷⁰ *Anglo-Indian Review* (May, 1943), 5.

⁵⁷¹ *Ibid.*

continued to press government on almost identical issues as his predecessor, but as a successful lawyer could perhaps be said to have adopted a more forensic style.

In January of 1943 having been elected President-in-Chief Anthony embarked on a frenetic tour (of southern India, Bengal and Bihar) with a tight itinerary – in just over a month Anthony visited 21 Association branches.⁵⁷² Rajahmundry, which had not been on the itinerary as its Anglo-Indian population consisted of ‘a comparatively few Railway families’, had evidently displayed enthusiasm as they presented Anthony with Rs. 578 As. 11 for the Association's funds and after ‘the meeting the whole body of people went to the station to see Mr. Anthony off.’⁵⁷³ Anthony gave speeches everywhere he went, stayed in some stations for less than a day, visited schools, a vocational institute for women, the mines of KGF, railway workshops, a ‘British Evacuee Camp at Coimbatore’, and the ‘Ernakulam Municipal Corporation’.⁵⁷⁴ At the Bangalore Bowring Institute Anthony was forthright in criticising the lack of Association members relative to the city’s ‘very large Anglo-Indian population’.⁵⁷⁵ According to the *Daily Post* Anthony remarked that ‘Bangalore could and should be one of the main bulwarks of Anglo-India’ were it not for the indifference of the community there:

His discourse was refreshingly exhilarating: his frankness and outspokenness generally appreciated... he was challengingly provocative... The community cannot be too often or too severely provoked. It is yet, as a whole, too indifferent to the need for organisation; its members too prone to quarrel amongst themselves, too reluctant to subordinate personal and petty jealousies and rivalries... the awakening to reality is too slow... [We must make] Bangalore Anglo-Indians “community” conscious, which alas! they are far from being today. The Branch has to shatter prejudices... it must dissolve complexes... of colour, pay and pension grade... It was no exaggeration on the part of Mr. Anthony to describe the future for Anglo-Indians

⁵⁷² *Anglo-Indian Review* (February, 1943), 15-18.

⁵⁷³ *Ibid.*, 15-16.

⁵⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 15-17.

⁵⁷⁵ *Daily Post* (5 February, 1943), cited in *Anglo-Indian Review* (March, 1943), 13.

as grim of prospect.⁵⁷⁶

While praising Gidney's efforts and foresight Anthony warned Anglo-Indians to wake up to the coming reality, telling them that in the future India they would sooner or later lose the hard won safeguards and have to fend for themselves.

Anthony's 'maiden speech' as President-in-Chief provoked controversy and was attacked in a letter by Mr. E. Few, M.L.A. and President of the Punjab Branch which Few circulated directly to other branches of the Association.⁵⁷⁷ The central Governing Body of the Association responded angrily that Few's comments were 'a gross misrepresentation of the President's policy' and that the Punjab Branch 'in adopting a resolution of a threatening nature and circulating this to the other Branches was thoroughly incorrect, unconstitutional and not conducive to good discipline within the Association.'⁵⁷⁸ Few perceived Anthony's position to be a departure from Anglo-Indian's traditional loyalty to Britain towards a more Indian and Congress friendly position. Anthony and the Association denied that they were being 'pro-this or pro-that but only pro-Anglo-Indian – the policy of enlisting maximum help from and friendship of all communities, Indian and European.'⁵⁷⁹

At a meeting of the Governing Body in March 1943, Few asked why his actions had been deemed 'incorrect and unconstitutional' and was answered by the Honorary General Secretary Mr. M. Collins who said it had decided that 'it was not in the interest of the Association for any President of a Branch to resort to certain propaganda to other

⁵⁷⁶ *Ibid.*

⁵⁷⁷ *Anglo-Indian Review* (March, 1943), 18.

⁵⁷⁸ *Ibid.*

⁵⁷⁹ *Ibid.*

Branches with the object of influencing them in any particular way...'⁵⁸⁰ Few responded 'that the Lahore Branch was not satisfied with the policy enunciated by the President-in-Chief as reported by responsible newspapers... if this was the correct exposition of the President's policy, then the Lahore Branch could not support him.'⁵⁸¹ Few asserted 'that the policy of the Association should be pro-Government and pro-British.'⁵⁸² Anthony responded that the newspapers had misrepresented his speeches and assured Few 'that his policy was certainly not "pro-Congress" or "pro-Muslim League"', that any alignment with a particular party would be 'unwise and incorrect at this juncture', that 'we as a Community must naturally support the Government' which he had done by emphasising the 'great part the Community was playing in the war effort' to the Viceroy, but that Anglo-Indians could no longer rely on having safeguards (even if they would continue to fight for them) and therefore had to develop a more self-reliant position.⁵⁸³ After assurances that this would be clarified in the *Review* Few withdrew his objection.

Gidney had expressed frequent and conservative sounding devotion to Britain and had limited his criticisms of government. Whatever protestations were made to the contrary the shift in tone and message initiated by Anthony, his fervent attacks on government, and his increasing outreach towards fellow Indians must have been obvious to other Anglo-Indian politicians. At the Association's 1943 AGM Anthony declared:

I am told by one or two people outside the fold of the Association that I am preaching defeatism... I preach realism. What were we told by Sir Stafford Cripps? ...We were told... that we could not expect our safeguards and our present protection to continue... we asked for a breathing space in which to set our economic house in order, and the failure of the Cripps proposals has offered us that breathing

⁵⁸⁰ *Ibid.*

⁵⁸¹ *Ibid.*

⁵⁸² *Ibid.*, 19.

⁵⁸³ *Ibid.*

space... The Cripps proposals caught us unawares... If those proposals had been accepted we would have been caught off both legs. Economically we would have faced extinction... we must prepare from now on to set our house in order... so that we will not be confronted with the hopeless situation with which we were confronted when Cripps came to this country.⁵⁸⁴

Anthony had realised at this point, safeguards would go and the British would have little power (and in his own view even less inclination) to do much for the Anglo-Indian community going forward. While Gidney had spoken of a 'minority block strategy' and threatened the emergence of numerous 'Ulsters' should the British let the community down, Anthony understood that the future of Anglo-Indians within India would depend upon relations with the Congress Party. Gidney had spoken of India as motherland and Britain as fatherland; Anthony would move towards a solitary identification with India based upon the formula Anglo-Indian by community, Indian by nationality.

In the last days of the Gidney era a plan had been devised to massively bolster the endowment of Anglo-Indian education so that at least if Anglo-Indians were to lose job security they would retain the means to educate their children. At present the fees in 'European' schools were prohibitively high for poorer Anglo-Indians and only those with secure government employment could educate their children up to the higher levels. So endowing Anglo-Indian education to the degree that all Anglo-Indians even in reduced circumstances, having lost secure employment, would be able to afford sufficient education for their children was seen as a key priority. Gidney hoped that the British Parliament could be persuaded to recognise Anglo-Indians' past services to Britain and the Raj in the form of a large grant of cash for such an endowment. Anthony inherited this policy and made it the basis of his overall political strategy for Anglo-Indians. Anthony

⁵⁸⁴ *Anglo-Indian Review* (May, 1943), 15-16.

wanted: highly endowed Anglo-Indian schools which would be able to provide education at a lower price without reducing teacher salaries; Anglo-Indian teachers and the Association to have effective control over Anglo-Indian schools; a strong Association with all Anglo-Indians as members and subscribers to the *Review*; what might be termed the best 'severance package' from the British that could be realistically obtained on the basis of their demonstrable obligations to the community; a complete reorientation of Anglo-Indian self-identification and economic life; and a rapprochement with Indians and the Congress Party leading to future brotherly feelings (provided that Anglo-Indian linguistic, cultural, religious and educational autonomy could be protected).

The subtext of Anthony's public message was all important, because like Gidney Anthony was attempting to mentally shift the Anglo-Indian community in a direction that many of them did not want to go, and under the increased pressures of an imminent British withdrawal from India Anthony was attempting to do so at even more radical speed. Anthony was determined to address the issues of self-identification, social and racial stratification within the community, the persistence (and indeed undoubted increase under wartime employment conditions) of widespread racial passing as Europeans amongst Anglo-Indians, and the survival of Anglo-Indian racial and social snobbery towards Indians. The last of these was particularly toxic for Anglo-Indians future in an independent India. Anthony saw that such values persisted primarily through two conduits – values imbibed through education by British and European teachers in Anglo-Indian schools and more importantly values inculcated by parents. Women's role as mothers and conduits of culture gave them a critical place in shaping the socio-racial values of their children. Anthony risked grave offence in declaring:

It is to the women of the community that I want to make an appeal, because it is axiomatic that our women have retarded the development of the community. No community can rise above the standards set by its womenfolk. I am grieved to say... that our ladies have held the community down. You women, you have not been a source of inspiration, but a source of mis-inspiration. You have been a reactionary force in Anglo-Indian homes. You have prevented your husbands from taking their share in the life of the community. You have taught your sons and daughters to look away from their community...⁵⁸⁵

The passing on of pro-British sentiment, of social and racial snobbery within the community and towards Indians may have been a hopelessly out of date as well as toxic legacy to leave to one's children, but not perhaps universally so. For the individual fair skinned Anglo-Indian who could pass as a European in the context of the Second World War racial passing was once again an objectively good strategy with its own material and social rewards. For an individual family migration overseas, abetted by fair complexion and racial passing as Europeans or Britons could be highly advantageous. An Anglo-Indian engaging in racial passing and serving in the British Army during the war would receive better pay and conditions, better promotion prospects, and the possibility of demobilisation outside of India or fraudulent 'repatriation' to Britain at the end of the war. It cannot necessarily be argued therefore, from the point of view of the individual or of the family unit, that racial passing was always a disadvantageous or detrimental strategy.

Women in the Anglo-Indian community had been highly concerned with the future of their children and had often aspired to upwards social mobility for themselves or at least their children. Within the context of the Raj and its elaborate socio-racial hierarchy such upward mobility had been achieved through racial passing. Anglo-Indian mothers who continued to inculcate children (deliberately or inadvertently) with socio-racial values that operated in favour of racial passing and identification with Britain over India, may have in

⁵⁸⁵ *Anglo-Indian Review* (October, 1943), 7.

some cases been damaging their childrens' prospects, but not in all cases. Those who clung to such an outlook most persistently were more likely, if they could find the means, to choose the strategy of emigration over acceptance of Anthony's new message, and even those whose complexion did not allow them to pass might benefit materially from emigration.

Here individual and familial strategies conflicted with group or communal strategies. For Anthony loss of Anglo-Indians in the Census returns, loss of their achievements in military service and other arenas, loss of the capital of more successful Anglo-Indians, and loss of Anglo-Indians with some means to the strategy of emigration were all highly detrimental to an overall communal strategy of self-preservation. As a collective determined to remain in India Anthony was advancing a sound and purposeful strategy of adaptation to changing circumstance. For many the message and tone was a step too far at a time when they were still enjoying wartime employment and higher salaries than many had known during the inter-war years.

Anthony's new tone and message galvanised support as well as provoking opposition. Several Branches recorded their dissension from Few's letter and expressed whole-hearted support for Anthony. The Secretary of the Dhanbad Branch at a General Meeting at the European Institute in 1943 before 'a representative gathering of Anglo-Indians of Dhanbad and the neighbouring coal field area... read his report explaining how the branch had deteriorated, attributing the apathy of the community and his own inability to infuse a keenness into the people... [and] that as a result of Mr. Frank Anthony's visit... the community was imbued with a new spirit of keenness, resulting in an influx of members...

[so that] today he had 55 members...⁵⁸⁶ The *Review* built on encouraging branch reports and began to speak in propagandistic terms of the influx and engagement of Anglo-Indian youth and the importance of youth movements more generally in India and the wider world. In March 1943 the *Review* opened with an editorial entitled ‘Militant Young Anglo-India’:

...Mr. Atkins, the young and ardently enthusiastic President of the Branch referred to the part which “militant young Anglo-India” is now playing in the Association. In this phrase he struck a chord which was touched upon by Mr. Anthony... Militant young Anglo-India is now on the march... The young women of the community are lagging behind in this matter... The part to be played and the role to be occupied by any community in the life of the nation are ultimately determined by the attitude and the activities of its women. The older women have not played their part in the past... because of this... the older Anglo-Indian men have failed to fulfil their duty... There are many ladies [t]oday on the different committees who are doing yeoman service for the Association. An enthusiastic lady worker can do at least as much, if not more, than her male counterpart.⁵⁸⁷

Anthony's new message that Anglo-Indians should embrace their fellow Indians and integrate more socially with them can be detected in articles such as ‘Indian Hospitality’ which explain Indian etiquette to Anglo-Indians while emphasising in several different first-hand accounts how marvellous and elaborate Indian hospitality and kindness are, and how effective Indian traditional medicinal remedies can be.⁵⁸⁸ A drastic shift in attitudes as well as an attempt to mobilise the youth to counteract ‘reactionary’ elders is evident in the *Review* soon after the point of Anthony’s takeover of the Association.

Anthony’s core strategy of reshaping Anglo-Indian identity decisively away from Britain and towards greater identification with India and Indian nationalism was both bold and divisive. Anthony’s developing view that the British had badly let down Anglo-Indians

⁵⁸⁶ *Anglo-Indian Review* (April, 1943), 23.

⁵⁸⁷ *Anglo-Indian Review* (March, 1943), 3.

⁵⁸⁸ *Anglo-Indian Review* (February, 1943), 21.

(much later he even titled his 1969 book *Britain's Betrayal in India*) made this shift easier for him and those who accepted his narrative. The result was to polarise and split Anglo-Indians, and to encourage those who rejected Anthony's formula to migrate, if they had the means to do so. In fact, those with the means, were very likely to choose the strategy of individual or family migration anyway as Anglo-Indians of all viewpoints tended to be apprehensive about the uncertain future for the community within India. A forced confidence on the part of those who had little choice but to remain was clearly more advantageous than despair, and while preaching a stark message about their bleak situation Anthony provided answers, hope and compelling rhetoric.

Anthony had to persuade as many of the more affluent Anglo-Indians as possible to remain, so that they would not deplete the economic strength of the majority who, by choice or necessity, were destined to remain in India. Anthony's overtures to the Congress Party and forceful rejection of partition were even more successful, as Nehru granted Anglo-Indians special protections in the Indian Constitution, some remnant of reserved posts in the railways, and the only two reserved seats in the Lok Sabha (Lower House of the Indian Parliament) as well as allocated seats in state legislatures. Anthony's success was a result of his reformulation of Anglo-Indian identity and allegiance, the enduring personal relationships he was able to build with Nehru and his family, and perhaps also the minor utility to the Congress Party of having Anthony's articulate and supportive voice in the public and legislative arenas as the leader of a minority community.

This chapter has charted the course of Anglo-Indian political development from its origins

in specific campaigns for greater rights and the work of primarily philanthropic bodies in the late 19th Century, through the formation of effective political organisation to respond to the constitutional changes (and economic consequences) of the 1919 and 1935 Government of India Acts and Gidney's sense of dual loyalty to Britain and India (represented as Fatherland and Motherland), and to Anthony's radical attempts to shift the Anglo-Indian community towards a strong communal identity within the framework of Indian nationalism. At the core of Anglo-Indian political strategies was a conscious process of making a political minority community, in accordance with the language being deployed by the British and Indians including those seeking to position themselves as political minorities, such as the Sikhs. We have seen how amalgamation of existing Anglo-Indian organisations laid the basis for a truly national Association, which while not the only remaining Anglo-Indian body, was able to win recognition from the colonial state as the political voice of the community.

The British had been reluctant to accept Anglo-Indian demands of any kind and had attempted to steer the community away from explicitly political agitation, towards the colonial state's preferred answers to what it perceived as the Anglo-Indian problem – which were the kind of philanthropic, educational, employment-related measures already in place and even agricultural colonisation. In response to the Anglo-Indian deputation of 1925, Lord Birkenhead was eager to make clear to Anglo-Indians that their future was to be in India, implying that wholesale emigration to Britain or a White Dominion of the empire was out of the question and that their identification with Britain (except insofar as they had a right to preserve their own distinctive culture as an Indian minority) which extended amongst many of their number to seeing it as home, was misguided.

We have revealed that the Assemblies set up under the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms were arenas in which Indian nationalists contested the British Indian Government's attempts to define Anglo-Indians as Indians by statute and pushed for the jobs they occupied in Government services and the railways to be Indianised at their expense. Questions in the legislatures began to shed light on a socio-racial hierarchy of Raj employment which structured employment in areas like the railways, through elaborate gradations of rank and remuneration and particular methods of recruitment and internal promotion, so as to place imported Britons at the top, Domiciled Europeans and beneath them Anglo-Indians in the middle, and Indians in the most junior or menial positions.

Anglo-Indians had been employed in middling positions between rulers and ruled as loyal buttressing agents of the imperial state in areas of vital security interest (transport and communication), with additional duties to serve as a military reserve force in times of war, strikes or civil unrest. Anglo-Indians, with their own internal and external racial and colour prejudices and extensive practice of racial passing, contested their leaders attempts to define them as an Indian minority community (in order to safeguard their economic position). As few Anglo-Indians identified themselves as Indians or associated with Indians (in accordance with the evolving rhetorical urgings of their leadership) it was easy for Indian nationalists to demand that their areas of employment, hitherto protected by discriminatory hiring procedures and enjoying discriminatory higher pay scales (made opaque by complex gradations of rank) than Indians (although Anglo-Indians were also kept on 'subordinate' scales that were less highly remunerated than the covenanted scales on which Britons – with or without experience – were hired), be opened up to free and fair competition to Indians (who often possessed higher levels of education). In this context, while both the Raj and the Anglo-Indian leadership asserted that Anglo-Indians were

exempt from Indianisation, in practice British colonial administrators found it impossible to resist political pressures to open out tiers of employment which had previously been preponderantly occupied by Anglo-Indians and Domiciled Europeans to Indianisation.

As a community Anglo-Indians were heavily reliant on the railways and other particular branches of state employment, to the extent that they sometimes claimed to be (like the martial races) a kind of railway caste. Gidney's political efforts directed towards the British and British Indian Governments were accordingly focused on achieving a permanent political voice through reserved, nominated or separately elected seats for the community in any transitional or future constitution, and towards achieving statutory safeguards which precisely enumerated and reserved proportions of jobs in Anglo-Indians' existing fields of employment. To achieve both ends Gidney pursued the core strategy of making a political minority community.

During the Round Table Conferences, Gidney advanced a 'minority block' strategy which soon dropped making common cause with the large Muslim minority and focussed on the interests of smaller minorities which he felt were being overlooked through the predominance of the Hindu-Muslim question. In doing so he received the support of other minorities, such as the untouchables, when he spoke effectively on their behalf. In London Gidney effectively courted the press and pushed the Anglo-Indian case as one of British (paternal) obligation. Through great personal efforts during the parliamentary deliberations over the 1935 Act, Gidney was able to enlist supporters in both the Commons and Lords to effect a last minute amendment providing the statutory safeguards (for reserved employment) for which he had been campaigning. The British Indian Government initially attempted to declare the amendment to be merely declaratory of

intent rather than binding, and Anglo-Indian political leaders experienced great difficulty in having it properly implemented.

Other political efforts centred on opening out new avenues of employment to Anglo-Indians and increasing finance for existing and new educational means to prepare the youth of the community to face increased competition for both state and private employment. As Anthony took over leadership after Gidney's death, in response to changing political realities, he initiated a radical new shift in tone and message, attempting to move the community rapidly towards an embrace of Indian nationalism, a distancing of itself from its traditional loyalty to Britain, and an acceptance that Gidney's safeguards would probably disappear in the self-governing India which was to come. Anthony's concrete measures focussed on building on Gidney's plans for an educational solution to the problem – which was something the British had long advocated though refused to provide any special (publicly funded by Britain or British India) one-off or continuing financial contribution towards.

Chapter VI: Colonization Strategies

In the context of deepening unemployment and anxiety about their future in a self-governing India one bold and recurring strategy for Anglo-Indians was colonization. In the early 20th Century Abbott had attempted to form an Anglo-Indian and Domiciled European colony in Uttaranchal in the Himalayas by buying up tracts of land and subdividing them to sell as scenic retirement homes to the domiciled. The interests of Abbott's family construction business dovetailed neatly with his philanthropic efforts and political ambitions. An interviewee in Bangalore recalled overhearing as a child her father being persuaded to reverse his decision to buy into the Abbott scheme by a friend.⁵⁸⁹ 'Abbott Mount', close to Nepal, now being advertised as a tourist retreat consisting of 'a cluster of thirteen Cottages set in the midst of five acres of marvelous woods... [with] a lovely church', is likely the last vestige of this attempt.⁵⁹⁰ According to Lahiri-Dutt Abbott also established 'settlements in the Jhansi and Bina districts'.⁵⁹¹ The *Statesman* would later link Abbott to support for the Anglo-Indian property agent E. T. McCluskie's agricultural colonization scheme – 'farming according to Mr. McCluskie and Mr. Abbott is a means of investment'.⁵⁹²

An early abortive attempt was also made to settle some destitute Anglo-Indians in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands in the early 1920s with a view to their taking up agriculture, but they were a limited number comprised only of unskilled men without any agricultural

⁵⁸⁹ Interview conducted by author in Bangalore, 2010.

⁵⁹⁰ Must See India, 2011, "Abbott Mount, Uttaranchal", Roam Space Travel Solutions Pvt Ltd [online] available at <http://www.mustseeindia.com/Abbott-Mount>

⁵⁹¹ K. Lahiri-Dutt, *In Search of a Homeland: Anglo-Indians and McCluskiegunge* (Calcutta, 1990), 42.

⁵⁹² Cited in *Anglo-Indian Review* (September, 1933), 3.

tools who took up residence in former prison buildings and some of whom succumbed to tropical disease before the venture was abandoned. Gidney would later disavow his involvement in the fiasco and claim it was not a project of any of the Anglo-Indian Associations. In 1930 Sir Mizra M. Ismail, Dewan of Mysore 'visited the Anglo-Indian Colony of Whitefield (Mysore)' near Bangalore, where many Anglo-Indian retirees had settled. The Dewan had been personally responsible for encouraging such settlement in Mysore.⁵⁹³ The *Review* reported that 'Sir Mizra looks upon the Anglo-Indian settlers in Mysore as the best subjects of the Mysore Durbar and from what we have been told, the State would welcome Anglo-Indians colonising in Mysore. The climate is ideal, it has one of the most powerful electric installations, and the supply of water is excellent.'⁵⁹⁴ The Dewan's enthusiasm may have been partly owing to the importance of Anglo-Indian engineers to major hydroelectric projects as well as the large Anglo-Indian population engaged in mining at the Kolar Gold Fields. An economically successful colony might become an asset to a princely state. However, despite princely encouragement it was partly the political status of Mysore that drove colonization proponents elsewhere.

A Sub-Committee appointed during the Association's 1929 AGM met 'to consider the question of a Communal Co-operative Land Colonization Scheme'.⁵⁹⁵ McCluskie was amongst its members considering whether agriculture was 'of such economic importance as a means of livelihood as to justify its preference to employment in Government Offices and Public Departments, as in the past' and investigating the questions of 'Land' and 'Finance'.⁵⁹⁶ Their 1930 report judged that Indian agriculture was inefficient by global standards with crop yields substantially below those of Java, the United States and Egypt,

⁵⁹³ *Anglo-Indian Review* (May, 1930), 23.

⁵⁹⁴ *Anglo-Indian Review* (June, 1930), 11.

⁵⁹⁵ *Anglo-Indian Review* (September, 1930), 13.

⁵⁹⁶ *Ibid.*

England and Japan for the products of sugar cane, ginned cotton, wheat and rice respectively. Low yields were ascribed to underinvestment in ‘good seed’, sufficient ‘manure’, ‘improved implements’, ‘good working cattle’ and ‘facilities for irrigation’ rather than any deficiency in the Indian Ryot.⁵⁹⁷ Only the tea industry was found to achieve a good return on capital investment. However, it argued that the introduction of more modern and efficient methods with sufficient investment would yield increased production and profits in other areas. The report examined the empirical figures on land usage in India and Burma emphasising the imperial state’s concept of ‘culturable’ (or cultivatable) wasteland:

			Acres
Area by professional survey	..	..	61,95,94,000
“under Forest	..	..	82,623,000
“not available for cultivation	..	..	14,71,59,000
“of culturable waste	..	..	11,55,87,000
“of fallow land	..	..	52,620,000
“of cropped land	..	..	21,91,92,000

These figures indicate that an area, equalling 50% of all the land at present cropped is available for the extension of cultivation. The following table will afford information by Provinces of culturable waste available, density of population and the average rainfall.

Provinces.	Millions of acres.	Population per sq. Miles	Average Rainfall.
Madras ..	.. 12,000,000	291	43
Bombay ..	.. 7,000,000	145	46
Bengal ..	.. 6,000,000	551	70
United Provinces ..	.. 10,000,000	427	42
Punjab ..	.. 15,000,000	117	31
Burmah ..	.. 60,000,000	53	95
Bihar & Orissa..	.. 7,000,000	344	53
C. P. & Behrar..	.. 15,000,000	122	48
Assam ..	.. 16,000,000	32	100 ⁵⁹⁸

⁵⁹⁷ *Ibid.*

⁵⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 14.

The report concluded that ‘Agriculture is a profitable undertaking’ and that ‘large tracts of land are available for a Communal Agriculture Settlement.’⁵⁹⁹ Burma, with the ‘largest area of culturable waste’ was dismissed owing to anticipation of its possible separation from India alongside other practical considerations. Assam was then judged unsuitable as it was ‘unhealthy’, lacked communication and suffered from ‘extremely heavy rainfall’.⁶⁰⁰ Despite the four Association branches in Burma, Burma and Assam were judged to constitute ‘*terra incognita*’.⁶⁰¹ The Central Provinces was thought to be most promising with: good soil; temperate climate; moderate rainfall; and ‘three of the most important Indian Railway systems traversing it, connecting it with the pinciple [sic] towns in India and connecting up all parts of the Province with the ports of Calcutta, Bombay and Vizgapatam.’⁶⁰²

A ‘suggestion made by one of the Branches of the Association that the Settlement should be situated in Southern India at an elevation of from two to three thousand feet’, presumably the ‘Mysore Tableland’, was rejected because it was too ‘far removed from large consuming centres’ and being ‘outside British India... the settlers would not have representation in the various Legislative Councils of the country’.⁶⁰³ The decision likely reinforced southern perceptions that the Association was a northern-dominated and Calcutta-centric body and that consequently proposals from the significant Anglo-Indian populations of Bangalore or Madras were unlikely to win approval.

A series of meetings were held to canvas support and gauge the level of potential

⁵⁹⁹ *Ibid.*

⁶⁰⁰ *Ibid.*

⁶⁰¹ *Ibid.*

⁶⁰² *Ibid.*

⁶⁰³ *Ibid.*, 14-15.

investment in the scheme, the results of which were initially disappointing. Gidney distanced himself from McCluskie's proposals. Nonetheless, in the early 1930s the most comprehensive attempt to create an Anglo-Indian colony began at Lapra (in modern Jharkand) by McCluskie and the Colonization Society of India Ltd (henceforth CSI). After discussions in the *Colonization Observer* (the official CSI magazine, henceforth the *Observer*), during which 'McCluskie Valley', 'McCluskieborough', 'Homeland', 'Aidelands' and 'Aidvalley' were suggested, the name McCluskiegunge (now spelled McCluskieganj) was settled upon. The name was not unique – Daltonganj was a few railway stops away, there was also nearby Leslieganj, and in Himachal Pradesh, McLeodganj.

The term 'colony' and 'colonization' carries multifarious meanings in Indian. Particular suburbs within a city are often still referred to as colonies, for example 'New Friends Colony' in Delhi. B. H. Farmer, a geographer by training, undertook a major study of colonization schemes after independence and defined 'agricultural colonization' as 'the establishment of people on wasteland by government organizations for agricultural purposes and in groups large enough to require completely new villages' explicitly excluding 'privately organised extension of cultivation... State Farms or Plantations, or the expansion of existing villages.'⁶⁰⁴ The Anglo-Indian schemes failed to secure state backing and hence would fall outside of Farmer's definition, but the kind of colonies he refers to were a significant part of the context in which Anglo-Indian ideas took shape. Farmer also singles out the 'concept of *culturable waste*', extensively promulgated by the imperial state through its annually published statistics, as of central importance to the understanding of colonization 'because of the misconceptions and false conclusions that

⁶⁰⁴ B. Farmer, *Agricultural Colonization in India since Independence* (London, 1974), 1.

it... engendered.’⁶⁰⁵

Agricultural Colonization in India

A major undertaking of the imperial state during the late 19th and early 20th Centuries were large-scale irrigation schemes which allowed for the creation of agricultural ‘Canal Colonies’ in the formerly arid regions of western Punjab for the resettlement of farmers from central Punjab and retired soldiers and state employees. These colonies involved high levels of state funding, for example by 1918 total government investment in the Chenab Colony ‘amounted to more than Rs 325 lakhs.’⁶⁰⁶ Chenab Colony was just one of these colonies commanding an area ‘estimated at over 2.2 million acres’, whose population ‘grew from 112,000 in 1891 to over 1.1 million in 1911, of which the majority were migrants from other parts of the Punjab’ and whose ‘annual value of crops... came by 1915 to more than twice the total capital expenditure incurred on the colony.’⁶⁰⁷

The imperial state deployed ‘Colonization officers’ chosen from among young ICS men such as William Hailey who would go on to be a Governor (first of the Punjab and then of the United Provinces) and advisor to five viceroys and who was raised to the peerage in 1936. As a colonization officer between 1901 and 1906 he took a pragmatic and forceful approach to the challenging task of turning ‘Jhelum colony’ into a breeding ground for high quality horses suitable for the army during repeated outbreaks of plague which killed and frightened off colonists.⁶⁰⁸ The colony was predictably less successful than Chenab and Hailey complained of the unsuitability of retired government servants when he

⁶⁰⁵ Farmer, *Agricultural Colonization*, 29.

⁶⁰⁶ I. Talbot & S. Thandi (eds.), *People on The Move: Punjabi Colonial, and Post-Colonial Migration* (Karachi, 2004), 5.

⁶⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 4.

⁶⁰⁸ J. Cell, *Hailey: a study in British Imperialism* (New York, 1992), 26-28.

expressed the sarcastic hope ‘that Government will some day be able to devise a more appropriate method of rewarding the retired Meteorological Observer, the superannuated ticket collector, or the blameless but very unagricultural individual whose life has been passed in the cloistered retreats of the Accountant-General’s Office.’⁶⁰⁹ Hailey could just as easily have been characterising the majority of Anglo-Indian settlers in McCluskiegunge almost three decades later (many of them retired clerks, railwaymen and engineers).

Anglo-Indian agricultural colonies probably drew inspiration from these earlier massive state-backed schemes. As Gilmartin argues although these colonies relied heavily on state investment, planning and supervision, the state’s rhetoric emphasised the decisive importance of a powerful ‘colonizing spirit’ alongside the ‘enterprise and perseverance’ of the colonists.⁶¹⁰ Gilmartin explores the ‘social engineering rhetoric of canal colony settlement’,⁶¹¹ in which colonization was depicted as a means of forging a new agricultural modernity that would ‘transform the settlers themselves.’⁶¹² Such rhetoric was closely paralleled in the marketing material of the CSI which stressed the moral and transformational potential of colonization for the settler. The CSI advanced a vision of the moral and physical reshaping of the colonist who would create a flowering agricultural colony through modern scientific methods, sheer willpower and dogged determination. An observer of the Chenab Colony in the 1920s described how in ‘less than a generation’ the settlers had ‘made the wilderness blossom like a rose.’⁶¹³ In addition to their quest for modernity and the pioneer spirit the instigators of Anglo-Indian colonization also felt the

⁶⁰⁹ Cited in *Ibid.*, 28-29.

⁶¹⁰ Talbot & Thandi, *People on The Move*, 5.

⁶¹¹ *Ibid.*, 17.

⁶¹² *Ibid.*, 9.

⁶¹³ Cited in *Ibid.*, 5.

biblical resonance of their task. Anglo-Indian colonization advocates cited both global and Indian models. In 1939 the *Observer* detailed an Indian 'land colonisation experiment started two years ago by the Travancore War Service Men's Association':⁶¹⁴

An area of about 55 acres of land surrounded by the Palode Reserve Forests was obtained from the Travancore Government two years ago; the entire area was cleared, surveyed and demarcated into 12 three-acre plots and the remaining land was set apart to serve as a demonstration farm... To-day there are some ten colonists with their families on a separate three acre block assigned to each [sic] of them. Pepper areca-nuts, cocoa-nuts, ginger, turmeric and plantains are among the products cultivated in this model colony. The residents are provided with facilities for conducting subsidiary industries like bee-keeping, poultry farming and buffalo rearing.⁶¹⁵

Although relatively small scale it was an attractive example because it was making 'excellent progress', had diversified its agricultural production into several potentially profitable areas and had managed to secure state support in the form of an initial land grant and following its success the Travancore Government's decision to send 'two young men who have been trained in agriculture at the Government agricultural schools, to settle in the colony' and to place 'at the disposal of the colony the services of a senior Agricultural Inspector to guide colonists in the lay-out and development of their area.'⁶¹⁶

The Travancore scheme was 'intended mainly for the benefit of *ex-service men*' and significantly its 'aim... [was] to meet in some measure the problem of unemployment among educated men in the state and to bring into existence a class of holdings which would demonstrate to agriculturalists the advantages of cooperative cultivation.'⁶¹⁷ This was clearly something like what the founders of McCluskiegunge were hoping for

⁶¹⁴ *Colonization Observer* (February, 1939), 6.

⁶¹⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶¹⁶ *Ibid.*

⁶¹⁷ Imperial Council of Agricultural Research, *Agriculture and Animal Husbandry in India 1937-38* (Delhi, 1938), 225.

themselves, but writ large, so that their own colony could grow into the homeland of Anglo-India.

The imperial state was devoting significant attention and resources to scientific agriculture, colonization and the co-operative movement comprising various kinds of agricultural societies. Anglo-Indians were also talking about co-operative farming, and 'co-operation' was a slogan for colonization enthusiasts. Another experiment to be mentioned in the *Observer* in 1934 was a 'Co-operative Educational Colony' for which the 'Rotarian Jamshed Nusserwanjee, Mayor of Karachi... [had offered] fifty acres of good land and a sum of Rs. 5000 to Captain J. W. Petavel,' a former 'lecturer in poverty at the Calcutta University' who had given a lecture outlining the plan 'to the Rotary Club of Karachi'.⁶¹⁸

The benefits of co-operation were explained in the plans detailed in the 1930 sub-committee report on colonization. A case was cited of an Anglo-Indian man who had retired 'with a capital of Rs. 40,000 which, without any previous experience in the business he invested in Cattle Breeding, Dairy and Poultry Farming with the result that in about 5 years time owing to the outbreak of disease amongst his stock he lost the major portion of his capital.'⁶¹⁹ This example was given to explain the need for 'an efficiently organized and intelligently directed Agricultural settlement' in which 'a hundred such persons combining on a co-operative basis could with a resulting capital of 40 lakhs of rupees have easily not only had the whole time services of a veterinary Expert but also the services of all the expert staff necessary for conducting such a business.'⁶²⁰ Co-operative

⁶¹⁸ *Colonization Observer* (April 1934), 5.

⁶¹⁹ *Anglo-Indian Review* (September 1930), 15.

⁶²⁰ *Ibid.*

agriculture with all the necessary expertise it was argued would be a better investment for the ‘appreciable numbers of the Community [who each year] retire from service with capitals representing Provident Fund contributions, Bonuses, and life savings of from ten to fifty Thousand Rupees’ [sic] who could not afford to live on the interest of their capital and who had lost their savings in schemes such as ‘Dairies, Boarding Houses, Taxis, [and] Lorry Services’.⁶²¹ The report asserted that ‘Large numbers of the Community have also invested not inconsiderable sums in South African Orange Gardens, New Zealand Timber, Dairy Farms and Australian Apple Orchards and to-day are sadder for their investments.’⁶²²

Anxiety and Desires for a Secluded Homeland

Anglo-Indians were attracted to the concept of a ‘homeland’ at the same time as other Indian communities were starting to think in these terms. McCluskiegunge was described as a homeland for Anglo-Indians, even using the Hindi term ‘our Mooluk’ on more than one occasion.⁶²³ In 1934 the *Observer* was using slogans like ‘Independence is the goal we are striving for’ and somewhat ambiguously referred to the enterprise as a ‘Nation-Building Scheme’.⁶²⁴ One of the most fully formulated expressions of what could be hoped for was spelled out in 1941: ‘to strive for the establishment of a small Anglo-Indian Colony or State in India as a protectorate of the Indian Government’.⁶²⁵ In an article entitled ‘Future of Anglo-Indians’ B. D. Leadon argued that it must be recognised that under dominion status Britain would not be able to prevent India from abrogating any

⁶²¹ *Ibid.*

⁶²² *Ibid.*

⁶²³ *Colonization Observer*, (March-April, 1939), 44.

⁶²⁴ *Colonization Observer*, (September, 1934), 1.

⁶²⁵ *Anglo-Indian Review*, (December, 1940), 23, republished in *Colonization Observer* (April 1941), 5.

constitutional provisions devised to safeguard the position of Anglo-Indians, he went on to say that what 'Britain could have done, and can still do, is to create in some very small corner of India an Anglo-Indian State or colony. It would be a very small price to pay the community for its past services to the British people and Government. Such a State could be developed with loans granted by the British Government. If the Indian Legislature could be induced to agree to such a scheme, and I have every reason to believe that there would be little or no objection, the Anglo-Indian community could be assured of a bright and promising future.'⁶²⁶

Earlier colonization enthusiasts' ideas were less elaborate but did envisage a self-contained and self-sustaining colony as a means to protect Anglo-Indians economically and culturally. This desire was in some measure a wish to escape from the uncertainties of a self-governing India and the pressure to integrate more with their fellow Indians through socialising and adopting different modes of living. For those to whom this was most threatening, characterised by Leadon as the 'typical Anglo-Indian' whom he dubbed 'the patriotic Mr. Jones',⁶²⁷ the idea of a self-sufficient and co-operative Anglo-Indian world was particularly appealing. A significant portion of Anglo-Indians already lived in small railway colonies and combined with the CSI's pastoral idyllic imagery, these may have provided them with a potential vision for colony life. The *Observer* described McCluskiegunge as 'the racial home of our people' even while referring to India as 'our Motherland'.⁶²⁸

However, the fears that played into support for colonisation could also be deployed to

⁶²⁶ *Ibid.*, 3.

⁶²⁷ *Ibid.*, 4.

⁶²⁸ *Colonization Observer* (January 1941), 1.

denounce the plan. Writing under the initials 'T. D. A.' one contributor to the *Review* across two issues late in 1931 argued that Anglo-Indians could never find safety, isolation and self-sufficiency through colonization within India.⁶²⁹ The *Review's* editorial decision to carry these articles constituted the opening volleys in the Association's denunciation of McCluskie's scheme. They questioned colonisation's feasibility and it would 'lead somewhere or nowhere.'⁶³⁰ The second article emphasised acute anxiety over the potential reach of Hindu domination even in a secluded Anglo-Indian colony:

I have tried to visualise our Community after fifty years of Hindu rule... I see ourselves as their hewers of wood and drawers of water, exactly what we have been to the British... The difference however of serving the Hindu and Britisher is this. We despise the one and respect the other, and we do not mind serving those whose morals and traditions are more or less synonymous with ours, and whose children we claim to be, but it goes against the grain to visualise our children working side by side in poverty with those whom we at one time engaged as our servants... Western luxuries... will be far beyond the... [reach] of our people... There will be no respect shewn for our traditions... we either become their hired servants according to their standard of living, in the lowliest positions, or fend for ourselves... If however, we are away from India, we would be able to work out our own salvation in the same way as other colonies have done... [If we remain] we are by no means assured of the co-operation of the Indians... We cannot see eye to eye with them... we wish to live apart from them in their own country... we wish to trade with them... yet keep them at arms length as far as our colony goes, or only to admit a small portion of them... Such a system of ostracism would result in utter isolation, for they would immediately boycott us... Indians... will always regard us as aliens. Assuming that we are able to prosper... may not this... breed a feeling of envy and jealousy? May it not lead to... opposition with the object of destruction?... So... may the future Rulers of India say, "These Christians are gradually spreading themselves over our land, and drawing away our people and taking away some of our living, we must exterminate them." They are almost saying it to-day.⁶³¹

Escape to a Colony within India was not enough, only escape from India would ensure safety – the 'best home for the Anglo-Indians is a Christian home.'⁶³² T. D. A. described how the 'perfect Swaraj' of Indian leaders would lead them to demand uniformity of

⁶²⁹ *Anglo-Indian Review* (November 1931), 17-18, and *Anglo-Indian Review* ('X'mas', 1931), 31-34.

⁶³⁰ *Anglo-Indian Review* (November 1931), 17.

⁶³¹ *Anglo-Indian Review* ('X'mas', 1931), 31-32.

⁶³² *Ibid.*, 33.

thought and eventually of religion, foreseeing that an ‘intensely intolerant Government’ of caste Hindus might ‘enact by Statute “No Christian may be appointed”’.⁶³³ ‘Communal pressure’ was compared to ‘volcanic forces’ waiting to erupt and engulf the small minorities.⁶³⁴ Indians would not forget the scornful treatment, indignities and insults they had been subjected to by Anglo-Indians in the past. ‘Communal hatred against the White man and his Eurasian offspring... [was] much more deep-seated today than it was fifty years ago’.⁶³⁵

T. D. A. compared Anglo-Indians to the Israelites in Egypt expressing fears of genocide and arguing for mass emigration to a Christian country such as one of the White Dominions where an Anglo-Indian agricultural colony might safely thrive. Another piece paralleled these genocidal and biblical themes, but inverted the potential victim and perpetrator – namely a letter to the *Statesman* (Calcutta) in 1879 seemingly by an Englishman in India during the 2nd Anglo-Afghan War, which resonated enough with Anglo-Indian fears in the early 20th Century for it to be reprinted in 1929:

I would propose that Afghanistan... be entirely cleared of its inhabitants... either by driving the present inhabitants out, or by putting them to the sword, and that we replace them with *all* the Eurasians from India, making some of them rulers and others barons... Give them independence, subject to England's approval of their politics... consider what Afghans are... as soon as our army is withdrawn, our people are murdered... So I think the only safe way is to take *all* for enemies and root out the lot – *slaughter the whole* wherever they can be found. Give grants of the land thus obtained to the Eurasians, who can go there, and open out new trade and commerce and agriculture. We might keep the women as slaves... “And the Lord spake unto Moses – (lytton) saying, Avenge the children of Israel (England) of the Midianites (Afghans) ... ” And they slew all the males ” ... “And the children of Israel (England) took all the women of the Midian (Afghan) captives, and their little ones, and took the spoil of all their cattle and all their flocks and all their goods.” ...we are not without warrant of holy writ for so doing, or precedent. If God

⁶³³ *Ibid.*, 32.

⁶³⁴ *Ibid.*, 33.

⁶³⁵ *Ibid.*

commanded this once, it cannot be wrong... The best plan would be to exterminate the Afghans, and replace them with our own population.⁶³⁶

The editor's commentary emphasised the change in British perceptions of Eurasians:

TIME has rung many changes in the destiny of the Anglo-Indian Community and its association of usefulness to the British Raj. Fifty years ago as the following letter testifies we were recognised as their "own population" and thought fit to be made rulers and barons of Afghanistan. Had this proposition fructified besides the military asset it would have been to the Frontier, and the reduction in the Military budget the position of the community would have been secured once and for all.⁶³⁷

T. D. A. also set out to destroy the arguments that Anglo-Indians had a future in Indian agriculture: large scale cattle breeding had no profitable future in India; to breed for meat and hides was a potentially dangerous undertaking – today 'it may be permitted under compulsion, but what of fifty years hence when the Hindu administers the land, will he allow his most sacred animal to be selectively bred for the sake of mere slaughter?'⁶³⁸ With fewer Europeans and the Muslims contriving to 'purchase from their own Muslim suppliers' demand in India for the produce of cattle would fall and Anglo-Indians would struggle to sell their produce in the far more competitive international market against established producers.⁶³⁹ Labour intensive low profit crops like 'wheat, maize, and millets' were more efficiently produced in the 'great grain producing centres... [of] America, Russia and Australia'.⁶⁴⁰

⁶³⁶ Cited in *Anglo-Indian Review* (October, 1929), 7.

⁶³⁷ *Ibid.*

⁶³⁸ *Anglo-Indian Review* (November, 1931), 17.

⁶³⁹ *Ibid.*

⁶⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

Planning Colonization

The 1930 report included detailed plans for the structure, ordering and management of a colony, envisaging a magnitude that ‘would require a large capital... [of] at least a crore of rupees.’⁶⁴¹ Pre-empting scepticism about the possibility of raising such a sum it was argued that ‘a thousand persons possessed of a capital of Rs.10,000 each’ would suffice, but that a wider issue of ‘shares of Rs. 10 each’ split into ten monthly instalments of Rs. 1 would allow ‘even the most sceptical or diffident member of the Community... to participate.’⁶⁴² The report envisaged an organisation, possibly registered under the Co-Operative Societies Act, but certainly with articles of Association based upon the Act. Voting power would be restricted to one shareholder one vote. Annual profits would provide rebates or bonuses to producing members (50%); dividends for all shareholders would ‘be restricted to 6¼% per annum’, and all remaining funds (25%+) would be carried to a Development Account.⁶⁴³

Government was expected to make a direct grant of land, which would be surveyed and plotted out, ‘preferably by an experienced Anglo-Indian Settlement Officer on the retired list, assisted by subordinate Surveyors of the same category’, into holdings of 50 and 100 acres with future roads to be marked out.⁶⁴⁴ It was hoped that a ‘retired Irrigation engineer’ might be found to handle the plans for irrigation.⁶⁴⁵ As the government Colonization Officers had done in the Punjab Canal Colonies they intended to prevent the future subdivision or alienation of the orderly regular plots that had been thus laid out. Settlers would require a prior investment in shares of Rs. 10 per acre in order to acquire

⁶⁴¹ *Anglo-Indian Review* (September, 1930), 17.

⁶⁴² *Ibid.*

⁶⁴³ *Ibid.*

⁶⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

⁶⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

plots of land. It was assumed that the society or its colonists' rental payments would 'not exceed annas two in the rupee per cent per acre payable to Government'.⁶⁴⁶ Practical details were outlined:

...all agricultural operations, such as, preparation of land, sowing, irrigation, harvesting, should be done on a contract basis by labour and with appliances provided by the organisation itself.. Prospective settlers having applied for and been allotted their land and paid all the premia... [the] Society would, on execution of the necessary bond put up the necessary farm buildings... the interest on such cost should be 7% per annum. The... Society would undertake also on a contract basis, to breake [sic] up the necessary land and prepare it for seeding... supply reliable seed[, irrigate] and manure at favourable rates... [through] its wholesale purchasing power... harvest... on behalf of the Settler... and it would not be necessary for the Settler to lock up any capital in the purchase of Tractors, Ploughs, &c... [The] Association... [should take] over all produce at current market rates and dispose... of it to the best advantage. The profits... being divided into two equal moieties between the producing Settlers, in the shape of a *pro rata* bonus, and the Society... [Additionally] produce should... be converted into articles of consumption... it would be more advantageous to manufacture sugar and by-products such as Rum and Spirits, then *Gur*... To obtain the highest possible prices for these commodities it would be advisable to establish a Central Stores in Calcutta...⁶⁴⁷

The potential spin-offs of related ancillary businesses would make the Colony profitable and provide additional avenues of employment for Anglo-Indian youths. Nor were the interests of those who would manage this vast enterprise neglected:

...the entire staff from Directorate to Workers should be salaried. The Directorate should consist of a Managing Director on a salary of Rs. 1,500 rising to Rs. 2,500 per month and four Directors, who would not be whole time at a fee of Rs. 16 per meeting, roughly Rs. 800 per annum, *i.e.*, 50 weeks by 16. The superior Staff should consist of a Secretary on a salary of Rs. 750 to Rs. 1,000 per month, an Assistant Secretary on Rs. 500 to Rs. 750 per month and an Accountant and Treasurer on a salary of Rs. 1,000 to Rs. 1,500 per month. All appointments being on a 5-year agreement except in the case of the 4 Directors who would be elected for a period of two years...⁶⁴⁸

⁶⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

⁶⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 17-18.

⁶⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 18.

Such ambitious and relatively comprehensive plans provided the basis for McCluskiegunge's foundation.

Global Models for Colonization

The McCluskiegunge scheme was seen very explicitly in a global as well as an Indian context. The comparisons which were made reveal the extent to which Anglo-Indians sought to place themselves within a global discourse as well as the premium they accorded to examples from Europe and the Anglosphere over more suitable Indian sources of comparison. This tendency to give preference to European examples and qualifications was not unique to Anglo-Indians though, it was part of the context of the Raj and something that Gidney criticised in the Legislative Assembly. An Indian contributor to the *Observer* A. B. N. Sinha writing on 'Rural Uplift through Co-operation' cited the benefits of co-operative credit societies for agriculture in Europe stating that they 'had transformed slums of poverty in Denmark into happy villages in 30 or 40 years' and benefited Holland, Germany and Ireland before coming to the Indian examples of the Punjab and the United Provinces.⁶⁴⁹

Positive photographs of New Zealand and Australian farming were presented in the *Observer* alongside reassurance that hardships and problems had also been encountered in those countries. For example – this 'fever may be put down to the same jungle fevers which prevail in Australia during the monsoons when no tree felling operations are carried out.'⁶⁵⁰ Anglo-Indians often interacted with, and occasionally intermarried with, Jews; growing NAZI antisemitism was also sympathetically covered in the *Review*, and perhaps

⁶⁴⁹ *Colonization Observer* (November, 1938), 8-9.

⁶⁵⁰ *Colonization Observer* [damaged; issue data missing], 8.

unsurprisingly Jewish settlement in Palestine was emphasised as a model:

The Jewish people who were thought to regard a colonization scheme with scorn as a crazy experiment are now flocking in thousands to the New Palestine Homeland... a very bright spot in the black Jewish world of oppression and tyranny... [where the] salvation of the Jewish victims of the Nazi Terror is being sought. The Jewish national movement for the restoration of... the land of Israel, as... the new homeland of this world-scattered race... [has] Within the short space of less than twenty years... transformed [it] into a veritable land of promise replete with modernity... To-day some 200,000 Jews have settled in Palestine... Dotted throughout the Country from Dan to Beersheba, "colonies"... have sprung up. There are some 200 of these agricultural settlements, cultivating the soil, raising fertile and abundant crops, rearing fine cattle and dairy produce, and sowing the countryside with perfumed orange groves and orchards of luscious fruits. At work... are men and women who have forsaken the books of the University of Europe, for the plough – the initiators of a new race divorced for centuries from the soil. Towns have sprung up... Factories, workshops, and every kind of commercial enterprise conducted on the latest models of modern progress. Most remarkable of all is... Tel Aviv... It is the first and only completely Jewish city in the world. From the street dustman to the Jewish Mayor, it is all-Jewish.⁶⁵¹

The idea of a scattered non-agricultural people coming together and taking to the soil, forming small agricultural co-operative colonies, of strengthening a communal racial cohesion and of creating a city where everyone from the dustman to the Mayor was Jewish seemed to particularly resonate with the proponents of Anglo-Indian colonization. The hope that ultimately industry and high culture might follow a solid agricultural foundation seems implicit in their admiration for the 'Triumph of Jewry's National Home'.⁶⁵² This success was attributed largely to 'sheer enterprise' and the editor asked readers pointedly 'Does it not stand to reason that if a barren country, in the course of less than 20 years, can by enterprise of a Community be made to support a population of 200,000 souls, the Domiciled Community can also achieve the same result by the same perseverance and determination.'⁶⁵³ The figure 200,000 was also an oft cited estimate of the total Anglo-

⁶⁵¹ *Colonization Observer* (October, 1934), 3.

⁶⁵² *Ibid.*

⁶⁵³ *Ibid.*, 2.

Indian population in India and the scattered nature of Jews across the world and Anglo-Indians across India was undoubtedly noted. The *Observer* called Anglo-Indians ‘a homeless and wandering Community’ who through colonization would be ‘given the chance of getting a real stake in their own country.’⁶⁵⁴ Additionally, Anglo-Indians’ consciousness of the persecution of Jews by the NAZIs would also have formed part of the context for their own apprehensions about how nationalist governments could behave towards minorities.

A more unusual comparison was made with Italian colonization in Abyssinia:

... [In] colonization anywhere, one must be prepared to meet with innumerable failures of various kinds... [but] we never “threw in the sponge,” and... are determined to pursue our good work, like Sons of Anglo-India, even unto Death... In the conquest of Abyssinia for purposes of Italian Colonization... the Italians overcame all physical forces, yet the Italians find it very hard to colonize in Abyssinia... and we learn that most of the families are fast returning to Italy... colonization in McCluskiegunge has been better conducted... although Italy has far greater resources in every respect... Anglo-Indians can stand more wear and tear than the Italians. This of course is traced partly to the British bull-dog spirit in us, and partly to our familiarity with the Indian Climate and conditions...⁶⁵⁵

The *Observer* presented various examples of colonising emigration from Britain, such as the proposals of the Empire Development and Settlement Research Committee which described ‘recent setbacks to the emigration of the British landless to the Dominions, the Overseas Committee [suggesting]... Our one hope lies in the establishment of entirely new colonies of settlers in the Dominions right away from the existing settled areas, where there will be no conflict with vested interest, either of capital or labour, and where at any rate for a few years, the settlers are not likely to stray into cities and compete with the

⁶⁵⁴ *Colonization Observer* (September, 1934), 1.

⁶⁵⁵ *Colonization Observer* (April, 1940), 24.

present Dominion citizens.’ Another particular scheme appearing in the *Karachi Daily Gazette* was also reported in the *Observer* – a colony for sixty ‘unemployed men’ sent from England ‘to find [sic] a Colony in the Eastern slopes of the Andes in Northern Argentina... financed by an English Millionaire Peer, but... [in the hope that] the colony [would become] self-supporting... [by growing] ipecacuanha, digitalis, jalap and many other drug plants for chemical factories... [including colonists trained as] cabinet makers, plumbers, electricians, horticulturists and book-keepers.’⁶⁵⁶ Such schemes, however dubious, were clearly being taken very seriously at the imperial metropole.

Opposition to Colonization

H. Hobbs of 21, Old Court House Street, Calcutta, an early visitor to Lapra and detractor of the scheme who did not identify himself with the domiciled community, published a scathingly critical pamphlet on the opening celebrations at McCluskiegunge entitled *Extracts from my Diary* in 1934. Hobbs praised ‘Abbott of Jhansi’ as ‘a very decent fellow... playing a bad hand well’ who had ‘started the same thing years ago... [and] eventually bought all the property back at his own price’.⁶⁵⁷ Hobbs alluded to Gidney’s involvement in some prior scheme of this kind (it may have been the Andamans scheme which Gidney later downplayed his involvement in), remarking of his polynomials and character:

Colonel Gidney, I.M.S. (RETD.), C.I.E., J.P., E.T.C., M.L.A., E.T.C., etc... I wrote to the *Englishman* about this notability saying he used those sub-sections of the alphabet because he considered the donkey looked better with all his harness... Well... they have the proud distinction of floating another colonization scheme and the gallant Col. Gidney, or Ginday, as some admirers dub him, was photographed... waving a 3d. Union Jack while the colonists were starting off to work for 2d. a day,

⁶⁵⁶ *Colonization Observer* (April, 1934), 5.

⁶⁵⁷ Hobbs, *Extracts from my Diary*, pamphlet (circa 1934), 12.

even then payment was doubtful. The Colonization scheme fizzled out because the leader of it was reputed to have bilked a woman out of Rs. 375/-.⁶⁵⁸

Hobbs was even more unflattering to McCluskie:

...McCluskie, Member, Legislative Council of Bengal, is the founder of the Colonization Society of India, Ltd. Once in the tie dept. of an outfitter's shop, he is reputed to have won a prize in the Calcutta Sweep, and became a house agent out of it... I have known him more than 45 years... For an hour he brought in every conceivable advantage appertaining to the 10,000 acres he had acquired – not for 99 years, or for 999 years, but FOREVER. (Many loud applauses and one old man threw his hat into the air)... Every now and then he brought in with becoming emphasis – THE DAWN OF A NEW ERA !!!! [sic.] obviously half disposed to tell the world that the Christian era finished on Nov. 3rd 1934, and his started as McC 1... I was full of wonder... until it dawned upon me that praising property was... [how] he picked up his daily bread... I told him the scheme was bunkum and bound to fail, yet he still thinks himself Christopher Columbus, but is actually Rip Van Winkle.⁶⁵⁹

Hobbs offered practical criticisms of the scheme, but concluded by returning to his scathing attacks on its architects: ‘And for that little bunch running the Colonization Society of India, if they don't do the reaping before the crops start growing their motto will most likely be over the hills and far away. But what an infernal Shame! Of all the peoples of India the Domiciled most need honest leaders – they have the worst.’⁶⁶⁰

Gidney and the Association were initially cautious, sceptical and critical of McCluskie's endeavours. In response to repeated questions as to Gidney's views of the Scheme the *Review* opined:

We are authorised to say that he has nothing whatever to do with the scheme or the Society... [Gidney] shares the view... [of] the Government... that the scheme... is not only Utopian in the extreme, but nothing less than communal suicide... and we

⁶⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 1-2.

⁶⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 4-5.

⁶⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 13.

feel it was a thousand pities that Mr. McCluskie thought fit to proceed to Europe on a holiday on the eve of the presentation of his colonization scheme. To say he went to England and to Switzerland to study Indian agricultural problems for the benefit of his scheme or the community is to insult one's intelligence and for any one to now ask that the cost of this holiday to Europe be debited to prospective share holders is... a burlesque in responsibility...⁶⁶¹

In April of 1933 the CSI was finally registered and made its IPO to a more enthusiastic response. The *Review* responded by restating its criticisms less forcefully. In particular they noted that McCluskie's attempt to market the project had led him to be critical of constitutional safeguards the Association was working towards for Anglo-Indians seeking continued employment in branches of government and railway service:

The belief that has aroused such great enthusiasm in the minds of the community throughout India... is that the scheme is intended to open out new avenues of employment for the youths of the community... [which] has gained strength in the repeated deprecation... of the value of the safeguards which the representatives of the community have been demanding... [Paradoxically] Mr. McCluskie, who now does not mince words... was one of the drafters of and signatories to the Memorandum submitted to the Simon Commission... Such repeated expressions of doubt in regard to safeguards... have certainly rendered the task of those who are endeavouring to secure safeguards very difficult... This could, however, have one result and that is that those organisations and leaders who have been doing their best to secure these safeguards will lose the moral and material support of members of the Community.⁶⁶²

Gidney perceived these alternative strategies as part of a zero-sum-game, in which the limited resources and energies of the community might be diverted from the Association and its own attempts to secure safeguards. Gidney was aware that Anglo-Indians had limited financial means, and the McCluskie scheme was a possible alternative to subscription to various funds being raised by the Association. Membership of the CSI might compete with membership of the Association, the circulation of the *Observer* might

⁶⁶¹ *Anglo-Indian Review* (September, 1932), 7.

⁶⁶² *Anglo-Indian Review* (September, 1933), 3.

compete with the *Review*, the buying of shares in the CSI and the contribution of money towards funds for building churches and a school (among other things) might compete with fund-raising drives by the Association to support Anglo-Indian scholarships for technical and other education, to support Anglo-Indian political representation and specific efforts to draft memoranda. These concerns applied whether the scheme was ultimately successful or not, but a far greater risk to communal interest was the prospect of failure after considerable numbers of desperate Anglo-Indians had poured life savings into the scheme. Gidney felt that for those Anglo-Indians of limited means the colonization scheme afforded little security, while for the young the employment prospects of agriculture were dubious, and even for wealthier Anglo-Indians agriculture might still prove unprofitable.

McCluskie's colonization scheme received both publicity and criticism in the press. An editorial in the *Madras Mail* commented:

The progress of the Anglo-Indian and Domiciled European Colonization Scheme must be a cause of acute anxiety to its sponsors. In spite of the publicity... little money has been subscribed... We sympathize with... McCluskie in his difficulties in securing the registration of the Colonization Co-Operative Society; but we agree, and it seems that the majority of the members present at the meeting in New Delhi agreed, with the suggestion of the Registrar of Co-operative Societies... that it would be better to wait for six months before registering the Society, and... to find out definitely what money would be subscribed by members... It seems that Mr. McCluskie has already spent Rs. 9,957 since January, 1930, and on this sum Rs. 6,625 are still due to him. It would need 3,300 members, paying a subscription of Rs. 2 per head, to meet these outstandings... and the total number of paid-up members at present is less than half this number. The subscription has, therefore, been raised to Rs. 5... It would be a very unfortunate position for a new Society to find the whole of its available funds used in covering expenses some of which had been incurred before the Society was formed...⁶⁶³

⁶⁶³ Cited in *Anglo-Indian Review* (September, 1932), 8.

Some criticisms were genuinely constructive. Those of a more personal nature were characteristic of debates within the Anglo-Indian community owing to its relatively small size and its compact field of potential leaders, movers and shakers. Partly as a result of such internal fratricide ‘unity’ was placed alongside ‘self help’ as the most frequently repeated slogans of the colonization campaign and unity was also repeatedly emphasised by the Association. Ultimately the McCluskie scheme would win cautious backing from Gidney and advertise itself in the *Review* but in the first half of the 1930s specific doubts about an agricultural colony for the unemployed and those wishing to retire refused to go away. The *Review* argued against the ‘danger in the suggestion that Anglo-Indians are on the eve of finding an Eldorado in agriculture’,⁶⁶⁴ and that agriculture could be no solution to the problems of unemployment, as it ‘would be misleading to suggest that the Anglo-Indian could till the soil and live on the miserable pittance of the wage to-day paid to the Indian tiller... [and that any] increase in the emoluments to the tiller would no doubt tend to diminish the out-turn expected by the capitalist farmer.’⁶⁶⁵

The profitability of Indian agriculture and the marginality of land as yet uncultivated were particular lines of attack: zamindars were not ‘making money or earning an appreciable interest on the money’ they had invested in agriculture; beset by ‘agrarian trouble’, ‘India’s agricultural outlook’ was ‘very black indeed’; the CSI would either have to pay zamindars exorbitant prices to purchase well located fertile land that would ‘swallow up the entire capital of the Society’ or rely on ‘Khas (free Government) land... situated in inaccessible places, miles away from the Railway and with no roads for transporting the produce of the land’; Central and Provincial Government would be unwilling to build

⁶⁶⁴ *Anglo-Indian Review* (September, 1933), 4.

⁶⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 3.

‘new jungle roads’ leaving colonists to ‘live a life of isolation’ in which ‘though they may be able to feed themselves’ they would ‘make no profit on their investment’; and no ‘Colonization Society – cooperative or otherwise’ could be audacious enough ‘to offer its shareholders any profit for... many years to come’.⁶⁶⁶ Hinting at their expectation (which proved prescient) that the colony would mainly attract retirees they starkly asked: ‘will any Anglo-Indian investor (say it be his Provident Fund or commuted pension) wait 10 or 15 years for a return to his capital? Why, he will be dead by then!’⁶⁶⁷ They attacked McCluskie for having asked ‘for fees from prospective shareholders before’ the CSI was registered and opined that ‘Had an Industrial Bank or industrial undertaking been associated with the Colonization scheme, the picture might be brighter and more rosey for the investor.’⁶⁶⁸ The mention of industry was a salient point which would be repeated a year later as preferable to agriculture:

Anglo-Indians and Domiciled Europeans... could with advantage to their employers and themselves take up work in the various cotton, jute, sugar, paper and other industries in different parts of the country. The average earning of the trained artisan in the various mills, on the piece system would be considerably higher than any individual engaged in tilling the soil may hope to get. With his inborn aptitude for mechanical and industrial occupation judged by his undoubted proficiency in the Railways, etc. the Anglo-Indian it is suggested would prove an invaluable workman in the mills.⁶⁶⁹

Locating McCluskiegunge

McCluskie did it seems take on board the criticisms of the Association in choosing the site for the colony. The *Observer* would later figuratively claim that a ‘thousand’ sites been ‘examined and rejected’ before the correct combination of ‘Climate, rainfall, elevation and the distinct advantage of the presence of the three important “R’s” – Rail, River and Road’

⁶⁶⁶ *Anglo-Indian Review* (September 1932), 7-8.

⁶⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 8.

⁶⁶⁸ *Ibid.*

⁶⁶⁹ *Anglo-Indian Review* (September, 1933), 4.

were discovered in Ranchi district.⁶⁷⁰ However, according to the *Review* government experts (of the Bihar and Orissa Government) were also sent to reconnoitre the site and came back with a ‘very discouraging’ report that a ‘very meagre yield... is obtainable from land even in a Province where irrigation facilities are plentiful’ and that (quoting the government experts directly) ‘any form of irrigation of this land except in the rainy season and part of the cold weather is in fact impracticable’.⁶⁷¹

The *Review* went on to state that: this made the project ‘a real gamble on rains’; that it was ‘regrettable that the Colonization Society has charged the Government of Bihar and Orissa with obstructing the scheme simply because the views of the Government experts are not in consonance with the findings of the enquiry the promoters have made’; and that it ‘would be prudent to face the facts revealed although they may be unpalatable... and bearing in mind the Government expert’s warning that there is a risk of losing the capital we would suggest that the Society, if it intends to go forward with the scheme, should adopt a policy of gradual development until tangible results are obtained on a certain number of holdings not exceeding 1,000 acres before launching a gigantic scheme which would not work out satisfactorily for hundreds of enthusiasts who may not all be able to sustain a loss of investment extending to even “a few thousands”’.⁶⁷²

⁶⁷⁰ *Colonization Observer* (January, 1941), 1.

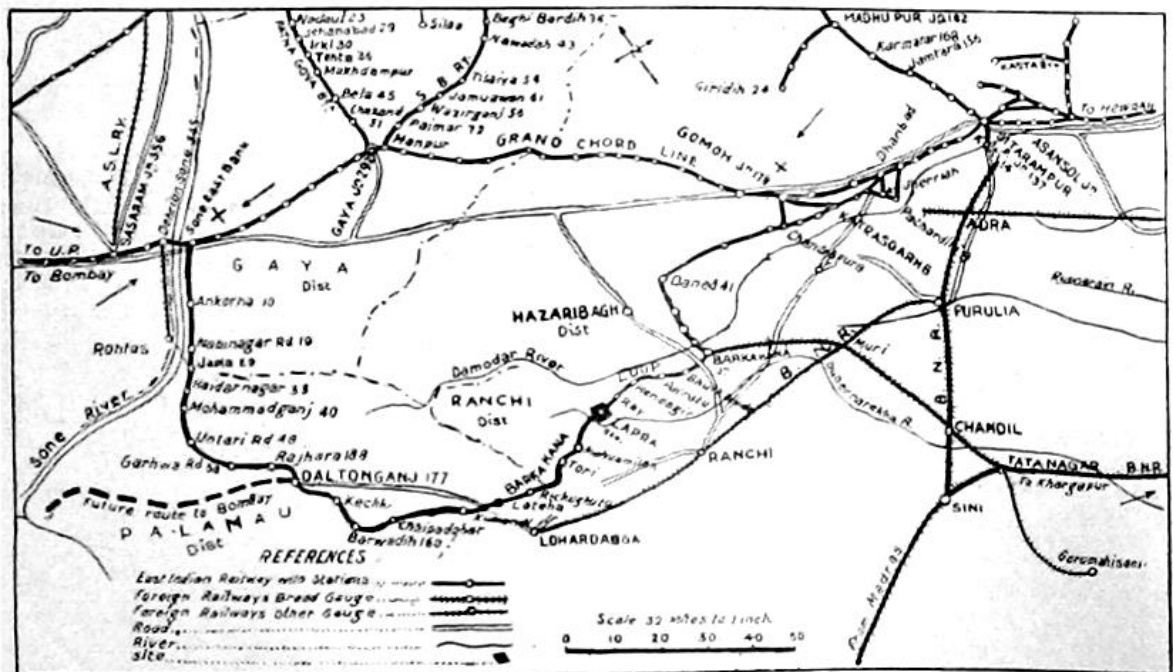
⁶⁷¹ *Anglo-Indian Review* (September, 1933), 4.

⁶⁷² *Ibid.*

OUR "HOME SWEET HOME"

We Anglo-Indians are learning to look upon McCluskiegunge as our "Mooluk" and our Home. No longer can it be said that we wander in a strange land. Our Home is McCluskiegunge and India is our Motherland. And as we proclaim McCluskiegunge our HOME, we look forward to the day when each of us will have his own little Home like the many whose Homesteads :: :: are to be seen scattered all over McCluskiegunge, to-day :: ::

NOW, TAKE THE FIRST TRAIN TO
 === McCLUSKIEGUNGE! ===
 Your VISIT will SURPRISE You!



The route to Lapra, now known as McCluskiegunge.

Fig. 1: Advertisement for 'Lapra, now known as McCluskiegunge', 'our "Mooluk"' with map.⁶⁷³

⁶⁷³ From *Colonization Observer* (July-August, 1939), 34.

The *Observer* asserted that Lapra had been chosen for its accessibility by railway and close 'proximity to a big market for the purchase of goods and sale of produce of the Colony', being on the East Indian Railway and '38 miles from Barkakhana Junction' connecting it to the Bengal Nagpur Railway and '288 miles' from 'Calcutta, the biggest market in the East'.⁶⁷⁴ The virtues of the site were heralded: elevation of '1,520 feet above Sea level rising to 2000 ft. towards the South where the Colony will extend'; '60-70 inches of annual rainfall', average temperatures of 100 degrees at mid-day and 70 at night during the summer and 60 degrees during the day and 50 at night during the winter; a 'mild' climate 'though hot during the day, there is always a breeze, the nights are always cool'; 'Water is to be had everywhere for domestic or farm purposes, if wells are properly dug and made *pucca*'; 'good virgin soil but some lime has to be added to make it more fertile'; the 'monsoon supply... more than sufficient' for irrigation 'but arrangements are in hand for reservoirs to have a supply of water for next hot weather'; and 10,000 acres contracted for 'to be taken up in lots of 2,000 acres per year' with the CSI as 'the direct tenant of the owner... a son of the Maharaja of Chota Nagpur, therefore the title is sound and clear. The lease has been ratified and confirmed by a separate deed signed by the Maharaja and both documents... duly registered at the Registry Office in Ranchi on the 16th October 1933... The period of the lease reads in the document thus:- Absolute, heritable, transferable, perpetual and for ever.'⁶⁷⁵

Settlers were to be tenants of the CSI and provision was made that in 'the event of the Society going into liquidation... that settlers will not be disturbed nor their rents raised.

⁶⁷⁴ *Colonization Observer* (July, 1934), 30.

⁶⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 30-31.

Their leases will be taken over by the landlord on the same terms and conditions as those of the Society.⁶⁷⁶ This guaranteed the position of settlers as long as they kept up their rental payments ‘to the Society or its successors.’⁶⁷⁷

Forging Anglo-India in the Jungle

Despite practical setbacks and the occasional ravages of death and disease McCluskiegunge began to take shape. Early enthusiasts moved to Lapra and were described in the *Observer*, such as Mr. H. Davis, Honorary Secretary of the CSI’s ‘Moghulpura (N.W.R.) Branch, a very keen member since 1932, [who] took leave to come and settle his two sons on their land and shew [sic] the way as an example to others.’⁶⁷⁸ Dubbed the ‘Moghulpura Pioneers’ they had come from a town on the North Western Railway which housed one of the largest railway workshops in the subcontinent. The first arrivals were staying in tents and constructing makeshift shacks. Soon however photos began to appear of the many new bungalows that had been built along with lists of the families that had settled in the colony or purchased plots for future settlement.

⁶⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 31.

⁶⁷⁷ *Ibid.*

⁶⁷⁸ *Colonization Observer* (July, 1934), 4.

THE MOGHULPURA PIONEERS



Mr. H. H. J. Davis (of Moghulpura) and sons, in front of their "Shack."



Mrs. Davis attending to morning duties.

SHOW THE WAY TO SETTLE DOWN



Denis Davis doing his bit also (mixing mud mortar).



The Davis Boys erecting a wall for their tent.

Mr. H. H. J. Davis, Honorary Secretary of our Moghulpura (N.W.R.) Branch, a very keen member since 1932, took leave to come and settle his two sons on their land and show the way as an example to others.

AND BECOME REAL FARMERS.

Fig. 2: Davis, Mrs Davis and the 'Davis Boys' erecting brick walls and tents⁶⁷⁹

The first list of 163 'salaami paid members',⁶⁸⁰ who had purchased plots for settlement appeared in the *Observer* in April of 1934 – four of these were couples (presumably

⁶⁷⁹ From *Ibid.*

⁶⁸⁰ 'Salaami' or quit-rents freed tenants from any obligations under a feudal landholding structure, and equated to an, often nominal, land tax, see 'Salámi. [Hindi, from Salám.] A quit-rent, a Jodi, peshkash; lands paying only a quit-rent', in G. Whitworth, *An Anglo-Indian Dictionary: A Glossary of Indian Terms used in English and of such or Other Non-Indian Terms as have Certain Special Meanings in India* (London, 1885), 275.

husband and wife) listed as a single member having purchased one undivided plot, one was a pair of women (presumably mother and daughter), 21 others were women (listed on their own, whether married or unmarried), and the rest men.⁶⁸¹ Only 24 of these members were listed as ‘immediate’ settlers, the remainder had bought land for future settlement or as some kind of insurance against an uncertain future. Collectively the new members had bought a total of 2,247 acres of land in the following distribution:



The largest number of members paid for plots of 10 or 5 acres with a significant number opting for 20 acre plots. By July there were 234 members (mostly individuals but including couples counted under a single membership), 3,203 acres of land had been sold and 6,938 CSI shares issued.⁶⁸² Most members were from the north of India, including many from what is now Pakistan (with multiple entries for Karachi and Lahore), so that a ‘Miss E. W. White’ from Bangalore with a five acre plot stood out.⁶⁸³ The *Observer* carried regular lists of settlers and visitors names, the list of visitors slightly larger in 1934

⁶⁸¹ *Colonization Observer* (April, 1934), 13-14.

⁶⁸² *Colonization Observer* (July, 1934), 8-9.

⁶⁸³ *Ibid.*, 8.

than the list of settlers. Members were also ‘reminded that after the sale of the present 1,000 acres (i.e., the Fourth Thousand Acres) the price will be raised to Rs. 25 per acre, to meet extra costs. As we have only about 800 acres left at Rs. 20 per acre, members are requested to send their salaami money early to avoid disappointment’ which whether owing to greater than anticipated cost or not encouraged those thinking of buying into the scheme to do so sooner.⁶⁸⁴ By the 15th of November 1938 the lists of new settlers were impressively long and 6,782.95 acres of land had been sold along with 10,276 shares.⁶⁸⁵



“Grenville Farm.”
The home of Mr. G. Glaskin who has settled in McCluskiegunge on his retirement from Railway Service.



The Soil Workers.
Hard at work on Grenville Farm, McCluskiegunge.

Fig. 3: A more substantial abode.⁶⁸⁶

⁶⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 9.

⁶⁸⁵ *Colonization Observer* (December, 1938), 27.

⁶⁸⁶ From *Colonization Observer* (January, 1941), 4.

‘The first social gathering’ of the colony was an ‘AT HOME’ hosted by one of the CSI’s directors Mr. D. Levi in June of 1934 and was detailed in the *Observer*, with about ‘70 people including children’ who played ‘games of various kinds which included races in which every competitor received a prize’.⁶⁸⁷ ‘Mr. S. Wood, dressed as a lady caused much amusement. His face was powdered and rouged and with the ginger pig-tails would have [apparently] caused some of the Hollywood beauties to pout with envy.’⁶⁸⁸ ‘Tea and refreshments were then served... The kiddies were in their glory with the cold drinks, patties, cakes, biscuits, sweets and other delicacies’.⁶⁸⁹ There followed a Whist Drive, various games for the adults, prize giving and encouraging speeches declaring that the event and future gatherings like it would function ‘to bring the settlers together and create a brotherly feeling especially on occasions such as this when there was an influx of visitors from all parts of India... this was one of the first steps towards colonizing under a healthy and social atmosphere.’⁶⁹⁰

The ‘new Colony’ was heralded as ‘the first of its kind in India’ and though bound to encounter difficulties was surely destined for a bright future and rapid growth.⁶⁹¹ Close cooperation by settlers with the Welfare Committee would ‘remove all reasons for unhappiness and selfishness’.⁶⁹² The *Observer* showed pictures of the garden party and happy groups of settlers and visitors many of them wearing topees (pith hats suitable for a safari). Simple and encouraging messages below the photographs such as ‘See the Children, how happy they are’ and sloganistic statements in bold printed capitals such as ‘WE ARE GROWING IN NUMBERS’, ‘AND ARE HAPPY AND CONTENTED’ litter

⁶⁸⁷ *Colonization Observer* (July, 1934), 5.

⁶⁸⁸ *Ibid.*

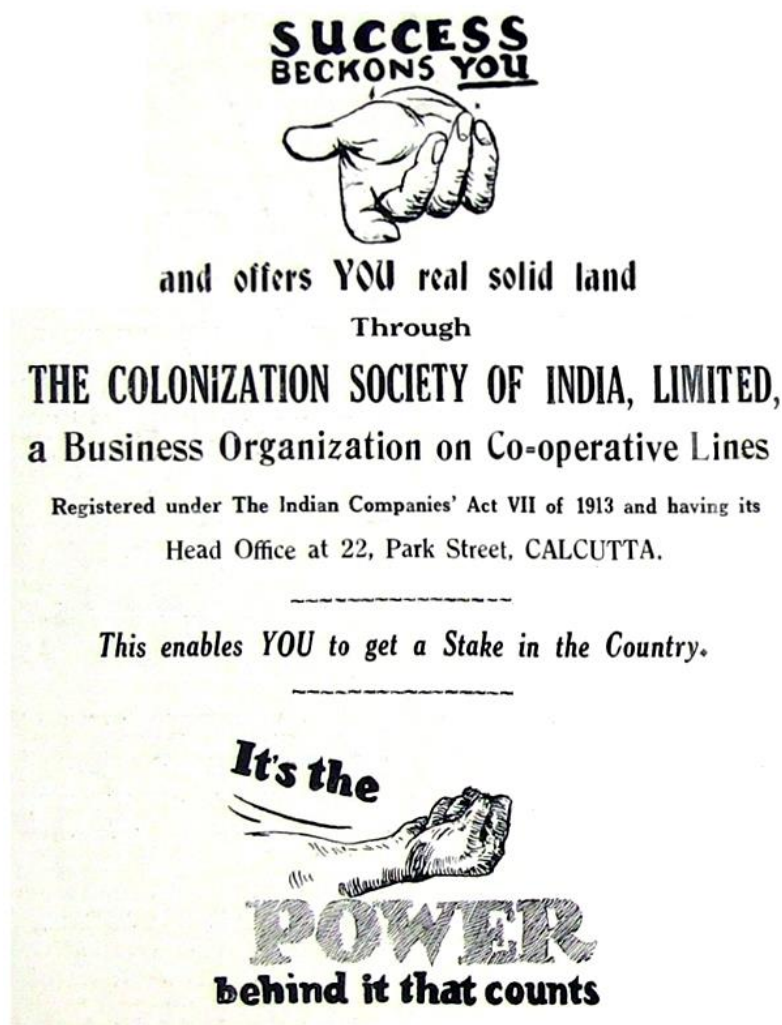
⁶⁸⁹ *Ibid.*

⁶⁹⁰ *Ibid.*

⁶⁹¹ *Ibid.*

⁶⁹² *Ibid.*

the *Observer* and at the bottom of pages there are short fragments such as ‘Retire in the Colony and save your money’ and ‘Wherever you go, they are talking of Lapra’. This facet of the material put out by the CSI was simplistic and straightforward, deploying declarative or interrogative injunctions, using the rhetorical cadences akin to party political propaganda or mass advertising.



**SUCCESS
BECKONS YOU**

and offers **YOU** real solid land
Through
THE COLONIZATION SOCIETY OF INDIA, LIMITED,
a Business Organization on Co-operative Lines

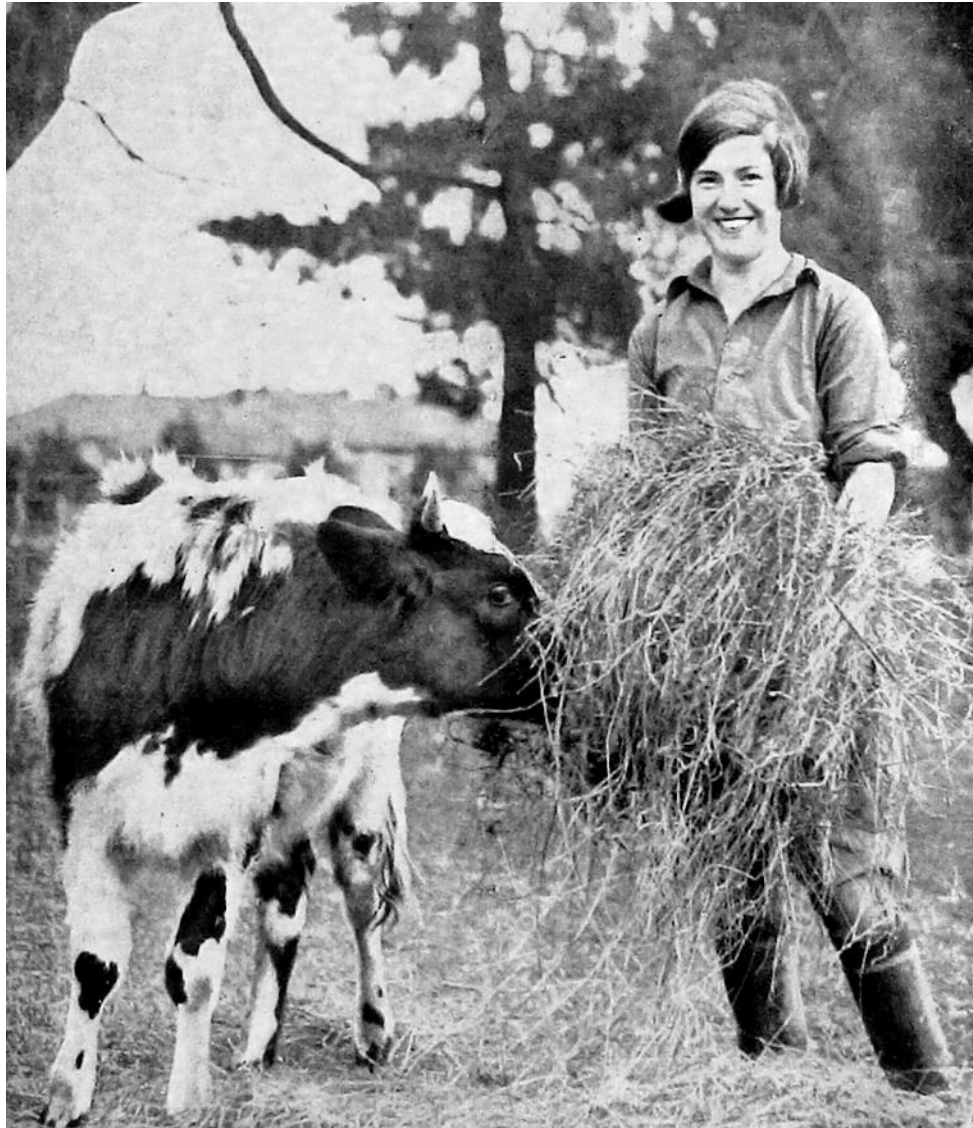
Registered under The Indian Companies' Act VII of 1913 and having its
Head Office at 22, Park Street, CALCUTTA.

This enables YOU to get a Stake in the Country.

It's the
POWER
behind it that counts

Fig. 4: Physical representations of colonization.⁶⁹³

⁶⁹³ From *Colonization Observer* (July, 1934).



HEALTHY OCCUPATIONS.



It is within the bounds of possibility that our girls will take to this open air and healthy life if they grow up in the colony; and why not ?

Fig. 5: Domiciled women of white complexion emphasizing the healthy occupation of agriculture.⁶⁹⁴

⁶⁹⁴ From *Colonization Observer* (July, 1934), 16, 31.

Agriculture and the site of the colony were depicted as healthy and improving. The concept of the absentee settler who would invest in the scheme and have his or her plot and perhaps bungalow ready waiting for them through the work of the CSI was elaborated by 1937 in a five year plan:

We have often been asked... by our Absent Settlers... to take over and work their plots of land for them, but as often we have been compelled to reply that the Society were not prepared to do this work; the real reason was the lack of a tangible scheme and even if we had a workable scheme, the condition of our Main Road would have made any scheme abortive, when the question of transporting the produce has to be faced. Now with the prospect of a first class road, 18 feet wide, the Colony opens up a vista for development... Undaunted courage; creative genius and a supreme devotion to the object, has given birth to the idea.⁶⁹⁵

The Colonization set out the following details of their five year plan: for a minimum plot size of 1,000 acres the CSI would undertake to arrange in the settler's absence to purchase agricultural implements, clear jungles, fence and lay out, weed and stump, plough, sow and cultivate, develop and tend, reap the harvest and sell the produce for such a plot on the basis of dividing the plot into 5 200 acre sections 'under the control of an Agricultural Overseer and under him Kamdars to look after a certain group of plots. The Kamdars will themselves control five coolies for every ten acre plot' and the settler would only have to pay the wages of the Kamdar and coolies for the first year, after which it was expected the plot would begin to turn a profit which would go towards these wages for the following years as well as wages 'for the Agricultural Overseer and the Divisional Officer-in-Charge of the whole 1,000 acres', the CSI would concentrate on growing 'Ground-nuts and Wheat', details of expenses would be kept and it was projected that a small return would

⁶⁹⁵ *Colonization Observer* (November, 1937), 1.

be achieved on the invested capital of the first year by the end of the third year, a larger return by the fifth year as well as having brought the land into a much improved state of ongoing cultivation.⁶⁹⁶ The CSI anticipated but would not guarantee the following returns:

EXPENDITURE.

Lump Sum initial A/c	...	...	Rs.	500 0 0
Monthly expenditure @ Rs. 5/8/- per acre per mensem for one year only	...	...	"	660 0 0
Contingencies	...	...	"	40 0 0
Total Expenditure			Rs.	<u>1,200 0 0</u>

ANTICIPATED RETURNS. (APPROX.)

1st Year.

200 maunds of Ground-nuts @ 5/- per md.			Rs.	1,000/-
100 maunds of wheat @ 5/- per md.			Rs.	<u>500/-</u>
			Total Rs.	<u>1,500/-</u>
20% of 1,500/-	=	...	Rs.	300 0 0
30% of 1,500/-	=	...	"	450 0 0
40% of 1,500/-	=	...	"	600 0 0
45% of 1,500/-	=	...	"	675 0 0
50% of 1,500/-	=	...	"	<u>750 0 0</u>
Return (approx.)	Rs.	...		<u>2,775 0 0</u> ⁶⁹⁷

The CSI emphasised that ‘even if no return was given, over and above your actual expenditure, you would still take over your Farm at the end of the five years with its annual anticipated income of Rs. 1,500/-, which works out to a monthly return of Rs. 125/- approx. To this add the return of only two acres of oranges and you have enough to live on comfortably.’⁶⁹⁸ Detailed breakdowns of the estimated costs involved for the CSI were also provided. The advertised returns expected for those who could afford the investment were predicated on living off the land with hired coolies to perform the hard manual agricultural labour.

⁶⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 2-3.

⁶⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 3. [Formatting closely follows original source.]

⁶⁹⁸ *Ibid.*

As McCluskiegunge began to take off fund-raising efforts sought to build up the wherewithal to build amenities for the settlers. By 1937, Rs. 5,919 As. 15 and P. 7 (with a further Rs. 200 pledged) had been received towards the school fund, Rs. 1,095 As. 8 towards the hospital fund, Rs. 800 P. 6 (and a further Rs. 100 pledged) towards the Anglican church, Rs. 687 As. 6 towards the Roman Catholic church fund, and Rs. 1,181 towards the road fund.⁶⁹⁹



Fig. 6: 'Mr. and Mrs. E. Williams.'⁷⁰⁰

A year later, anxious to find the 'money for the building of the Cemetery Wall' one of the CSI directors approached Mr. E. Williams, Deputy Superintendent of Telegraphs, the East Indian Railway and his wife, and secured 'a handsome donation of Rs. 300... Rs. 200/- to the Cemetery Wall and, Rs. 50/- each to the Churches of England and Rome.'⁷⁰¹ It is interesting that the donation should have been made on a cross-denominational basis. McCluskie himself died in 1935, and his memory was kept alive in founders day celebrations and memorials in the *Observer* years later. Having undoubtedly been behind the Association's repeated critiques of the project Gidney eventually became the Chairman

⁶⁹⁹ *Colonization Observer* (August, 1937), 23.

⁷⁰⁰ From *Colonization Observer* (August, 1938), 32.

⁷⁰¹ *Ibid.*

of the CSI himself and visited McCluskiegunge with great fanfare. A Gidney Club was set up in the colony and there were proposals to build a large residence for Gidney himself to be called 'Gidney Castle'. The CSI was actually run by a Colony committee of directors and had at least 39 representatives across India in 1937 heading up branches, honorary branches or acting as honorary secretaries in thirty-six locations including: Agra, Cawnpore, Kasganj, Ghaziabad, Karachi, Muttra Junction, Lahore, Rangoon and Moradabad. The scale of the endeavour to settle McCluskiegunge was impressive and liable to overshadowed by the eventual demise of the scheme amidst the pressures of Anglo-Indian war-time service and large scale emigration as well as the ultimate lack of a younger generation willing or able to remain and create a real functioning economy in the colony

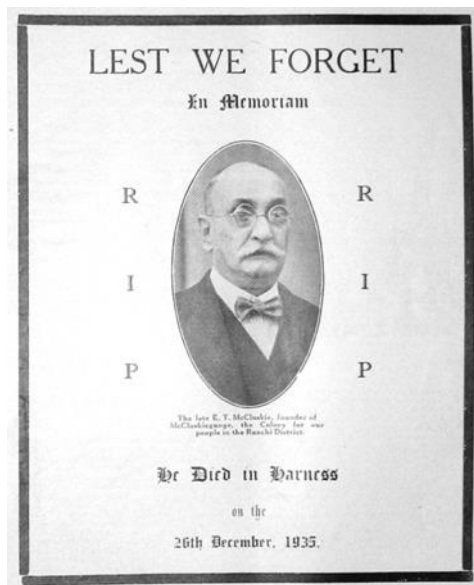


Fig. 7: Memorial to McCluskie, who 'died in harness' on the 26th of December, 1935.⁷⁰²

⁷⁰² From *Colonization Observer* (January, 1941), 5.

Anglo-India in the Indian Ocean

In May of 1930 the *Review* carried a detailed summary of the proceedings of that year's AGM of the Association; item 6 on the agenda was another even more ambitious 'Land Colonisation Scheme':

The President explained that... the Association had been considering for a long time what would be the best means of antidoting the closure to the community of the doors of the various Government services. It was with this intention that a few years ago he approached the Government of India with a view to making the Andaman Islands including the Nicobar, Car-Nicobar and others – a Crown Colony for the Community. The Government made confidential enquiries. Major Barker I. M. S., the S. M. O., at Port Blair reported that it would cost more than £2,000,000 to render the Islands malaria-free and the Government replied that it would be practically impossible to consider the proposal...⁷⁰³

A letter to the editor appearing in November of the same year advocating colonization in the Andamans revealed ambivalence about identification with India:

There is only one solution... Colonisation. The community as a whole is a misfit... we have no roots in this or in any other soil and... calling ourselves Indians is not going to alter the fact... [Our] determined effort should be the colonization of the Andamans, before our savings vanish. One hundred young men should be recruited, who can pool say Rs. 300 each... enough to purchase agricultural implements, seed, sheep and cattle and food to last many months. The colony need worry only to be self-supporting at first. Agricultural expansion must always come first then commercial expansion... We must sow quick-growing crops, plaintains, papayas and other fruit will do well and a variety of vegetables will flourish. The cattle, poultry, and sheep will give us meat milk and butter and eggs and the sea will yield us fish. The 'hundred' must be all sorts... farmers... mechanics and blacksmiths and carpenters and backwoodsmen and fishermen... A trust should be formed to manage the affair. Later... an effort must be made to produce for the Indian market, – butter, cheese, soap, cooking oil from cocoanut, coir-matting, tinned fish... An appeal must be made to every Anglo-Indian and Domiciled European to support the colony by buying colonial produce... It will wake the community out of its proverbial lethargy and... go through a process of evolution... resulting in a homeland, unity and nationality. The community in India will focus its attention on the colony and feel that it has an interest and an anchor somewhere. I offer myself for the first batch. I can build boats, log huts and make furniture...⁷⁰⁴

⁷⁰³ *Anglo-Indian Review* (May, 1930), 23.

⁷⁰⁴ *Anglo-Indian Review* (November, 1932), 34.

Interestingly, the letter weaves together threads we have encountered in previous chapters. The proposed ‘homeland’ would be a site of unity and Anglo-Indian nationality, even for its supporters remaining in mainland India who would feel some sense of connection and identity linked towards such an Andamans settlement, invest in it and buy its produce – in this respect it has interesting parallels with Israel. The writer expresses the feeling that this would be a more meaningful endeavor than what he feels to be an artificial and unprecedented assertion of Indianness by Anglo-Indians.

Gidney’s editorial response is also illuminating – we ‘gladly publish this letter and in presenting it to the careful consideration of our readers – indeed of the entire community, we not only invite criticism but have no hesitation in giving it our wholehearted support but with the warning that such a scheme needs very careful preparation and thought lest it end in another fiasco.’⁷⁰⁵ Gidney was hasty to give a detailed account of the prior attempt in 1923-1924 to settle twelve ex-servicemen in the Andamans ‘as a gesture of appreciation of Anglo-India’s services during the Great War by the ex-Services Association’, blaming the failure on the lack of any provisions or equipment whatsoever for the men apart from ‘Re. 1/- per diem’ and disavowing any personal involvement on his or the Association’s part in the project.⁷⁰⁶ Gidney had probably encouraged the prior attempt and did not want to accept blame for its failure, but we can see that he remained keen on a well-equipped, well-funded and well-thought-out settlement for Anglo-Indians in the Andamans – more enthusiastic than he was about McCluskiegunge prior to McCluskie’s death. Perhaps the prospect of a bridgehead that might be expanded and ultimately receive some support from

⁷⁰⁵ *Anglo-Indian Review* (November, 1932), 34.

⁷⁰⁶ *Ibid.*

the British or British Indian Government in a region that could more realistically aspire to some kind of autonomy or even separation from India than a landlocked mainland colony. Despite his cautious support for the idea of an Anglo-Indian homeland in the Indian Ocean no further scheme to colonise the Andaman Islands materialized during Gidney's lifetime.

After Anthony took over the Association he opposed any new attempts at colonization. Anthony's strategy quickly developed into an embrace of Indian nationalism which ran counter to the escapist isolationism from Indians which colonization implied (even when this was not practically achieved). Anthony feared further dissipation of the community's meager resources and saw colonization overseas as, like emigration, a threat to the survival of the Anglo-Indian community within India. However, a rival faction within the community in Bengal, uncomfortable with Anthony's new prescription and his distancing of the community from its traditional ties to Britain, created a new body called the 'Britasian League' led by its President, Capt. G. Ambler who attempted to found an Anglo-Indian colony in the Andamans in the last years of British rule.⁷⁰⁷

Anthony and the his new editorial voice for the *Review* were consistently critical of the Andamans idea, although other senior Anglo-Indian M. L. A.'s and politicians within the Association attempted to obtain as much information about Ambler's efforts from the British Chief Commissioner of the islands in a manner that suggested they would be

⁷⁰⁷ *Anglo-Indian Review* (June, 1947), 11.

supportive if the scheme could be carried out with some hope of success.⁷⁰⁸ In an earlier critique of colonisation and emigration schemes S. F. Perry declared:

The topic of to-day... is that of Anglo-Indian Emigration to the Andaman Islands... Col. D. M. Reid the Commanding Officer of the Anglo-Indian Army has evinced special interest in the question... thoughts are centering round an Utopia... as have so many Schemes as “McCluskiegunj”, “Clements Town” etc... But puerile games as imagining ourselves self sufficient and “Lords of all we survey” in an island of our own... should be left to the School children. The idea of independence is most attractive... Let us examine the... difficulties in obtaining the island for our purpose; in providing the whole community... the wherewithal to emigrate; the capital for a number of years of growth into independence and self sufficiency; the produce of business that is essential for the prosperity of a land and the question at the end of it all as to whether the Andamans or any other available island can exist as a separate entity. Trade is essential... we might succeed in Twenty Years time. Can the community exist for that number of years with no government to provide jobs... The majority – I can boldly say 95% of the community have no adequate bank or post office savings... Is the Scheme only for the rich... Then let the deserters go their way. If such a scheme did go through then let the community not expect any help from any government, nation, bank institution or mission... once landed on the island do we repeat the farce of our other Anglo-Indian Colonies?... Suppose we are a success on the island, are we not then after years of toil fair game for any government or nation? Are we to be in the British Commonwealth of nations or subject to the Government of India – or are some insane enough to think of forming a republic?... Give up your high handed European qualities and claims... give up your thoughts of unsociability and isolationism and make up your minds to gain for yourselves not an Andaman Island but an equal status in the future independent India...⁷⁰⁹

In 1947 the *Review* published the letter of ten prominent Anglo-Indians (four of them M.L.A.’s, some of them Association branch presidents and committee members, one member of the ICS, the President of the rival Anglo-Indian Federation and the Secretary of the Anglo-Indian Civic Union), which had been forwarded to Anthony, to the Chief Commissioner of the Andaman Islands alongside the Commissioner’s response.⁷¹⁰ The letter, dated 18th December 1946, asked for details of the Commissioner’s interactions

⁷⁰⁸ *Ibid.*

⁷⁰⁹ *Anglo-Indian Review* (November, 1943), 19.

⁷¹⁰ *Anglo-Indian Review* (June, 1947), 11-14.

with and nature of the Scheme proposed by the Britasian League for Anglo-Indian settlement in the Islands. The authors declared that while they did ‘not subscribe to Capt. Ambler’s objective as we understand it to be, viz., the founding of a Home Land for British Eurasians in the Andaman and Nicobar Island’ they were not ‘indifferent to the growing unemployment among Anglo-Indians and especially among the demobilised’ and were aware of ‘a considerable body of Anglo-Indian opinion in Calcutta and elsewhere which believes that the settlement on land in the Andaman Islands is a practicable proposition, the land being cheap and fertile and, in comparison with most parts of India, plentiful.’⁷¹¹ They went on to say that they considered ‘that with adequate training and capital there is no reason why the peculiar difficulties of settlement in the Andaman Islands should not be successfully overcome... [nor] why Anglo-Indians, being as they are Indians of European descent should not receive a fair share of whatever land is available for post-war settlement in a part of their own country and on the same terms or, at any rate; not less favourable terms and conditions, as are laid down for other Indian nationals.’⁷¹²

The authors argued that they thought the Britasian League or its offshoots would be incapable ‘of diverting a considerable part of the Anglo-Indian community to the hitherto novel occupation of agriculture’ citing their good reasons for doubting the abilities of the League as well as their ‘factual information.’⁷¹³ The authors cogently made the point that they could not be indifferent to such schemes as a ‘failure on their part would, we anticipate, react very unfavourably on the community as a whole’, that they needed

⁷¹¹ *Ibid.*, 11.

⁷¹² *Ibid.*

⁷¹³ *Ibid.*

sufficient information to judge whether to advise the community ‘whether or not to trust themselves, their money and their future generations to such schemes’, and finally they asked the Commissioner for his personal ‘advice and opinion as to the... feasibility of Anglo-Indian colonization of the Andamans and Nicobar Group.’⁷¹⁴

The Commissioner’s reply, dated ‘28/29th’ January 1947, was lengthy and discouraging.⁷¹⁵

The Commissioner reported that: the Nicobar Islands were ‘inhabited by a simple aboriginal people and not suitable for settlement at all’; that almost the entire area of the Andamans was covered by tropical jungle, with timber being its principal resource; that the Islands were recovering from Japanese occupation and all government efforts and resources were being utilized in repairing damage to its ‘physical assets... buildings, roads work shops, saw mill etc.’; that as of 1945 the penal settlement had been abolished and all but a few convicts who had elected to remain repatriated; that there was not sufficient cleared land available for it to be practicable for any large scale settlement to take place; that during reconstruction efforts for the next two to three years the administration would not be allowing persons, other than those ‘known to be of proved value’ to come to the Islands; that the accommodation problem was ‘extremely acute’; that passage via the only chartered steamer to and from the Islands was ‘limited and... very fully required for the movement of officials and Government employees of all classes including contractor’s employees’; that personally he doubted whether the two main types of agriculture (paddy growing and capital intensive coconut plantations) could ‘provide an adequate livelihood

⁷¹⁴ *Ibid.*

⁷¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 12-14.

for' Anglo-Indian 'agriculturalists', and that therefore he considered 'large scale' Anglo-Indian colonization 'not a practical proposition in the present conditions.'⁷¹⁶

On the subject of the Britasian League the Commissioner reported that after some correspondence with him two of their representatives came to visit the Islands and to discuss certain points with him, and that after 'considerable discussion as to their objects, composition and [the] financial status of the Britasian League and of the Britasian Development Company' he had agreed for 'a small number of 15 to 20 Anglo-Indian members of the Britasian League to come... [and] work on a small coconut plantation and estate which is recorded in the name of Mrs. Deakes and on whose behalf one of the two representatives held a Power of Attorney.'⁷¹⁷ Finding that of this group 'a small number were found to be persons who had no intention of working on Mrs. Deakes' estate' the Commissioner sent these few members of the group back to India and the majority had remained working on the estate.⁷¹⁸ The Commissioner reported that the only other members of the League who had arrived were 'a small number of motor mechanics, motor drivers and skilled technicians' who had 'been given daily rated posts in various branches of the Administration.'⁷¹⁹ The Commissioner had also agreed with the League that any future would-be agricultural settlers would have to apply to him directly or through the League with details of their financial resources and prior experience before travelling to the Islands. Anthony presumably published these letters to highlight the small scale of the Britasian League's activities and the discouraging official response to settlement on any significant scale.

⁷¹⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 13-14.

⁷¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 14.

⁷¹⁹ *Ibid.*

Pan-Eurasianism

The idea of pan-Eurasianism, surfaced several times in the *Review* and in the writings of Cedric Dover, but appears never to have attracted widespread support. After receiving a letter from J. Moore Gidney encouraged Moore to write ‘an article on the subject.’⁷²⁰ Colonisation could be described as often utopian and to some degree escapist; Moore’s article was titled ‘Utopia via “Eurasia”’ and was penned in ‘Johore, Malaya’.⁷²¹ Moore described himself as ‘a rebel’ in contrast to the usual ‘dog-like loyalty of the Eurasian’ and as ‘a Eurasian patriot.’⁷²² Moore argued that the ‘problem of the Anglo-Indian is the same problem facing all Eurasians throughout the East and, perhaps, instead of seeking a solution for the security of one section if we concentrated on a major issue concerning all... If we focussed all our energies on ‘*Eurasia*’ instead of dissipating them in the circumscribed political, economic and social areas of our very shadowy homes there would appear to be better scope for progress.’⁷²³

Moore advocated ‘Emigration with a view to building a new and unhampered home’ claiming history had ‘proved that this method is the only salvation for minorities.’ Moore described the main alternative as ‘a minority being compelled by circumstances over which it has had no control to merge into or being exterminated by an overwhelming alien majority.’⁷²⁴ Moore’s rhetoric was pronounced, occasionally existential, and particularly self-critical towards his community, their position and history. Moore described how

⁷²⁰ *Anglo-Indian Review* (December, 1934), 35.

⁷²¹ *Ibid.*

⁷²² *Ibid.*

⁷²³ *Ibid.*

⁷²⁴ *Ibid.*

Eurasians' 'upbringing', 'education', 'environment and the economical and social conditions' were 'not conducive to critical introspection', and went on:

Our existence is artificial through we appear to be unaware of this very patent fact and this artificial complex is apt to lead us to imagine that we are Europeans and to arrogate to ourselves the pantomimic assumptions and privileges of the dominant race... we have to go on our knees and plead for the merest crumbs from the banqueting table for we are neither hosts nor guests but mere mendicants... we have developed into a servile and parasitic race and, what is worse, a good many have been driven into the embrace of fatalism... We are the outcome of the greed of the West in exploiting a passive East and now that east is beginning to assert itself and we, who have had no choice in our being, are being regarded as a necessary evil and are to be left to our fate.⁷²⁵

Like Dover Moore attempted to build a distinctive, non-European, non-Indian, Eurasian consciousness and confidence through his writing, emphasising Eurasian achievements, how these had been underplayed by the British and how Eurasians had been used when it was convenient and in times of emergency and later dropped. On his proposed solution of pan-Eurasian colonisation Moore went on to say:

Where are we to make our new home for there is no land left for colonization? All the best lands have been taken by the white races... At most we number much less than a quarter of a million and consequently our requirements are modest. At first my thoughts were directed to the northern territories of Australia... [But] would they accept us?... until I accidentally came across... German New Guinea... Whether the League would consider such a scheme I am not in a position to know, but as Eurasians are really the outcome of the League of Nations its paternal instincts should react kindly to us. German New Guinea is by no means an ideal site for Eurasia but beggars cannot be choosers... the greater part is virgin tropical forest, a phenomenon which is not strange to us. Being a neighbor and near bred to Sol the climate of New Guinea will not hasten the pigmentation of our skin any more than the sun in our present homes. There are vast mountains... where temperate and even colder climate is experienced. The country is wild and undeveloped and its opening out is the work of the pioneer... There would be plenty and to spare of risk, very hard work and privations but there would be one great consolation – all our efforts would be for our own benefit and the accumulation of such efforts would give us a country of our own... The colonization of such a place would necessarily be a slow process and would primarily be for the youths from our schools... It

⁷²⁵ *Ibid.*, 35-36.

would probably have to be in the form of aided and controlled settlements run under strict supervision and discipline... May God crown our efforts in search of emancipation!⁷²⁶

The idea of obtaining League of Nations support was novel, and with proposed settlement of a land under a League Mandate by a scattered people without a home, evokes the work of the Jewish Agency in relation to mandate Palestine. Though Moore argued that Eurasians could not be as successful as Jews as a minority – the ‘only minority race which has been able to survive as a separate entity and to keep its religion and customs without a home of its own is the Jewish race and it has managed to do this in spite of all manner of disabilities and repression. All honour to the despised Jew and a splendid example to us but unfortunately we have neither the tenacity nor the freemasonry of Jewry.’⁷²⁷ Jews, Moore argued, were bound by loyalty to their community, while Eurasians had been made ‘servile’ through loyalty to others. A later Anglo-Indian proponent of emigration in 1943 ‘compared the community and the emigration to the situation of the Jews’ hoping Anglo-Indians too could find ‘a Palestine.’⁷²⁸

A critic of colonization who pointed to ‘the Khojas, the Memons, the Parsis and the Bohras’ in India and the ‘Jews in Europe’ as examples of successful minorities that had maintained ‘comparative prosperity’ in the face of larger communities, and who advocated that Anglo-Indians set up light industry factories requiring low startup capital to

⁷²⁶ *Ibid.*, 36-37.

⁷²⁷ *Ibid.*, 35.

⁷²⁸ *Anglo-Indian Review* (November, 1943), 19.

manufacture goods like ‘toothpaste’ and ‘chocolate’ rather than squandering their resources on more utopian schemes, insightfully commented on colonization’s popularity:

Since the beginning of the Anglo-Indian movement no suggestion gained greater popularity... because it seemed to guarantee everlasting happiness. No one thought of its practicability, everyone frantically voted for it only because the scheme *very effectively appeared to segregate the Anglo-Indian from the Indian* [my emphasis]... Besides nobody can give a correct estimate of the cost, and above all if the colonisation is to be done in India itself the Anglo-Indian will soon realise painfully that even after Colonisation the Indian figures very prominently in his life. I believe... it is much better to abandon the Colonisation Scheme altogether... it should never be believed that settling in India ultimately means subordination to the Indian.⁷²⁹

Anglo-Indian Colonization reveals a variety of sources of inspiration within the Indian context, such as Canal Colonies of the Punjab, but also fascinating connections that place the community within the broader setting of global history. Colonization appealed to Anglo-Indians as a seemingly all-encompassing solution to their many problems. Enthusiasm and cynicism competed in debates over the practicality of such schemes. In the case of McCluskiegunge there was sufficient enthusiasm for a very substantial attempt at settlement of the land to take place. McCluskiegunge has attracted the attention of two geographers Alison Blunt and Kuntala Lahiri-Dutt. Lahiri-Dutt argued that McCluskiegunge was not an isolated case, or simply ‘one of the few colonization attempts of the Anglo-Indians’ but rather ‘the culmination of a dream that had been building since the genesis of the Community and intensified through the 1920’s.’⁷³⁰ Lahiri-Dutt sees Anglo-Indians in terms of their marginality, and McCluskiegunge as fundamentally ‘a utopian concept’, whose failure was inevitable and pre-determined by lack of preparation and thought about its economy and unrealistic fantasies about ‘terrific crops which never

⁷²⁹ *Anglo-Indian Review* (May, 1934), 11.

⁷³⁰ Lahiri-Dutt, *In Search of a Homeland*, 8.

saw the light of day.’⁷³¹ Her research reinforces one key factor in the colony’s demise, it attracted retirees rather than Anglo-Indian youths, and therefore like Whitefield became more of a sleepy retirement settlement than one characterised by thriving agriculture. The agricultural endeavours which did take place ended up relying on ‘the native coolie and the bania shop for supplying labour and provisions.’⁷³² Lahiri-Dutt offers cogent reasons for the colony’s failure, but is overly sceptical about the scale of planning which went into the scheme. The plans may have been unrealistic, but they were meticulous. We have seen that the scheme was thoroughly thought out, enacted in elaborate detail and carried the support and hopes of a considerable portion of the community beyond those who actually took steps to purchase land, and the smaller number who relocated there.

The question for the historian is why Anglo-Indians invested so much energy, capital and enthusiasm into colonisation as a strategy, if these efforts seem so flawed with the benefit of hindsight? Anglo-Indians looking around at contemporaneous examples like Jewish settlement in Palestine, saw that with sufficient determination and the virtue of necessity great things could be achieved which might astound posterity. If Anglo-Indian ideas for colonisation were utopian, they appeared to be within the realm of the possible when Anglo-Indians looked globally to other examples of settlement within the British Empire and outside of it. Anglo-Indians also never achieved the level of state backing and support which they expected to follow the establishment of an even marginally successful bridgehead. They saw the level of state investment which had gone into earlier agricultural colonies such as those in the Punjab and felt that the British owed them an even greater debt of loyalty and obligation. The Andaman Islands scheme pointed towards

⁷³¹ *Ibid.*, 101.

⁷³² *Ibid.*

the scale of their ambition, but also their hope that the British would materially back a venture on a large scale once it had been embarked upon.

The reason that such schemes were so popular is that they seemed to offer a comprehensive solution to: the economic problems of the community which would ultimately promise self-sufficiency; the perceived threat of being swallowed up by larger Indian communities; the preservation of their social existence through escape or segregation from others; and to the identity question as such a colony would provide a homeland and a source of pride and identity in which Anglo-Indians might still enjoy their own assertions of Europeanness, Britishness and whiteness without having to face the judgements and restrictions of the Raj's socio-racial hierarchy, or a prospect that caused them greater anxiety the threat of a new Hindu Raj. Such motivations for colonisation placed this communal strategy along with that of emigration in opposition to the aims which Anthony formulated in order to preserve the future of the community within India.

Chapter VII: Quit India or Make it Home?

Anglo-Indian attitudes towards migration as a potential strategy for themselves and their children overlapped with the discussions of colonization. The desire to find a new homeland, within India or without, was partly the product of an impulse to retreat from the perceived dangers of absorption into the seething masses of India's vast population, to sink or swim, once the temporary economic safeguards expired. Blunt provides fascinating insight into the experiences of Anglo-Indian women who had migrated to Australia and Britain.⁷³³ While a historical study of the experiences of Anglo-Indian migrants would be a worthwhile subject, this chapter confines itself to debates over the idea of migration competing with efforts to build greater identification with India.

Blunt's work explored how Anglo-Indians constructed Britain as fatherland and India as motherland, arguing that 'political attempts to foster a greater national loyalty to India as motherland rather than Britain as fatherland were contested on a domestic scale. Anglo-Indian homes continued to be imagined as more British than Indian despite political attempts by Gidney and Anthony to identify the community as a nationalist minority'.⁷³⁴ In spite of such evolving duality Gidney ultimately retained a greater affiliation to Britain, while Anthony made the decisive shift towards Indian nationalism and ultimately repudiated Britain. As with racial passing, the potential advantages and disadvantages of migration for Anglo-Indians differed widely depending on whether it is viewed as an

⁷³³ Blunt, *Domicile and Diaspora*.

⁷³⁴ ---, 'Land of our Mothers', 51.

individual/familial or collective strategy. Like other prominent ideas –educational foundations, agricultural colonization and industrial training – migration as a strategy owed its genesis in part to earlier philanthropic efforts by, usually religiously minded, Britons and Europeans.

Mizutani's work explores the St Andrew's Colonial Homes set up by the Scottish missionary Revd John Graham (1860-1942).⁷³⁵ 4,500 feet above sea level, close to Darjeeling, Graham built a miniature village of cottages in Kalimpong, 'for the benefit of the less fortunate children of the domiciled community in India'.⁷³⁶ The first of these cottages was occupied in September 1900, by the end of 1903 there were 'about 100' students in residence, 'about 300 by the end of 1910', and 'about 630' by 1925 by which time there were 19 cottages, 'with an average of 32 children in each'; of the 1,671 children who had been received since the Homes' foundation '60 per cent were boys and 40 per cent girls.'⁷³⁷ Many of the children were not orphans but had been 'saved', from 'neglectful' and sometimes resistant parents in accordance with what Mizutani has termed the then prevailing 'ideology of 'abandonment''.⁷³⁸ Graham raised the funds for the project within India from 'the colonial government, businesses, and the wider public' and donations from the Queen and the Prince of Wales.⁷³⁹

⁷³⁵ Mizutani, *Meaning of White*, chapter 5.

⁷³⁶ *Ibid.*, 138.

⁷³⁷ *Ibid.*, 140.

⁷³⁸ *Ibid.*, 148.

⁷³⁹ *Ibid.*, 143-144.

Through the *St Andrew's Colonial Homes Magazine* (henceforth *Homes Magazine*), Graham argued that, removed from physically and morally degenerating environments such as the Calcutta slums and from the influence of wayward parents, this elevated and healthy environment would help reshape these children away from vanity and indolence and other vices widely attributed to Eurasians and towards habits of self-discipline and a sense of the dignity of labour.⁷⁴⁰ In making this case to his donors Graham entered debates over whether heredity or environment was the cause of supposed Eurasian degeneration, advocating the latter. Mizutani argues that it 'was above all as a training ground for juvenile emigration that the Colonial Homes had been conceived... [and that] most efforts in the area of vocational training were geared to the ultimate goal of sending its children overseas' to 'settler dominions such as Australia, New Zealand, or Canada... to live humble but independent lives as 'pre-industrial' labourers, whether agricultural or artisanal.'⁷⁴¹ In 1907 Graham created the 'Kalimpong Demonstration Farm' to train the children in agriculture while 'experimenting with agricultural innovations'.⁷⁴² Although aimed at children the experiment shared themes – agricultural innovation and moral and physical refashioning of participants – with colonisation. The transformational process would continue as the children migrated to healthy agricultural environments overseas.

A few affluent Anglo-Indians travelled to Britain for education, holidays, or settlement, and had established a London Association. However, large scale migration was a later phenomenon; the first wave precipitated by anticipation of Indian home rule and later waves a response to perceptions of or actual changing circumstances for Anglo-Indians

⁷⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 163-164.

⁷⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 168-169.

⁷⁴² *Ibid.*, 169.

after independence. Britain and Australia attracted the largest numbers. Others migrated to Canada, New Zealand, the United States and elsewhere. Debates over identity were crucial to individual and familial decisions for or against migration. Gidney and Anthony expended political capital in attempts to foster a greater level of identification with India as ‘motherland’. Anthony went further by attempting to decouple Anglo-Indians from identification with England and Britain. Anxieties about the economic future and prospects for cultural, linguistic and religious integrity for themselves and their children in a self-governing India were critical to fostering a widespread desire to emigrate. Exploring Anglo-Indians’ ‘culture of migration’ in the interviews of émigrés to Australia and a fictional work by an Anglo-Indian set in 1948, the anthropologist Robyn Andrews found that the ‘central issue faced by... Anglo-Indians in India at this time, was *how* to leave India. *Whether* to leave was not in question.’⁷⁴³ [Author’s emphases.] For some Anglo-Indians this option would have been taken if it had been possible and affordable, but practical impediments induced them to make the best of a future in India.

Gidney concurrently pursued multiple strategies that did not always dovetail neatly for the community as a whole; he often made seemingly contradictory demands on the British. Gidney also made a habit of presenting every possible argument he could devise in support of Anglo-Indian claims, whether these sat well together or not. It is not surprising therefore that while campaigning for Anglo-Indians’ future within India, he also in different periods and to varying degrees expressed support for various colonization schemes on the Indian mainland and in the Andaman Islands (conceiving that they might separate from India), supported individual efforts to emigrate, and called on the British to

⁷⁴³ R. Andrews, ‘Quitting India: The Anglo-Indian Culture of Migration’, *Sites: New Series* 4:2 (2007), 33.

help lift barriers (generally a 'colour bar') to large scale emigration to the white dominions. Towards the end of his life he campaigned for a sort of severance package from the British involving continuing financial obligations to the Indian Government to underwrite higher Anglo-Indian salaries in their existing fields of state employment, or a large lump sum payment and/or land grant towards colonisation or new Anglo-Indian educational institutions that would equip Anglo-Indian youth with the skills to face open competition with other Indian communities.

Birkenhead's response to the 1925 deputation and memorandum (which had raised the question of lifting barriers to Anglo-Indian migration to the white dominions, and the complex, tri-partite legal and employment statuses for Anglo-Indians) argued that the community's 'best interests... [would] in the long run be served by throwing in its lot, generally speaking, with the Indian peoples' and emphatically declared that Anglo-Indians had a permanent stake in India 'and in no other country'.⁷⁴⁴ Birkenhead thus forcefully redirected Anglo-Indians away from their complaints about the difficulties of migration within the empire and negated the prospect that their future might lie in Britain or the white dominions. Until more direct evidence comes to light it will be impossible to be certain on this point, but the thrust of Gidney's political rhetoric and endeavours can be argued to support the interpretation which follows: while advancing every argument he himself could devise Gidney looked to the British to provide some kind of all-encompassing solution to the Anglo-Indian problem; the avenues of advance he chose (embracing as a necessity of economic survival the legal status of Anglo-Indians as Indians, temporary economic safeguards, statutory protections within any Indian

⁷⁴⁴ BL, Mss Eur D703/42, Birkenhead Collection.

constitution or act) to press most were those which the British might be willing to countenance (and at key stages he had been given rhetorical and/or legalistic formulae as well as advice by prominent British supporters such as Hardinge); and had other options been discussed as viable Gidney would arguably have more enthusiastically embraced several alternatives. It is clear that Gidney would have been keen to accept the option of British nationality for Anglo-Indians and entry into all ranks of the British Army or into special Anglo-Indian military units. Gidney would have been very keen for the British Parliament to take on board financial obligations to Anglo-Indians by providing for their continued employment in areas like the IMD and the railways – the British might conceivably have further militarized the running of the railways while they were still in India. Lastly, though there is less direct evidence for this, it is highly likely that had the British been willing to advocate, financially support and remove legal barriers to a large scale relocation of Anglo-Indians to the Andaman Islands, Australia, New Zealand or Britain, Gidney would have enthusiastically embraced such an opportunity.

It appears likely that Gidney had at some point hoped for this kind of solution, and the willingness of the Anglo-Indian community to attempt to create a new homeland in sites like McCluskiegunge and the Andaman Islands with their own meagre resources highlighted a desperate desire not to accept a place within India as Indians and in open economic competition with Indians. Even were this new Anglo-Indian home to be in India, Gidney hoped for a self-governing autonomous homeland, a federal state or ‘protectorate’, under loose Indian or British sovereignty. The nature of what might happen in India, of the extent to which the British would ever truly leave and when, as well as what loose or centralized structure, of what state or multiplicity of states, and what kinds

of sovereignty, might exist as the British handed over more power to Indians, was to many, not least Gidney, highly uncertain. Gidney hoped that India would remain tied to the crown and empire; this made his own formulation of Anglo-Indian identity a more comfortable one.

In the Andaman Islands a successful Anglo-Indian colony might aspire to separation from India and continued allegiance to Britain. Part of the myth-making of some Anglo-Indian emigrants was the story that had Churchill not lost the 1945 General Election they might be living together in a prosperous Anglo-Indian British colony in the Seychelles or Andamans. Whether this argument (that Gidney would have eagerly embraced a wholesale scheme of Anglo-Indian relocation) be accepted or not – and Anthony did much to reorient Anglo-Indians who remained in India towards embracing India and even a wholehearted Indian nationalism – it further highlights the significance of debates about India and Britain as sources of identity and constructed homes of the imagination.

Identification with England

W. A. Hobson made the argument in 1928 that Anglo-Indian education encouraged ‘the Anglo-Indian’ to identify himself with England and to ‘despise his Indian heritage’, describing how he ‘imagines himself an Englishman and an Englishman pure and simple’.⁷⁴⁵ Another article by W. Clay soon followed entitled ‘Emigration as one of the solutions to the “Anglo-Indian Problem.”’⁷⁴⁶ Clay presented a powerful case for Anglo-Indian emigration summarizing ‘the causes which will make it imperative for the British

⁷⁴⁵ *Anglo-Indian Review* (August, 1928), 2-3.

⁷⁴⁶ *Anglo-Indian Review* (September, 1928), 2-3.

Government to assist the Anglo-Indian to emigrate' as: their alienation from the soil; the caste system operating to restrict their employment; 'overwhelming numbers of competitors' in their existing fields of occupation; hostility to their 'manners, customs, religion and traditional leanings' (presumably towards the British); and the incompatibility of their standard of living with 'the wage scale of the Indian'.⁷⁴⁷

Clay did not present Anglo-Indians, even rhetorically, as an Indian community or minority in the article; Indians were presented as an oppositional category to Anglo-Indians. In contrast to Gidney's frequent use of terms such as 'our Indian brethren', Clay referred instead to Anglo-Indians' 'Indian neighbours', and then only to emphasize their differences.⁷⁴⁸ Clay particularly emphasized the caste system as a barrier to successful Anglo-Indian economic integration with Indians:

The Anglo-Indian Community... has... entirely alienated itself from the soil... This has been facilitated by the unique conditions attaching to the Indian social structure, so much so, that... the Anglo-Indian has become a stranger in the land of his birth, and is in fact looked upon in this light by the masses. It is in this alien and hostile atmosphere that the Anglo-Indian will have to live... and find sustenance... However much the intellectual Indian may deplore the caste system, it is still a living force... and all those who will not, or cannot subscribe to its usages are thrust beyond its pale.⁷⁴⁹

Clay further argued that there were specific impediments to Anglo-Indians breaking into new fields of economic life giving the example of any business 'started with Indian capital' where he claimed 'preferential treatment is the order of the day, and an Anglo-Indian stands no chance on his merits, nor infact does any community, except that of the

⁷⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 3.

⁷⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 2.

⁷⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

particular community to which the owners belong.⁷⁵⁰ Clay also argued that as the higher castes felt ‘degraded by doing manual labour’ they were overcrowded into the ‘professional classes’ (presumably lawyers, clerks etc.) to such a degree ‘as to cut down the emoluments to such a low figure, that even an Indian with his low standard of living is unable to maintain himself.’⁷⁵¹ Clay argued that Anglo-Indians ‘aware of the abyss that dangled beneath’ their feet had ‘always clung forcibly to the paternal side of... [their] origin’ and had been given subservient positions ‘which the British, for the maintenance of their supremacy, could not entrust to the Indian’.⁷⁵² ‘In the role allocated to the Anglo-Indian, he has antagonized the Indian’ and it was ‘natural that the Indian, once he grasps the reins of power... [would make the necessary changes to] stabilise him in his new estate.’⁷⁵³

Another interesting argument was that the large numbers of Anglo-Indians who had already moved to Burma (assuming that ‘50 per cent of the working members of the community in Burma were not born in the province’ and that the ‘majority’ had ‘no intention of going back to India proper’) had done so to escape the lack of opportunities available in India and ‘conditions’ which pointed ‘inevitably to emigration as the only solution of the “Anglo-Indian Problem”’.⁷⁵⁴ Clay concluded that the:

... Anglo-Indian and Domiciled European Community, must be looked upon as one of the liabilities of the British Administration... A straight bargain should be made between the British and the Indian that... the expropriation of the Anglo-Indian helot must be paid for. Payments equated over 30 years, based on the present value of his service in Government... would enable the community to be eliminated without inconvenience to the State during the period, and at the same time enable

⁷⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 2-3.

⁷⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 3.

⁷⁵² *Ibid.*, 2.

⁷⁵³ *Ibid.*

⁷⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 3.

the community to undergo a training which would fit them for earning a living in an independent position, in countries which would be consonance with their outlook on life... [The] Anglo-Indian is fitted for a life... opening up new countries. His was the instrumentality by which India... and Burma was opened up. In... Australia or Africa he would be invaluable. The majority of the community are accustomed to a life where the amenities of life are few... As the Anglo-Indian has not been able to establish himself on an independent economic basis in this country, they could only live in it on sufferance and by the favour of the people of the land. Consequently the question of emigration must be faced. Soils favourable to the Community where the wages are more in consonance with the standard of living of the community are to be found even in lands other than those over which the British flag flies and if we are not wanted in lands where the British are settled, we must look to those to find a home.⁷⁵⁵

Interestingly, Anglo-Indians are depicted as helots, the semi-slaves of ancient Sparta, and as fundamentally the responsibility (financially and otherwise) of the British. The thrust of the argument is that Britain had a duty to resolve the question and to pay for Anglo-Indians during a transition period prior to mass emigration. Anglo-Indians are presented as almost a collective adult version of the children being helped in Graham's Homes, needing similar solutions to their problems writ large. British philanthropists and sympathizers with the Anglo-Indian cause had often deployed the language of paternalism, and Clay was arguing in this vein that Anglo-Indians were in effect wards of the British. The key point, that the British ought to acknowledge their responsibility for and make real financial provisions for the Anglo-Indian community, was one shared and espoused by various Anglo-Indian political figures and writers.

An excerpt from an article in the 'Morning Post' appeared in the *Review* in December 1929 arguing that if 'the Government really contemplate this policy of Dominion Status it would be better to begin to raise a Relief Fund for the helpless Anglo-Indian

⁷⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 4.

population.⁷⁵⁶ However, neither the British Government, nor the British Indian Government, were ever willing to accept this degree of responsibility or take actions on such a scale. Gidney, as editor of the *Review* during this period, was responsible for the prominent inclusion of Clay's lengthy article (notwithstanding the usual caveat that the editor did not necessarily agree with the views expressed by contributors) and while the *Review* did occasionally present views which dissented from those of the Association (which were almost synonymous with those of its leader), the predominant editorial line made it essentially a mouthpiece for views and arguments with which Gidney was in broad agreement. It is also clear that as Gidney became familiar with what measures the British might be prepared to countenance in aiding the Anglo-Indian community the idea of mass emigration received less attention and that later under Anthony's leadership there were a large number of articles arguing against emigration.

There were other voices expressed in the *Review* and within the Association such as in 'An Appeal' by C. H. Gilbert, the Honorary Secretary and Treasurer of the 'Mogalsarai' branch which encouraged greater identification with India as 'motherland' (as Gidney did) but also rejected the idea of emigration:

If fortune favoured us, how many would leave the community to become Americans or Italians! How many would deny India as their Motherland. Hundreds of our people have done so; ashamed of the land that gave them birth, ashamed of the community that brought them up. They are lost to us, but, we who are left... who are not regarded as Britishers, Americans, Italians... but Indians, let us remain together – and... fight our rightful place into the body politic of India. [sic] India wants us... Remove from your minds any notions of superiority. If you are not a Britisher, you are an Indian, irrespective of what your colour might be...⁷⁵⁷

⁷⁵⁶ *Anglo-Indian Review* (December, 1929), 9.

⁷⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 9-10.

Mr. J. S. Turner also commented in an article entitled 'Pride of Nationality' that 'we find many of our people actually ashamed to acknowledge themselves Anglo-Indians, and only too ready to pose as Britishers, Americans, Russians and even Mexicans' and asked 'Why should we be ashamed of our Nationality... of being Anglo-Indians... [and] of India as our Motherland?'⁷⁵⁸ Turner argued that Anglo-Indians should not be ashamed of their mixed origins because all nations were mixed in their origins, and that 'it would be difficult to find another nation with a greater degree of admixture of blood than the British, and yet we find the Anglo-Saxons – as much a hyphenated race as the Anglo-Indian... proud of being an Anglo-Saxon'.⁷⁵⁹ Like other writers Turner spoke of the 'Anglo-Indian race' and tried to persuade his audience that it was 'a match, and more, for any other race physically, morally and intellectually.'⁷⁶⁰ Turner called on Anglo-Indians to be 'proud of India'.⁷⁶¹ To do so 'Anglo-India', personified as a woman (a daughter of mother India), would have to 'doff herself of all assumed airs of superiority and cease being the laughing-stock of all her sister-communities in India.'⁷⁶²

In a speech earlier that year at 'Moghalserai' Turner had called on 'Anglo-Indians – as children of the soil, statutory Natives of India, [and] as sons and daughters of Mother India' to support Indianisation provided Anglo-Indians be given 'our rightful place in such schemes.'⁷⁶³ The phrase 'children of the soil' was a broad rhetorical claim to an Indian identity for Anglo-Indians, though perhaps not specifically as agriculturalists, and contrasts sharply with Clay's more grounded claims about Anglo-Indian alienation from

⁷⁵⁸ *Anglo-Indian Review* (May, 1930), 19.

⁷⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

⁷⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

⁷⁶¹ *Ibid.*

⁷⁶² *Ibid.*

⁷⁶³ *Anglo-Indian Review* (March, 1930), 13.

the (actual) soil of the country. Turner suggested concrete measures to foster greater pride in Anglo-Indian and Indian national identity – the establishment of an ‘*Anglo-India Day*’ to be named ‘GIDNEY DAY’ and further building the cult of Gidney by letting ‘the rest of India know that we are proud GIDNEYITES’, as well as choosing a ‘*National Emblem*’ to consist of ‘a Lotus bud, partially opened, on a back ground of Rose foliage’ to represent India and Britain [author’s formatting].⁷⁶⁴ Turner’s last suggestion, and his justification for it, should remind us of the complexity of Anglo-Indian identity, even from someone advocating a greater identification with India:

Anglo-Indian National Flag: – Our culture, education, habits, mode of living, and above all, our sentiments being all predominantly British, it is but natural that no rag, green, white, yellow, pink and blue will ever appeal to us as a National Flag. The only flag that can, and always will, command our respect is the UNION JACK... [which] must of necessity be the basis of our National Flag to emphasise our British connection. The Anglo-Indian floral emblem of the Rose leaves and the Lotus bud emblazoned in the corner of the Union Jack will suffice to make it the distinctive National Flag of the Anglo-Indian Race.⁷⁶⁵

Turner was thus describing Anglo-Indians as a race, but also, Anglo-India, as, in some sense, a nation within Mother India. The appeal to the Union Jack even in the context of an attempt to create greater identification with India was mirrored in a later assertion that Anglo-Indian’s rootedness in the soil of India was the result of both their Indian blood but also a right of conquest – ‘This land is ours, because without Anglo-Indians the British would never have conquered it.’⁷⁶⁶

⁷⁶⁴ *Anglo-Indian Review* (May, 1930), 19-20.

⁷⁶⁵ *Anglo-Indian Review* (May, 1930), 20.

⁷⁶⁶ *Anglo-Indian Review* (October, 1944), 7.

Identification with India

Blunt has argued it was between the 1925 deputation and the first Round Table Conference in 1930-31 that Gidney's rhetoric began to 'shift from claiming a distinct identity as permanent British settlers in India... [to an assertion] that the Anglo-Indian community was both British and Indian in origin, and that it could act as a unique and a strategic bridge between both nations.'⁷⁶⁷ Nonetheless the framework for Gidney's understanding throughout the period, even once he began to recognise the need to seek the goodwill of prominent Indians, was one of continuing loyalty to Britain and one which still perceived – perhaps astutely – the British as the font of power and patronage. Accordingly, though he publically claimed to support Indian aspirations to home rule (within the empire), Gidney's political appeals were still primarily if not exclusively aimed at British ears. Even so Gidney's policies and pronouncements were contested. A significant number of Anglo-Indians as late as the early 1930s were objecting to their legal status as 'Statutory Natives'.

In his presidential speech to the Association AGM in 1932 Gidney claimed to be 'in no way perturbed by the threat... of a 12th hour effort of presenting a monster petition to Parliament objecting to our acceptance of the position of Statutory Indians and demanding that we should be given a status as one writer of an article said that we should consider ourselves "England's footprints on the sands of India."⁷⁶⁸ Gidney went on to argue:

If the Anglo-Indian refuses to declare himself a citizen of India, he had better pack up his... baggage and clear out... After all, who has the right among us to say that we should deny our motherland, India? None but a coward, none but a fool!... India is the land in which our fathers and grandfathers have died... that has given us birth,

⁷⁶⁷ Blunt, *Domicile and Diaspora*, 45.

⁷⁶⁸ *Anglo-Indian Review* (September, 1932), 5.

that gives us our education and our work... The future India will demand from you a complete alteration of your mental outlook. It will not tolerate you as some of us think ourselves “superior beings to the Indian”, or as some one said as a “European subject”... aliens to the Dominion of India... Past history has told you that England is the only nation that is ashamed of its offspring and that endeavours, in every way, – social and otherwise – to lose its identity in its offspring... Be men, be women, be proud of India and your nationality, as you are proud of England and your heritage... unless the Anglo-Indian community awakens from this pseudo-superiority... [and] to the fact that the new India will receive it in its bosom as one of its children... India will be no place for the future Anglo-Indian...⁷⁶⁹

Gidney’s speech was endorsed in the *Indian Daily Telegraph*:

Anglo-Indians had in the past been a tribe without a leader... the waifs and strays among them well compelled by the exigencies of the times to tag themselves to the tail of the Britishers... some of them being misguided often ladled out anti-Indian bogeys which ultimately failed to serve their purpose. To-day leaders like Sir Henry Sidney have realized that if their community must have a place in the Federal India, it must march with the times... [his] candid observations would be unpalatable to some of his compatriots. Yet it is a fact and as such ought to be accepted without any reservation... [This] advice has come none too soon...⁷⁷⁰

Speaking to a British audience in London in 1934, Sidney emphasized that ‘the Anglo-Indian... owing to his adherence to all that is British and Western and his loyalty, is... considered *as much* an alien and a foreigner’ as the Briton.⁷⁷¹ To Anglo-Indians he continued to preach the forging of closer ties with Indians. In an article on how Anglo-Indian women could help their community subheaded ‘Sidney’s Outspoken Advice’ and ‘Forget your superiority – if any; learn local vernaculars’ mix with Indians’ Sidney’s message was presented as follows: the Anglo-Indian ‘education system was at the root of the trouble, as it brought up the children of the community in a “sense of pseudo-superiority” and made no effort to bring home the fact that India was the land of their

⁷⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 5-6.

⁷⁷⁰ Cited in *Anglo-Indian Review* (September, 1932), 27.

⁷⁷¹ [author’s emphasis] *Anglo-Indian Review* (January, 1934), 4.

birth, their home, and that Indians were their brothers and sisters’; ‘compulsory teaching of the local vernacular should be enforced in every school’ to prepare Anglo-Indian youth to be ‘Indian citizens in every sense of the word’; it was the ‘sacred duty that every woman, European or Anglo-Indian... [owed] to India... to get to know the Indian woman’; it was regrettable ‘that both Anglo-Indian and English women seem to feel ashamed to learn the language of India’, it was ‘a short-sighted policy’ which had ‘done much harm in the past’ but which ‘if remedied to-day, and if our women get to know India and win the hearts of the people’ would help make India ‘a heaven indeed for all of us’; under a sub-heading ‘England not our home’ Gidney targeted Anglican schools for letting Anglo-Indian children ‘be brought up in the belief that England is their home’; and lastly told Anglo-Indians to ‘forget their superiority (if any) over Indians, which was a complex from which many of them especially the women suffered in a marked degree. He begged of them to throw in their lot with the Indians, who after all were their brothers and sisters and stand shoulder to shoulder with them in any constitutional fight for their rights’.⁷⁷²

As we saw in previous chapters racial passing was a strategy for many individuals and families for ascending the Raj’s socio-racial hierarchy and antithetical to both Gidney’s and Anthony’s formulations of Anglo-Indian identity. A 1935 article entitled ‘The “Nationality Question”. “Anglo-Indian”, “European” or “Indian”’ attacked racial passing and fleshed out more details as to how Anglo-Indians could retain cultural distinctiveness (even ‘Englishness’) within the framework of Indian nationality.⁷⁷³ On passing the author derided misguided hopes of obtaining ‘overseas passages... By calling oneself a European to put it bluntly one only bluffs oneself and one is left stranded out of both

⁷⁷² *Anglo-Indian Review* (March, 1934), 14.

⁷⁷³ *Anglo-Indian Review* (December, 1935), 29.

folds... But certain false values tend to drive many of our number to label themselves European, somewhat weakening and endangering the community and leaving themselves (shall I say) in vacuo.⁷⁷⁴

The author's arguments about identity and nationality attempted to assuage Anglo-Indian fears and equate their new position with other established Indian communities:

But to say this, does not mean to deny the fundamental "Englishness" of us. By upbringing, by ideals, by culture, by sympathy we are all English to the marrow. We only acquire a new domicile... Indians must not... expect us to put on dhotis and saris, live in mud huts, become Hindus, hate what they hate, laugh when they laugh... To Indians who wish to test our Indian nationality by the extent of our familiarity a hail-fellow-well-met-familiarity, – a slap-on-the-back-familiarity, I emphatically answer "Never". Do the Parsis do it? They are among the most exclusive as they are amongst the most national of the communities... A friend of mine who went to England for a 4 year study always called himself an Indian. Thus should it be: abroad, Indian; and in India "I am an Anglo-Indian, Sir!"... if instead of being so disunited and ashamed, Anglo-Indians were to admit the fact of their domicile... our position in the country would be very much sounder... Nationally then we are Indians but nationality... is a federal fabric with its distinct and (desirably) individualistic communities. The Bengalees will not wipe out their Bengaliness... We also will maintain our Englishness. And Indians may not "crib".⁷⁷⁵

While this kind of message, when coming from Anglo-Indian political leaders and writers themselves, was often described as 'outspoken' or challenging for some portions of the community, it seems that Anglo-Indians had a harder time hearing similar messages coming from Indian sources, even those apparently sympathetic to the Anglo-Indian case. A speech delivered by Balasaheb Gangadhar Kher, an Indian nationalist, member of the Swaraj Party, and 'Premier of Bombay' at the AGM of the 'Bombay Provincial Branch of

⁷⁷⁴ *Ibid.*

⁷⁷⁵ *Ibid.*

the Anglo-Indian Association... again raised the old controversy regarding the policy to be followed by Anglo-Indians in the country'.⁷⁷⁶ The *Review* argued that:

There is... nothing in Mr. Kher's speech which has not been frequently uttered by... Gidney... It is, therefore beyond our comprehension why Mr. Kher's statement should be so repugnant to Anglo-Indians' feelings... G. L. H. in a letter to our contemporary the *Statesmen*, asks, "Can a true born Anglo-Indian feel this land to be his motherland"?... To our mind... those of his ilk who take pride in proclaiming from house tops their renunciation of the blood... inherited from their mother and their connection with the country of their birth, can never command the respect of any one. Do... [Australasians and Canadians] keep on 'longing' for the 'home' from where their original forefathers came? They at least may, even to-day, be welcomed back to England. But can an Anglo-Indian ever hope to be absorbed in English society, however true his professed longing for a return to his father's 'home' be? ... Anglo-Indians... have no right of citizenship except as an Indian minority... Anglo-Indians of this die hard and ignorant type... mislead the youth of the community... antagonize the Indian and... inspire contempt and ridicule in the minds of Englishmen.⁷⁷⁷

Both Gidney and Anthony put a lot of their energies into reshaping the outlook of Anglo-Indian youth. A young man in 1940 inverted the usual gendered rhetoric by describing India as 'our fatherland':

The Indians therefore we must consider, as our brothers and sisters and must learn to treat them as such... We only have to meet the Indian half-way... to show him that we are sympathetic and want to strive for India's welfare, whether it be complete self-Government or only partial. We want to throw off that feeling of superiority... The Indian is rapidly becoming westernised... we do not have to adopt the dhoti or saree... The Indian likes to speak English. A little bit of Urdu or Tamil from us... and he is pleased. A little more interest in his customs and ways and we have made him our friend... Anglo-Indian parents should teach their children to think kindly of the Indian, to realise that he is a progressive and excellent fellow and to impress on their children the dire necessity of seeking friendship with him.⁷⁷⁸

⁷⁷⁶ *Anglo-Indian Review* (May, 1938), 3.

⁷⁷⁷ *Ibid.*

⁷⁷⁸ *Anglo-Indian Review* (April, 1940), 7.

Attempting to foster greater levels of identification with India and things eastern McNeelance interestingly invoked ‘the U.S.S.R.’, as exhibiting ‘principles of equality and humanity and the absence of racial prejudice’ and quoting its leader “‘I am an Asiatic” says Stalin; and the men women of the U.S.S.R. European or Asiatic follow him.’⁷⁷⁹

Australasia

In 1938 Graham, writing in the *Homes Magazine*, began to advocate ‘New Zealand as the best part of the Empire for purposes of Anglo-Indian emigration... [pointing] out that the outstanding feature of the New Zealand outlook is its freedom from colour prejudice – “freer than any other part of the Empire”.’⁷⁸⁰ Graham had visited New Zealand after many of his charges had successfully emigrated there. Graham gave his impressions of New Zealand over the radio from Auckland praising its: ‘home life’; suitability for the welfare of Anglo-Indian girls; treatment of the young emigrants ‘as real members of the family’; ‘ideal relationship between Employer and Employed... between Capital and Labour’; ‘wonderful atmosphere of true democracy’ as a ‘young nation’ not overly ‘bound by tradition’; unusual freedom ‘from class distinctions’; judgement of individuals ‘by what they are in themselves and their capacity for doing work, and not by their higher incomes or their credit at the Bank’; comparative gender equality with husbands helping ‘to wash up the dishes and clean the shoes’; and lastly its comparative ‘*freedom from colour prejudice*’ [original emphasis].⁷⁸¹ The *Review* followed Graham’s efforts to facilitate Anglo-Indian emigration, reporting that:

⁷⁷⁹ *Anglo-Indian Review* (October, 1944), 8.

⁷⁸⁰ Internal quotation cited in, and remainder by the editor of, *Anglo-Indian Review* (February, 1938), 5.

⁷⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 14.

...New Zealand has won the affection of the Kalimpong emigrants. This happy position in New Zealand is entirely attributable to the influence of the Maoris, who, though a minority... possess the statutory right of representation in the Cabinet... is the equal of the European settler in... law and in social privileges... [Whereas the Australian] Minister of the interior stated that “an Anglo-Indian of three quarters white parentage would be allowed to land, if in sound health, of good character and in possession of a British passport... [How do they] propose to measure the white parentage of any Anglo-Indian... It is well known that children of a European father and an Anglo-Indian mother, at times, vary considerably in their complexion. From the point of view of parentage there may be no difference between the light complexioned child and the darker one. But the Australian Government may be prepared to welcome the former and refuse permission to his less fortunate brother or sister... We are deeply grateful to Rev. Dr. Graham for his persistent advocacy of the rights of the Anglo-Indian community to emigrate to other parts of the empire but we cannot agree with him that the decision of the Australian Government is a ‘magna charta’...⁷⁸²

In an issue later that year the Kalimpong emigrants were described as a new ‘party of 14 (nine boys and five girls)’, the largest group so far, had ‘recently sailed from Bombay per S. S. Strathmore’ to add to the then total of ‘108 Kalimpong boys and girls in New Zealand and 50 or 60 “grand children”’.⁷⁸³ The group were described as ‘the best’ so far sent by Graham, with four being ‘matriculates at the Calcutta University. They have worked in farms and intend to do farming... to begin with. One boy has passed the Board of Apprenticeship and the higher grade examinations. All the girls are diplomaed children’s nurses.’⁷⁸⁴ Unfortunately for advocates of emigration it was announced in 1939 that the New Zealand Government had ‘recently decided not to give permits to Anglo-Indians to emigrate to that Colony’:

The decision... must be very disappointing to Dr. Graham who had entertained very high hopes for the youth of Kalimpong in that Colony. This colour bar is the outstanding weakness of Britain’s colonial policy. The mother country is apparently helpless in the matter of removing any ban against the entry other British subjects into the Dominions... even when such a ban is based on colour prejudice. We... do

⁷⁸² *Ibid.*, 5.

⁷⁸³ *Anglo-Indian Review* (October, 1938), 6.

⁷⁸⁴ *Ibid.*

not favour emigration of Anglo-Indians to any Colony particularly if such emigration is to be on sufferance...⁷⁸⁵

When emigration had seemed a possibility, the *Review* had celebrated the idea (provided there were no colour based restrictions). Gidney might still have been open to *en masse* Anglo-Indian migration to a place within the empire such as New Zealand, but only, it seems, if it was emphatically possible and unrestricted, otherwise the community would simply be dispersed (as some fairer skinned Anglo-Indians emigrated to Australia, some to New Zealand and so on) and those remaining weakened. New Zealand's rejection triggered the *Review's* declaration of general opposition to emigration and especially emigration 'on sufferance'.⁷⁸⁶ However, the following year, a memorandum by 'Mr. S. H. Prater, M. L. A. (Bombay), J. P.' on the 'Anglo-Indian Problem' appeared in the *Review* with suggestions as to how the community might respond to the anticipated end of safeguards under dominion status:

There appears to be one solution... emigration... which is already being adopted by Anglo-Indians who can afford it. Numbers have left the country and have found employment for their children in England and elsewhere. But we are not concerned with the people who have the means to settle their problems but with the masses who have not... The first question is what country shall we migrate to... racial considerations... provide a bar. The first question then is to find a country which will be willing to receive the community and which would provide suitable conditions for Anglo-Indian settlement. There are difficulties in the way but they ought not to be insuperable *if the British Government would provide its assistance...* Efforts should then be directed to the emigration of the younger element... who can be best trained for a new existence... Their children brought up, schooled and trained in the new country will enter it not as strangers but as citizens. Schemes for emigration and for the care of children during the period of training and for their subsequent launching into employment are in being in England and elsewhere... [though] are extremely expensive and here again the community *will require the aid of the British Government* surely there is enough sympathy in Britain... The problem of the community is an economic problem which can be solved by emigration to a country where people of European habits of life may compete for

⁷⁸⁵ *Anglo-Indian Review* (November, 1939), 7.

⁷⁸⁶ *Ibid.*

employment with others of the same standard of living and obtain in any grade of employment a living wage.⁷⁸⁷ [my emphases]

Prater echoed Clay in emphasizing that the British should be called on to take some financial responsibility for Anglo-Indian emigration and Graham in his focus on the training and emigration of Anglo-Indian youth.

Frank Anthony and the Émigrés

After Gidney's death in 1942 Anthony and the *Review* became more unambiguously hostile to emigration, as reflected in a 1943 article by F. W. Corbett:

Some well meaning friends have suggested wholesale emigration to the Andamans and elsewhere. This is not a practicable or a desirable solution. We are a community whose roots have dug deep into the country of our birth... We are... accustomed to the attractions of an urban life, and cannot fit easily into a rural community... Some others suggest that the fairer ones amongst us should merge with the European and leave the country and the darker ones should merge into the Indian community. This is foolish... There is no need for us to merge our identity with either the European or the Indian, and to liquidate ourselves as a community, any more than the Parsis, the Jews or the Armenians. We are too virile a community for that.⁷⁸⁸

Another article entitled 'Anglo-Indian Psychology & Policy' by Rev. L. J. Hopkins of Bangalore (presumably a Briton) argued that a 'change of mentality' was more important than policy in order to combat 'a widening gap between the Anglo-Indian and other Indian communities.'⁷⁸⁹ A note declared that although in general agreement with the article, the editor was '*in complete disagreement with the opinion on European masters*' (i.e.

⁷⁸⁷ *Anglo-Indian Review* (May, 1940), 21.

⁷⁸⁸ *Anglo-Indian Review* (September, 1943), 12.

⁷⁸⁹ *Anglo-Indian Review* (November, 1943), 16.

Hopkins' assertion that European schoolmasters were being falsely blamed for inculcating Anglo-Indian youth with attachment to Britain and disdain for all things Indian).⁷⁹⁰

Hopkins discussed 'an ineradicable, instinctive feeling that everything British and Western is necessarily superior, and that everything Indian and Eastern is inferior – even soap and beauty preparations!':

Even when there is no actual contempt of things Indian, there is too often a staggering lack of interest in them. Soon after the death of the great Indian poet... I asked two young people... if they knew which man of letters of international reputation had just died... I told them it was Rabindranath Tagore, and to my horror I discovered they had never heard of him! But what exasperated me still more was that they made it pretty clear, when they knew he was an **Indian** poet, that they did not want to know about him.⁷⁹¹

Anglo-Indians themselves such as McNeelance made similar points that they could read Shakespeare, but not many could 'read an Urdu newspaper', that they listened to Beethoven 'but how many of us can listen to Indian Music without laughing at it or saying "It is just noise?"'⁷⁹² Hopkins pointed out that Europeans accused of inculcating such values in Anglo-Indians (especially children) had 'much freer and better relationships' with Indians 'than the average Anglo-Indian', that some 'of these despised European masters are amongst those who have written books on Indian history... philosophy and... many of the Indian languages', that 'no one could accuse them of anti-Indian prejudices' and that quite 'frankly such prejudices are found more frequently among Anglo-Indian members of school staffs.'⁷⁹³ Hopkins stated that for years he had 'been trying to eradicate these prejudices from the young people committed to... [his] care, but their

⁷⁹⁰ *Ibid.*

⁷⁹¹ *Ibid.*

⁷⁹² *Anglo-Indian Review* (October, 1944), 7.

⁷⁹³ *Anglo-Indian Review* (November, 1943), 17.

home influences and inherited prejudices prevail[ed] in most cases.’⁷⁹⁴ Hopkins questioned whether in asking for the continuance of reserved employment Anglo-Indians were really ‘asking for ‘rights’ or ‘privileges’, when looked at from the Indian point of view?’ arguing that ultimately the ‘only reliable safeguard is goodwill.’⁷⁹⁵

Deploying crude reverse psychology McNeelance accused fellow Anglo-Indians of suffering from a “defense mechanism” – that is, a tendency for a man to protest strongly that he does not like a thing because he does like it and he is ashamed to say so. The stronger his liking, the stronger his protest he does not like it...’⁷⁹⁶ Hopkins also suggested that ‘the problem of the girls is in many ways quite different from that of the boys’,⁷⁹⁷ implying that the absorption of (particularly fairer complexioned) Anglo-Indian young women into the transient European community (through hypergamy) was a more achievable strategy than racial passing was for Anglo-Indian young men.

Hypergamy-emigration strategies were also criticized by K. French-MacGowan:

There are some – particularly among the women of our community who feel that by marrying Europeans they will in time leave India and thus satisfactorily, solve their individual problems. It is no exaggeration to say that their’s is a fool’s paradise. Statistics will prove that well over nine-tenths of these people remain on permanently here, and of those who do leave, the majority soon return back to this country where life is so much cheaper and easier... especially so when compared to the rigors of climate, labour problems, and... endless process of toiling and moiling.⁷⁹⁸

⁷⁹⁴ *Ibid.*

⁷⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 17-18.

⁷⁹⁶ *Anglo-Indian Review* (October, 1944), 7.

⁷⁹⁷ *Anglo-Indian Review* (November, 1943), 18.

⁷⁹⁸ *Anglo-Indian Review* (December, 1943), 14.

Under Anthony's leadership the theme of returning Anglo-Indian emigres with tales of woe became increasingly frequent in the *Review* in the years leading up to and immediately after independence, most likely in proportion to the scale of Anglo-Indian anxiety-induced emigration. As the British departure drew nearer Anglo-Indian anxieties mounted into what Anthony characterised as a mood of defeatism and panic. Large numbers of Anglo-Indians (difficult to accurately quantify) with the resources to emigrate chose to do so, predominantly to Britain and Australia (contesting the White Australia policy).

Anthony found himself having to combat what he perceived as widespread misinformation, ignorance and willful misrepresentation. A 1946 article entitled 'Quit India?' tried to make it clear that 'Quit India does not apply to Anglo-Indians.'⁷⁹⁹ However many Anglo-Indians believed that they would be forced out along with the British and mistreated if they remained. Anthony had dropped the term 'Domiciled European' from the Association's name and the *Review* delivered the following stark message penned by the Ajmer Branch Committee:

There has been in the past a tendency prevalent amongst a microscopic minority of fair Anglo-Indians to describe themselves as 'Domiciled Europeans'. This term ceased to have any political or economic significance over a decade ago... it has been expunged from the name of the Association... The Anglo-Indian is an Indian by nationality and an Anglo-Indian by community. We are the one and only racial minority in India... Today the spirit of nationalism dominates the Association ... We have a short time before us to strengthen our Association, so that our Leader can secure our economic rights, and it can only be done if every Anglo-Indian joins the Association at once... To safeguard you this branch of the Association intends introducing a badge which all members will be asked to wear on all occasions, so that members of other communities will know that you belong to an organization that is not apathetic to the national interests of the country. It is hoped that this step

⁷⁹⁹ *Anglo-Indian Review* (August, 1946), 11.

will safeguard members of the community who may perhaps be insulted or assaulted otherwise by crowds who are incited to these acts by irresponsible hooligans.⁸⁰⁰

The last point suggests that the fears that the Ajmer Branch of the Association sought to allay might not have been entirely unfounded, if it was thought necessary or prudent to have a badge identifying oneself as Anglo-Indian in case one be mistaken for a European and attacked or molested by nationalist mobs. Anthony's embrace of nationalism and his formulation 'Indian by nationality, Anglo-Indian by community', which we have discussed in previous chapters, is also very plain in the statement by the Ajmer Branch. In an attempt to assuage fears and stem the flow of Anglo-Indian emigration the *Review* carried many articles promising that Anglo-Indians could have a 'Great Future in India',⁸⁰¹ arguing against emigration and published letters of those who had left and regretted the decision and desired to or were in the process of returning to India. One letter to the editor highlighted splits within the community and the extent of the prevailing apprehension:

When I visited Calcutta recently, I was given a printed tract... the ultimate aim evidently to produce a split in our camp, which would considerably weaken the power of our Leader... Must we, because the sheltering (?) hand of Britain is about to be withdrawn, put our 'tails between our legs' like whipped curs, and run to Australia or Brazil? Has not one lesson been sufficient that we must now emigrate to foreign countries, to be duped and exploited by other Powers – as we have been by the British – and then discarded after we have redeemed their shortcomings? I fail to understand why Indians should want to "crush" us and "wipe us off the face of the earth"!⁸⁰²

⁸⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 11-12.

⁸⁰¹ *Anglo-Indian Review* (June, 1947), 20.

⁸⁰² *Anglo-Indian Review* (August, 1946), 26.

YOU HAVE BEEN WARNED.

WHEN TROUBLES and DIFFICULTIES ARISE DON'T WEAR A DISMAL LOOK

WEAR

YOUR LUCKY BIRTHSTONE

IT IS THE MOST POWERFUL CHARM IN THE WORLD FOR GOOD LUCK

Also Precious Stones of All Kinds			
January:—Garnet	Rs. 2 0	July:—Ruby	Rs. 5 0
February:—Amethyst	Rs. 5 0	August:—Sardonyx	Rs. 3 0
March:—Bloodstone	Rs. 2 0	September:—Cornelian	Rs. 2 0
April:—Moonstone	Rs. 2 0	October:—Opal	Rs. 2 0
May:—Alexanderite	Rs. 5 0	November:—Topaz	Rs. 5 0
June:—Agate	Rs. 2 0	December:—Turquoise	Rs. 3 0

A. C. PETERS. (Dept. A.I.R.) 56-Mori Road, Mahim—BOMBAY.

Fig. 1: Advert appearing below preceding letter to the editor, further emphasising Anglo-Indian anxiety.⁸⁰³

Another article entitled ‘Why Quit India?’ by ‘M. Morris, M.L.A., M.B.E.’ argued that Anglo-Indians belonged to India and declared that there should be no sartorial test for Indian nationalism, that other communities than the Anglo-Indian such as ‘Bengalis, Beharis, Punjabis, Marwaris etc.’ sometimes wore European dress and that those who wore ‘a coat or a neck tie or a topi or frock’ should not ‘be a target for maltreatment in any outburst of anti-British feelings’.⁸⁰⁴ Mr. Abdul Haji was quoted in the *Statesman*:

During the recent disturbances, hooliganism in Calcutta was characterized by the absurd notion that every person who wore a topee or a necktie was a British Imperialist. I, a Punjabi... was on that unpropitious day in European dress. An emotional mob relieved me of my topee by setting fire to it. I was then coerced into taking off my necktie and pulling my shirt over my trousers... [while] an English friend who had recently come out to India but who on that evening wore no topee or necktie, was allowed to pass... The national movement has degenerated into mob violence. Indian and Chinese establishments in Park Street and Chowringhee were damaged by rioters... Dress is no criterion of a person’s national spirit, and I am certain many Anglo-Indians were abused and insulted because of their European dress, while Col C. J. Stracey, an Anglo-Indian in the I. N. A., is also facing trial.⁸⁰⁵

⁸⁰³ *Ibid.*

⁸⁰⁴ *Anglo-Indian Review* (September, 1946), 14.

⁸⁰⁵ Cited in *Ibid.*, 15.

Nissen echoed this account: ‘walking down Chonringhee I had my topee taken off, and jumped upon, and smashed, squashed... I had my tie taken off and thrown on the ground... oh yes... all around the boundary wall of my house in... big letters – that big, Quit India, Quit India...’⁸⁰⁶ While arguing for Anthony’s nationalist position that Anglo-Indians should remain in India, Morris revealed reasons for Anglo-Indian fears:

Why then is there this flutter and frustration over the ‘Quit India’ cry? Why plans to get away from India or to quit it?... Those who can afford it may leave the country. What of the remaining bulk? Any unfriendliness, antipathy or estrangements on the part of Indians towards Anglo-Indians is mainly the fault of the latter... Anglo-Indian girls and women especially have had smaller opportunities of identifying themselves with Indian girls and women and Indian life and... resentment and hatred are seemingly provoked more quickly, if shamefully, in cowardly members of an insensible mob... attacks... were extended in the most disgraceful manner to defenceless women... however... a few honourable chivalrous Indians ran the risk of protecting the unfortunate women from shamelessly vicious assailants.⁸⁰⁷

In June 1947 the Association warned Anglo-Indians that, with the British having declared they would leave India in a year’s time, they must now accept Indian domicile if they wanted to remain in India (and be employable by the state) and issued the following ‘Warning Against “quitting India”’.⁸⁰⁸

The Head Office... has recently received numerous letters from Anglo-Indians who left India for other countries, including the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, Africa and America, regretting their hasty action and requesting the Association to do all in its power to arrange for their return... At the same time several Europeans who had decided to Quit India, have now for one reason or another changed their minds... many genuine Europeans prefer to live – and die in India. This desire however, is not enough; they *must* accept Indian Domicile if they wish to partake of the life and opportunities which are the birthright of the children of this land: consequently, they will find it expedient to become good ANGLO-INDIANS. If genuine Europeans can do this, and many are already doing so, then the time has

⁸⁰⁶ Mss Eur R189.

⁸⁰⁷ *Anglo-Indian Review* (September, 1946), 16.

⁸⁰⁸ *Anglo-Indian Review* (June, 1947), 17.

come for every real Anglo-Indian – and so – called Domiciled European – to stop sitting on the fence and to enter the fold of the All India Anglo-Indian Association... REMEMBER *the stronger our numerical strength the greater our voice in public affairs and the better our bargaining power!*⁸⁰⁹

Underlying this advice was a desire to provide some space for those who did not accept Anthony's formulation of Anglo-Indian identity, i.e. those who were engaging in racial passing as Europeans or Domiciled Europeans, whom Anthony's rhetoric generally excluded. The article made the point clearly that an Anglo-Indian could 'be of *pure* or *mixed* European parentage provided he has made India his *permanent* home.'⁸¹⁰ This was not really about annexing actual Europeans to the Association, though they certainly would have been welcomed, but actually about giving Anglo-Indians knowingly or unknowingly engaging in racial passing who clung to a 'false' unmixed identity (in Anthony's view the majority of Domiciled Europeans) some way to join the Association whilst maintaining their existing identity.

Anthony would continue to speak against racial passing and identification with Britain, as he attempted to push Anglo-Indians towards his formulation of strong Anglo-Indian communal identity within an Indian nationalist framework. One response from Domiciled Europeans and Anglo-Indians opposed to Anthony's message was the accusation Anthony was an Indian Christian passing as an Anglo-Indian – a widely circulated rumour reiterated by Nissen who conceded it might be considered 'slanderous'.⁸¹¹ Some Anglo-Indians, Anthony felt, were still dangerously deluded – as an article covering the views of A. Fanthome, the Anglo-Indian M.L.A. for the U.P. expressed it:

⁸⁰⁹ [Formatting as original] *Ibid.*, 17-18.

⁸¹⁰ [Original emphasis] *Ibid.*, 18.

⁸¹¹ Mss Eur R189.

... there was a section of opinion that believed that somehow and in some way Britain would continue as the ruling power here, and that lulled by this false hope, they were content to remain indifferent and apathetic... For these people... there would be a rude awakening... their fate would be worse than that of the escapists who were quitting because these people still could not read the 'signs of the times.'... [The] Community had for long enjoyed a protected but mistaken existence... For this, (and in a large measure no doubt) Britain was to blame... [As the] Community was the *child* and the *creation* of the British, it was the duty of Britain as a good parent to make adequate provision for the Community before she hand over the reins of government. However, Britain had even failed the Community in this, and they were now faced with the realization that Britain could not and would not help them. This though a grievous and unpardonable act of ingratitude for all the loyal services which Britain had exacted and expected from the Community, during the many crisis [sic] through which she had passed...⁸¹²

Fanthome expresses a language of paternalism to condemn Britain's failure in its duty to Anglo-Indians, which was a theme that Anthony would increasingly deploy and develop in order to push Anglo-Indians to sever part of their identification with Britain, embrace India more fully and abandon hopes that Britain would somehow come to the rescue and provide an alternative to Anthony's own prescription. Interestingly, highlighting broader uncertainty, a group within the Anglo-Indian community appears to have not really believed the British would withdraw completely. Although the position of the Association had long been officially sympathetic (under Gidney) to Indian home rule, and was under Anthony's leadership more emphatically in favour of the aspirations of Indian nationalism many Anglo-Indians and Domiciled Europeans remained apprehensively opposed to independence.

Nissen recounts 'I, I, while there I didn't like the idea, of course, of India being taken over by the Indian... because after all, one has to reluctantly admit that we, my lot, we did hang

⁸¹² *Anglo-Indian Review* (June, 1947), 20.

onto the coat-tails of the British over there, heh, we did, and so we were, sort of, we were treated as part of the British Raj if you may say...'⁸¹³ Nissen understood Indian feelings, acknowledging 'this was their country', but was still unprepared for the speed of the British withdrawal:

...I saw the Indian point of view, but it came quite as a shock I must say that, right up to, what was it, August 47, until two or three months before, August 47, we, my lot, we, we never really, really realised that... how far this business had advanced about handing over India, independence, it came as quite a shock, and I remember... cycling to the office every morning, I used to cycle around past the high court, and right on top of the tower on the high court was the union jack, and I remember on the, on that, on that 16th of August 1947 cycling along and I saw the Indian flag up there and really it gave me quite a shock and that was really the first time I really realised that the British were out...⁸¹⁴

Although Nissen did not panic, or leave India until 1960, his feelings of 'shock' are revealing of a widespread sense of disbelief amongst the domiciled that the British would withdraw so definitively and abruptly from India.

Anthony pushed the message that flight was cowardice and published letters in the *Review* which he claimed to have been sent by émigrés who had regretted their choice to leave India:

Yes, we belonged to that lowest category of Anglo-Indian Family – once. The type that through sheer cowardice, deserts homeland, community, friends, and leaves for a foreign land, popularly known as “that little home in the west”... We found that wretched little home in the west not quite what we expected it to be... Our friends had warned us. Oh! but we are the smart ones! We knew all about it! We were different and original! You should see us now. Hear my Dad talk... Just one of the many examples of a Prodigal Anglo-Indian family. Savings of a lifetime gone, with nothing to fall back on but a meagre pension. I remember those days of eternal rushing about, asking for advice... We had made up our minds to go away, and our real purpose was to show our friends how clever we were... The British had just

⁸¹³ Mss Eur R189.

⁸¹⁴ *Ibid.*

“packed in”, the usual rumours were circulating. We were going while the going was good... We were cowards once, now we are prodigals. Pride gone, money gone... We were an Anglo-Indian family once. Now we are referred to as – “THAT ANGLO-INDIAN FAMILY” – pray God that it never happens to you...⁸¹⁵

This biblical theme of the prodigal son, a parable with which Anglo-Indians would be familiar, surfaced repeatedly. Another letter from a distressed Anglo-Indian woman described her sorrowful life in England, desperate desire to return to India, and hopes that the Association might be able to assist her:

We were all very happy in India, and when my husband returned from the Burma Campaign he was repatriated. My son and I came as military personnel, and my mother got her passage due to the fact that her only brother was in the army... We have been in England a month short of 3 years and I have tried to do my duty as a British Housewife but I cannot bear any part of life in England, the work, the absolute starvation, and terrible climate – I am ill with it and feel I shall really go mad with it all, if I have to live here much longer. I long for the glorious sun-shine of India and for the warmth of the friendship of the people to whom I belong, as compared with the cold aloofness of the English people. The past 3 years have been a night mare to me. I have had no home until 6 months ago and have even lived in an air raid shelter. I have shed many bitter tears and begged my husband to return to India... but he does not approve of life in India... I beg of you, Sir, is there any way that you can help us through the Anglo-Indian Association to get back. I am willing to work my passage in any capacity, house maid, governess, musical entertainer, anything, I have many friends and many good connections in India and I know I could get work if I once got to India.⁸¹⁶

Those arriving in England faced rationing and food that was surprisingly unfamiliar and bland (given that what they thought were English dishes which they cooked in India were highly spiced Anglo-Indian versions). If they had previously felt identification with England, the reality could be quite alien. The letter’s themes of a miserable climate, the food, the ‘cold aloofness’ of the English and the drudgery of having to do one’s own housework bereft of servants also appear prominently in Blunt’s study of Anglo-Indian

⁸¹⁵ *Anglo-Indian Review* (June, 1947), 21.

⁸¹⁶ *Anglo-Indian Review* (July, 1947), 17.

migrant women's experience in Britain. The *Review* also made dire warnings about Australia, where the climate was more amenable to Anglo-Indians wishing to migrate:

While in Bombay... Mr. Anthony was informed that out of about 600 Anglo-Indians who had left for Australia about 300 or more had already returned... The only argument which seems to convince would-be emigres is bitter experience. Those who have lived in a world of illusion and have suffered from the escapist complexes vis-à-vis this country and our community have refused to listen to argument or to face facts showing that this is the only country which will accept Anglo-Indians. An increasing number of members of the Community are returning from England, whose economy is becoming more and more desperate, or from Australia with its avowed White Australia Policy.⁸¹⁷

One editorial entitled 'Stop This Emigration Nonsense; Real Opportunities For the First Time' attempted to push the view that Anglo-Indian prospects were far better in India, and disparagingly mentioned the scheme which was at times suggested for a mass exodus to Brazil:

These Anglo-Indians the overwhelming majority of whom have never been outside of the country, talk glibly of emigrating to England or Australia or even Brazil... They forget that 2/3rds of the Community is coloured. That even the lime-complexioned Anglo-Indian is classified as a black man even in England... What the Anglo-Indian can do in Australia, with [sic] its avowed White Australia Policy, can better be imagined than described. Persons who emigrate, in the first flush of a new adventure, write, glowing letters of the wonderful conditions... One or two years of hard realities bring them down to earth and inevitably back to India... Anglo-Indians with good prospects... have resigned and gone to England or Australia. They are now writing to the Railway Administration begging even for re-employment, as they cannot be reinstated. They have lost their prospects, and yet they are quite willing to get back and start afresh on the Railways. Some unbalanced people have talked of Brazil, a country about which the Community knows nothing, a country which every now and then throws a Coup d'état, and where the language is a foreign one.⁸¹⁸

⁸¹⁷ *Anglo-Indian Review* (October, 1947), 2.

⁸¹⁸ *Anglo-Indian Review* (November, 1947), 1-2.

The editorial heralded Independence as setting Anglo-Indians free ‘from the British social and economic system which treated him like a pariah and which never allowed him to achieve any position of real eminence.’⁸¹⁹ Arguing that within two months of independence Anglo-Indians were ‘being given positions which they never held in 200 years’, and that although there would inevitably ‘be one or two cases of discrimination here and there’ towards Anglo-Indians it would no longer be ‘the studied discrimination of deliberate British Policy.’⁸²⁰ The new achievements and opportunities were described:

The Army and the Air Force have a very high percentage of Anglo-Indian officers. Litchfield, a 35 year old Anglo-Indian, has just been made a permanent Brigadier. Anglo-Indians are being selected for key positions in the Armed forces such has never happened before... Elsewhere Anglo-Indians are getting accelerated promotion... Shirley Forrester... is now Secretary to the Governor of the C.P... Recently over 20 Anglo-Indians were selected for the Central Administrative Service... The Railways are, to day, crying out for Anglo-Indians. Some Railways like the E.I.R. have lost 60% of their Loco staff, with the exodus of the Muslims. No Anglo-Indian, to day, under the age of 30 years, however poorly educated, needs to be unemployed... Through the Association Employment Bureau we are tapping increasing avenues of lucrative employment. Indian firms are today welcoming Anglo-Indians, particularly in the Air lines.⁸²¹

Continued reserved quotas in the Railways was one of the concessions, along with three seats in the Constituent Assembly, which Anthony achieved through his strategy of embracing Indian nationalism and his appeals to the Congress Party. The editorial argued that the ‘British who owed to us a great deal gave us nothing, while Congress who owed us nothing have given us a great deal... the Cabinet Mission, refused the Community one seat... Mr. Anthony approached the Congress leaders for representation... [and] was granted 3 seats in the Constituent Assembly... These British mountbanks refused a paltry 100,000 acres of land... [requested by] Gidney, and repeated by Mr. Antony... in

⁸¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 3.

⁸²⁰ *Ibid.*

⁸²¹ [Original text used extensive bold formatting, which has been removed] *Ibid.*

recognition of the War services of the Anglo-Indians.’⁸²² In the formulation of the Indian Constitution Anthony achieved lasting concessions: ‘In the July Review I referred to the final acceptance of Articles 297 and 298. These articles guarantee continuance of quotas in the Railways, Telegraphs and Customs and, above all, the continuance of our educational grants.

On the 25th August, the Constituent Assembly finally accepted the two remaining provisions relating to Anglo-Indians, namely articles 293 and 295.’⁸²³ Article 293 gave the Indian President the power to nominate up to two Anglo-Indian representatives to the Lok Sabha, and article 295 gave State Governors the power to nominate Anglo-Indian representatives to State Assemblies where the community was not otherwise represented. Anthony emphasised that Anglo-Indians had not been ‘entitled to a single seat at the Centre or in the Provinces’ based upon their numerical strength in the 1941 Census.⁸²⁴ Anthony quoted the ‘Premier Kher of Bombay’ (who we previously encountered arousing the ire of Anglo-Indian traditionalists) as saying that ‘if the Anglo-Indians would only pause and analyse conditions they would realise that they occupy a position of respect which should enable them to take their place as the Brahmins of the new India.’⁸²⁵ Anthony reassured Anglo-Indians that their schools as private institutions were safe from any interference and would continue to receive grants, while article 298 would ensure that if any government school had 40% or more of its students as Anglo-Indians they would be able to demand instruction in English.

⁸²² *Ibid.*

⁸²³ *Anglo-Indian Review* (September, 1949), 9.

⁸²⁴ *Ibid.*

⁸²⁵ *Ibid.*, 10.

Still these achievements did not halt the emigration of many Anglo-Indians who had the means to leave. In an interview in 1964 Anthony estimated that by that point ‘between 100,000 and 150,000’ had left India, although the interviewer judged this number to be ‘undoubtedly too large’.⁸²⁶ Blunt who has written on Anglo-Indian migrants to Britain and Australia asserts that ‘an estimated one-third of Anglo-Indians had emigrated by the 1970s, mainly to Britain, Canada and Australia. Many Anglo-Indians imagined themselves to be travelling home, either to Britain or to white dominions of the former British Empire.’⁸²⁷ Anthony found it necessary in September 1949 to warn Anglo-Indians not to register as British Nationals under the British Nationality Act which was ‘not intended for Anglo-Indians’ and would cause them to lose ‘their Indian Citizenship... [and] without doubt, be expelled from any employment they are holding under Government.’⁸²⁸ In the ‘October/November’ issue that followed an article by ‘Geo. P. V. Miller’ appeared under the heading ‘Anglo-Indian “Exodus” Causing Anxiety; Insidious Propaganda Condemned’ which warned that prominent and well placed Anglo-Indians were responsible for creating panic:

The exodus of Anglo-Indians who have for several decades – nay generations – lived in India to England, Australia, Canada etc., is causing anxiety to the community who have decided to identify themselves with Free India... almost to the extent of creating a defeatist mentality in the community... due to insidious propaganda, such as, “India is no place for Anglo-Indians and we will not be treated well”, “How can Anglo-Indians adapt themselves to Indian conditions”, “We are looked upon with suspicion” etc., which those who have left or contemplate leaving “Home” carry on. Such statements coming as they do from people well placed in life and in certain cases from people who, at one time or the other, were supposed leaders of the community... The exodus of a certain section of Anglo-Indians... is inevitable. The exodus was visualized so far back as 1934 when India... had no idea that 13 years hence – 1947 – she would gain her objective... Taken from a long range point of view it augers well for the future of the community that it is drained,

⁸²⁶ R. Wright, & S. Wright, “The Anglo-Indian Community in Contemporary India”, *eScholarShare@Drake* (1971), 3, [online] available at

<http://escholarshare.drake.edu/bitstream/handle/2092/237/Wright%23237.pdf?sequence=1>

⁸²⁷ Blunt, ‘Land of our Mothers’, 69.

⁸²⁸ *Anglo-Indian Review* (September, 1949), 2.

may purged, of an element whose roots, as sons and daughters of the soil, are not embedded in Indian soil.⁸²⁹

Miller repeated the point that though the British ‘brought the community into existence and owed so much to it, they treated it in a niggardly manner... [While] Indian leaders, despite the community’s past history by virtue of which there was no special reason to treat it with any affection, went out of their way to treat the community with generosity far beyond the community’s expectations.’⁸³⁰ Miller also dealt with the subject of Anglo-Indians registering themselves as ‘British subjects’, weakening ‘the numerical strength of the community’, while continuing in the ‘usurpation of claims and privileges to which they are not legitimately entitled’ having renounced their status as Anglo-Indians.⁸³¹ Miller even charged the ‘British authorities’ with carrying out ‘a gross piece of injustice by driving a wedge into the community and creating a canker which would be difficult to remedy. Though at the moment its repercussions may be unnoticeable in time to come there is every reason to believe that it will be disastrous to the community by undoing all that is now being done to being about a camaraderie between the Anglo-Indians and the other communities in the land. It is also likely to revive the fast-ebbing suspicion and hostility.’⁸³²

In his 1949 AGM speech Anthony summarised Anglo-Indian achievements in the Constituent Assembly and the problems going forward. Anthony described how during the drafting of the constitution there had been some danger arising from ‘leaders of certain

⁸²⁹ *Anglo-Indian Review* (October/November, 1949), 6-7.

⁸³⁰ *Ibid.*, 8.

⁸³¹ *Ibid.*, 7.

⁸³² *Ibid.*

minority communities [who] felt that perhaps they would get more by pursuing the pre-independence tactics of militant communalism... [which] gave rise to a tremendous backwash of antipathy towards the claims of the minorities' which led to the withdrawal of most of the safeguards and reservations which had been planned for the minorities, apart from those of the Scheduled Castes whose economic and social position was perceived to be most vulnerable.⁸³³ Anthony noted that it had been 'often argued that, although small, the Anglo-Indian community... [was] the most economically advanced community in the country', however with the support of Nehru and Vallabhbhai Patel Anthony had been able to preserve the articles benefiting the Anglo-Indian community.⁸³⁴ Anthony canvassed in the Constituent Assembly 'and particularly as a result of support from Sardar Patel, [was able] to get the Congress Party to induce its members to withdraw all its amendments' aimed at whittling down the substance of the articles.⁸³⁵ Anthony argued that the 'psychological problem':

...OF ANXIETY... [is] EASILY OUR FIRST AND GREATEST PROBLEM TODAY... There was a time when I used sledge-hammer methods, because at that time sledge-hammer methods were indicated. Before Independence, when I preached nationalism to the community, I told those who did not feel that they were Indians, that they should leave the country... To my mind, the anxiety of a number of Anglo-Indians emanates from JUST SHEER IGNORANCE... The other day I got a letter from the Principal of a school asking me whether from next year could he expect any grant from Government... I wrote back and asked him, don't you read the papers? You don't get the Review perhaps... Haven't you read that Anglo-Indian education has been guaranteed. He was not aware of it... A FRIEND OF MINE... WAS DISCUSSING THE MATTER AT THE ANGLO-INDIAN CLUB AT DELHI WITH CERTAIN MEMBERS OF OUR GOVERNIG [sic] BODY. THEY WERE EXPRESSING GRAVE DOUBTS AS TO MY ABILITY TO GET THESE GUARANTEES FINALISED. A MEMBER SAID, DON'T YOU READ THE PAPERS? MR. ANTHONY GOT THESE FINALISED ONE WEEK BACK!!! This is the kind of thing that we are up against.⁸³⁶ [author's formatting]

⁸³³ *Anglo-Indian Review* (December, 1949), 14.

⁸³⁴ *Ibid.*, 15.

⁸³⁵ *Ibid.*

⁸³⁶ *Ibid.*, 15-16.

Anthony gave examples of ‘railway men’ he had recently spoken to who had believed their schools might be closed down the following year, and that all schools would henceforth have to teach in Hindi.⁸³⁷ Anthony also pointed out that while Anglo-Indians on the railways were often now receiving promotion either faster or to higher grades of service than had been usual or even possible under the British, they still claimed ‘I have no future in India. I will be discriminated against...’⁸³⁸ The issue of gender resurfaced as Anthony asked how:

...this psychological problem... is aggravated by the Anglo-Indian woman, who refuses to argue with her husband, who just tells him that, “For the sake of the education of your children you must leave the country.[”] The children may be 2 or 3 years old but his wife says to him, in season and out of season: For the sake of the children’s education you must leave the country... The other day... a gentleman from Bombay... told me, I do not want to leave the country – I am a dark man, I have a good job. Where am I to go? Where will I be accepted? I explained the position to him and he said “I will tell my wife, if it becomes necessary we shall have to get a divorce”[.] This is a problem which faces so many of our Anglo-Indian men and women in their homes today... This continuous process of badgering by their wives and daughters going on. Wives are asking, who is your daughter going to marry? I say to the wives, your daughter will probably marry very much better than you did; you married a railway subordinate; your daughter will probably marry an Anglo-Indian officer.⁸³⁹

Anthony’s gendered and stereotyped caricature of the ‘badgering’ woman highlights the extent of Anglo-Indian women’s agency within marital relationships, many were clearly at the centre of the crucial decision to emigrate, and they made these choices for cogent strategic reasons – their perception of their children’s future, the issue of education and thinking about who their children would marry if they stayed (the possibility of hypergamy – within the framework of the socio-racial hierarchy they had grown up in as well as in purely economic terms – presumably very much in mind if they favoured

⁸³⁷ *Ibid.*, 16.

⁸³⁸ *Ibid.*

⁸³⁹ [Extensive use of formatting in original source have been removed] *Ibid.*, 16-18.

migration to England or a white dominion). Caplan's anthropological work on Anglo-Indians in post-independence India may also suggest that these women possessed more foresight on the question of their daughter's marriage prospects than Anthony, as Caplan makes a strong argument that Anglo-Indian men found it harder to adapt to the economic changes that were to come in post-independence India, while Anglo-Indian women adapted more readily to employment in the private sector (as secretaries, shop assistants, hotel workers, flight attendants and in communications), becoming primary breadwinners and holding Anglo-Indian families together.⁸⁴⁰

Referring back to the gendered, but real, fears for the safety of Anglo-Indian we found earlier during the Quit India movement, Anthony sought to deny that events of this kind had taken place during more recent outbursts of violence:

During the September killings in Delhi panic-stricken, backboneless, so called Anglo-Indian men came to me saying, "When is the Anglo-Indians' turn coming when women's throats be cut?[""] And they seemed to be disappointed than no Anglo-Indian women had their throats cut and... that Anglo-Indians were... the only people to go about to their work without being molested... There is this peculiar feeling that an Anglo-Indian will never get fairplay – that he will never get justice – that he will never get equality of opportunity. Some have been in the throes of these inhibitions and want all these fears to be realised some want to discriminated against – some want Anglo-Indians throats to be cut so that they will be able to say "All that Mr Anthony have [sic] told us is wrong; we are not accepted in this country; the people want to get rid of us.[""]⁸⁴¹

Anthony deployed a gendered language of masculine and feminine stereotypes in order to shame Anglo-Indian men into embracing his message, reflecting his patriarchal assumptions in telling Anglo-Indians not to 'play the role of nervous, panicky, old women,

⁸⁴⁰ Caplan, *Children of Colonialism*.

⁸⁴¹ *Anglo-Indian Review* (December, 1949), 18.

which is the role which has been played, I am sorry to say, by most of our so called leaders.⁸⁴² Anthony attacked former ‘colleagues’ who were spreading the message that Anglo-Indians could have no future in India, saying that he felt betrayed, and that no one contemplating leaving India should run for office within the Association.⁸⁴³

As an individual Anthony argued, anyone had the right to emigrate and make their home wherever they wished, but those who were or had been in positions of leadership should not fan the flames of Anglo-Indian anxiety. Anthony also returned to the topic of registration under the British Nationality Act, telling his audience that dual (Indian and British) nationality was not legally possible, that those who registered could lose their jobs, and that those who might leave in the future need not register as there were no restrictions on them travelling to England in the future and applying ‘for British nationality after one year’s residence there’.⁸⁴⁴ Still Anthony warned Anglo-Indians not to ‘give up lucrative employment’ in India to face uncertain prospects and very real discrimination abroad.⁸⁴⁵ Anthony bemoaned that so often it was only the positive accounts (except for readers of the *Review*) that were being reported, and described the quirks of the Anglo-Indian mindset:

...with what elan you get Anglo-Indian announcements over All India Radio wishing their friends and relatives goodbye as they are proceeding to the U.K[.] They even put it in the... leading papers. But when they come back do they talk about it to anybody? Nobody ever mentions. Large numbers of Anglo-Indians are returning, some of them demure – they sneak about in different parts of the country ashamed to tell people of their experience. When they were leaving the country they thought they were doing something laudables, [sic] but when they come back realising their mistake, realising that in England they were nothing but black men, that they were only Indians – at least here you are an Anglo-Indian – there nobody

⁸⁴² *Ibid.*, 20.

⁸⁴³ *Ibid.*, 17.

⁸⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

⁸⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 19.

knows who an Anglo-Indian is... and if the children are a little on the lighter side than their darker parents then those children will at one time or other repudiate their darker parents... One of our branch Secretaries went to England, he was a dark man, he entered a shop for a hair cut, and was told "we do not cut the hair of coloured men in this saloon."... This man rose to a good position in India and he went to England resigning a job the like of which he will never see again. The other day two friends of mine were over at my place, very dark people, who had been on a tour of Australia... he told me that he and his wife were never mistaken for Indians, but were taken for Samoans. He seemed glad... It is a peculiar psychology. Some persons may be mistaken for anything but if they are not regarded as Indian they feel it is a matter for great pride... We still believe that if we go abroad we will be accepted by our kinsmen across the seas. It is a tragic thing.⁸⁴⁶

The social construction of racial boundaries in Britain and the white Dominions, as in the history of the United States, set mixed race people (unless very fair and able to successfully pass as white) in the coloured camp. Still Anthony was betraying his own interesting psychology, or at least understanding of the motivations of his fellow Anglo-Indians, when he implied that it was better to retain a mixed race status and be recognised as partially European or British by being an Anglo-Indian than to be considered completely Indian by the ignorant and prejudiced Britons and Australians they were likely to encounter. Even as he condemned preferring to be mistaken for being a Samoan, Anthony still maintained that it was better to be an Anglo-Indian than simply an Indian (which he might have justified as communal pride).

Anglo-Indian identity, assertions about ancestry and levels of identification with Britain and India were all highly contested within the community. The leadership of the

⁸⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 20.

Association may be taken as consistently ahead of the bulk of the community in its levels of identification with India. Under Gidney a dual identity with Britain as Fatherland and India as Motherland was put forward, and even this formulation by a man who believed in an Imperial India and clearly remained politically loyal to Britain while publically supporting Indian home rule within the empire, proved contentious. Frank Anthony went further, attempting to sever Anglo-Indians' psychological ties to Britain, to make the community a truly Indian national minority entitled culturally to preserve its language and European customs (even asserting that as the first language of a recognized Indian minority English was an Indian language). Anthony's embrace of Indian nationalism was rejected by many prominent and well-off Anglo-Indians, who for the most part joined in a series of waves of emigration around the time of independence and the first few decades after independence. Anglo-Indian anxieties, even panic, were acute, but for those who could not afford to leave or who chose to stay Anthony provided a proscription which offered hope for a secure future as a recognized and protected minority within India.

We have seen that emigration was not a new strategy, that British philanthropists such as Graham had been sponsoring and arranging the emigration of suitably prepared Anglo-Indian youths to New Zealand to work as artisanal craftsmen or agricultural workers. Mass emigration was rejected as an answer to the Anglo-Indian question by the Secretary of State for India, Lord Birkenhead, in his response to the 1925 deputation, who made it clear when he met with Anglo-Indian leaders that the future of the community was within India as statutory Indians. Given this response the overarching strategy of Anglo-Indian leaders remained within the framework of creating a political Indian minority community and securing to the community rights, privileges and representation on that basis.

However, we have seen that inside and outside of the Association alternative strategies (colonisation, emigration, or the two combined) continued to be advocated and pursued. Gidney cautiously supported colonisation and emigration at various times, particularly after McCluskie's death. Gidney only criticized emigration if it were to be on sufferance, a partial emigration to countries like Australia and New Zealand which tolerated a colour bar on large proportions of the community. It has been argued that Gidney looked to the British in hopes that they would provide a comprehensive solution to Anglo-Indians' situation, he seemed amenable to pursue those avenues which the British appeared likely to accept, and that he would have been eager for the British to propose and support (financially or logistically) a mass emigration of Anglo-Indians to a suitable destination (Britain, a white dominion, or even the Andamans), and failing that desired a kind of severance package consisting of large grants in land or finance towards an Anglo-Indian colony or educational institutions in India. Gidney's hopes were unrealised at his death in 1942.

Anthony felt that Gidney had been cruelly let down by the British, and saw the Cripps mission message to the community as confirming that the British could not and would not do anything to safeguard or fight for the future of the community. In the fast changing political climate, Anthony began to see the writing on the wall and worried that buoyed up by their high levels of wartime employment his fellow Anglo-Indians were not awake to the coming danger. Anthony began his leadership with a sharp reorientation towards Indian nationalism, and increasingly away from identification with Britain. Soon Anglo-Indians were feeling less complacent; anxiety about the prospect of a Hindu Raj became

widespread. In this chapter we have seen how Anthony's message contended with those advocating individual or mass emigration. In the context of Anthony's strategy for the collective survival of the community within India, emigration was a clear threat, it would denude the community of many of its most prosperous and prominent members further impoverishing those who by choice or necessity remained behind and weakening the numerical strength of the community which was so essential to its political bargaining power as an Indian minority (as well as ultimately perhaps challenging its demographic vitality).

Anthony's forceful rejection of emigration through the pages of the *Review* included deploying accounts of 'prodigal sons', families and individuals who had emigrated, had disappointing and horrible experiences and wished to return to India at any cost even to be reemployed in more junior positions than they had left. Anthony also employed a gendered language to attack the women of the community for their active role in promoting emigration (which many not unreasonably felt was in the best interests of their children), and to rhetorically emasculate and shame Anglo-Indian men who were in favour of emigration.

In the context of the debate over whether to quit India or truly embrace it as home, interesting facets of Anglo-Indian identity, attitudes to colour, and fears have come to light. Anthony commented on how Anglo-Indians who went to Britain and Australia were happy to be mistaken for Mexicans or Samoans, as long as they were not mistaken for Indians. Anthony warned Anglo-Indians that in Britain many of them would be seen

simply as black, coloured or Indian, and that to be recognised as an Anglo-Indian in India was a preferable socio-racial status affording more prestige than this – he may have been reflecting his own communal pride, prejudices or merely betraying his understanding of the psychology of his community, but Anthony felt compelled to make the point that Anglo-Indians would continue to occupy a more favourable position in the socio-racial hierarchy of India (put simply would command more respect), than they could hope to achieve in Britain or Australia. Anthony noted too that light skinned children in these new countries often came to shun their darker parents, this was however, something many Anglo-Indian mothers might hope for, if not for themselves at least for their children, an escape into whiteness and belonging in a country with which they felt ties of kinship and culture (whether or not these ties would be recognised or reciprocated). For those who embraced Anthony’s message, it provided hope, and Anthony was able to achieve better terms for Anglo-Indians’ future, as an Indian political minority in India, from the leaders of the Congress Party, than even he had hoped for.

Conclusion

In 1911, a mixed race, English speaking, group of European and Indian extraction won official recognition in the Indian Census of their desired designation as ‘Anglo-Indians’, appropriating a term which had previously denoted and in some circles continued to denote Britons settled or long resident in India. Anglo-Indians had previously been referred to by a variety of other names perceived by themselves and others to be pejorative to varying degrees including Eurasians, half-castes, Indo-Britons, and East Indians. Anglo-Indians overlapped with another group known as Domiciled Europeans (that is Europeans of Indian domicile) who had settled permanently in India and claimed to be of unmixed European extraction. Collectively Anglo-Indians and Domiciled Europeans were known as ‘country borns’ or the ‘domiciled community’, thought by the authorities of the British Raj and the transient British population to share a common economic existence that made them essentially one conjoined social class. Between the categories of Indian Christians, Anglo-Indians and Domiciled Europeans there was significant blurring of boundaries and high degrees of racial passing.

Eurasians or Anglo-Indians are difficult to access in the colonial archive. The persisting dual meaning of the term Anglo-Indians makes locating them in historical sources and contemporary scholarship problematic. Additionally Anglo-Indian family and personal names are British or European and much source material does not explicitly identify those of mixed race. The prevalence of racial passing amongst Anglo-Indians also serves to obscure their presence – in migrating, many Anglo-Indians chose to disappear in countries

like Britain and Australia, deliberately burying as much of their past as possible. Christopher Hawes referred to Anglo-Indians as a 'reluctant community',⁸⁴⁷ and the reluctance of many Anglo-Indians to accept their status as mixed race was a product of their subordination and ostracism within the Raj's socio-racial hierarchy. British racism towards Anglo-Indians was inextricably bound up with classism, and both conspired to create boundaries between white and non-white which, as can be seen from the divergent experiences of mixed race people in other colonial settings, were not inevitable. The creolized Mestizo nations of Spanish America illustrate how hierarchical gradations of class and colour could exist without such formalized attempts to police an artificial binary 'colour line'.

Comparing the history of mixed race peoples in India with those of other European colonies, makes the significance of British imperial policies in determining the nature of the colonial impact on India more apparent. Catholicism, with its emphasis on conversion and the acquisition of souls, shaped a very different attitude towards race and miscegenation in Iberian imperial possessions. The Spanish in the Americas launched wholesale conquest, conversion and colonization efforts that created highly racially mixed Mestizo societies, with far more elaborate hierarchies of colour and class, than were to be found in Protestant British North America. The Portuguese too, though their settlements (excepting Brazil, which became one of the most racially mixed societies in the world, and which despite the language barrier was suggested by a few Anglo-Indians as site to which they could migrate *en masse*) tended to be smaller and based on

⁸⁴⁷ D'cruz, 'Christopher Hawes in Conversation'.

strategically located trading posts with little penetration into the interior, favoured conversion and racially mixed marriages to cement their far more limited presence.

The Indo-Portuguese populations in locations like Madras formed the earliest parts of India's mixed race population and provided sexual partners to soldiers of the East India Company in Fort St. George (initially encouraged by the Company). Louisiana Creoles⁸⁴⁸ and Franco-Canadian Métis further support the idea of a 'more liberal attitude' among Catholics 'toward people of mixed blood'.⁸⁴⁹ The Dutch too, though Protestant, were more consistently favourable towards miscegenation in their colonial possessions.⁸⁵⁰ The sociologist Christopher Bagley argued that for 'Dutchmen, to have heirs who were of mixed European and Asian race was an honourable, and a desirable thing. For the Englishman such an event was covered with shame and contempt... [According to figures from 1930 and 1931] taking population into account, there were nearly ten times as many census-defined Eurasians in the Dutch Indies as there were in British India and Burma.'⁸⁵¹

Dutch Eurasians held the same legal status as Europeans (which is what Anglo-Indians had been asking for since the Rickett's petition to Parliament in 1830). Those of complete or partial European ancestry (the equivalent of Domiciled Europeans and Anglo-Indians respectively) were known as *Indische Nederlander* which might be translated as Indies Dutchman, while socially *Indo* referred to those of mixed race and *Totok* (a Javanese word

⁸⁴⁸ Mixing with native Americans was tolerated, while interracial sex with free or enslaved blacks was made illegal in the 1724 *Code Noir*: see J. Spear, 'Colonial Intimacies: Legislating Sex in French Louisiana', *The William and Mary Quarterly*, Third Series, 60: 1, Sexuality in Early America (Jan., 2003), 75-98.

⁸⁴⁹ E. Hedin, 'The Anglo-Indian Community', *American Journal of Sociology*, 40:2 (Sep., 1934), 171.

⁸⁵⁰ See J. Taylor, *The Social World of Batavia: European and Eurasian in Dutch Asia* (Madison WI, 1983).

⁸⁵¹ C. Bagley, *The Dutch Plural Society: A Comparative Study in Race Relations* (Oxford, 1973), 43.

for pure) to those who were exclusively Dutch. Yet there was, comparatively speaking, little attempt to prevent intermarriage or legally subordinate the mixed race group into an entirely separate category of existence, or to exclude them entirely from Dutchness. However, in the context of decided British opposition to mass Anglo-Indian emigration, Birkenhead's tough message, that Anglo-Indians should achieve 'an integral part in the economy and society of the country in which they live',⁸⁵² had some merits when contrasted with the difficulties created for Dutch-Indonesian Eurasians by the Dutch Government's mixed messages of harnessing Eurasian support during military colonial suppression actions in 1948-1949, practically facilitating their retention of Dutch nationality whilst discouraging their emigration to the Netherlands, which problematized their relations with nationalists and the Indonesian state, eventually triggering mass emigrations to the Netherlands.⁸⁵³

Kenneth Ballhatchet has argued that the Burghers in Ceylon 'enjoyed a much better position... [than Anglo-Indians as] British rule only began there in 1796, after almost three centuries of Portuguese and Dutch rule, and the Dutch were particularly tolerant of intermarriage.'⁸⁵⁴ This is not to assert that socio-racial hierarchies did not exist in other colonial settings, merely that these took different forms, with profound consequences for the growth and experiences of mixed race groups and race relations more generally. The anthropologist Peter Wade notes that in contrast to the very definite racial categories in the United States which allowed Jim Crow laws to operate, in contemporary Latin America

⁸⁵² Cited in *Anglo-Indian Review*, Supplement (September, 1928), i.

⁸⁵³ See W. Wertheim, 'The Indo-European Problem in Indonesia', *Pacific Affairs*, 20:3 (Sep., 1947), 290-298, and P. van der Veur, 'The Eurasians of Indonesia: Castaways of Colonialism', *Pacific Affairs*, 27:2 (Jun., 1954), 124-137.

⁸⁵⁴ Ballhatchet, *Race, Sex and Class*, 96.

‘There is often not a clear socio-racial hierarchy.’⁸⁵⁵ The hierarchy exists, with whiteness and blackness at its apex and nadir respectively, but with a much greater variety of terms to describe gradations of colour (not usually purporting, like the Caribbean terms ‘quadroon’ and ‘octoroon’, to precisely describe degrees of admixture), and a fluidity of interpretation in which other markers of class status can trump complexion and lead an observer to elevate the colour classification they accord to a subject within the hierarchical spectrum. From early in the 20th Century some Latin American countries celebrated their Mestizo status in contrast to the colour line of the United States.⁸⁵⁶

The numerically small size of the Anglo-Indian community, ‘no more than half a million people at Independence’,⁸⁵⁷ helps to explain the paucity of historical scholarship on Anglo-Indians. However, the size of the mixed race population in India also tells us much about changing British attitudes towards miscegenation. Attitudes towards miscegenation and its offspring on the part of the colonizing power, of those at the metropole, and of those who went out to the colonies, and its varying prevalence across time, differed according to the particular colonial power and colony involved, with profound consequences for the impact colonial rule would have in different settings. The extent of permanent settlement by colonists being the only factor that was more significant than attitudes towards and occurrence of miscegenation in shaping colonial societies. Large scale migrations and intentional mass settlement in the so called ‘white dominions’ of Australia, New Zealand and Canada placed them in an entirely different camp in the eyes of the imperial architects than possessions like India which were perceived to be

⁸⁵⁵ P. Wade, ‘Race in Latin America’, in D. Poole (ed.), *A Companion to Latin American Anthropology* (New York, 2008), 184.

⁸⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 181.

⁸⁵⁷ Blunt, ‘Land of our Mothers’, 53.

unsuitable for significant European settlement. Official policy generally opposed such settlement, and favoured the deportation of ‘poor whites’ who could show no legitimate purpose (i.e. employment) for their presence. South Africa constituted an intermediate case between the two kinds of British imperial possession.

That India was defined as a non-settlement colony belies the significant number of Europeans who did settle in India, resulting in mixed race offspring who could less easily be deported to a ‘home’ they had never known, and forming the basis of a significant multigenerational settled minority buttressing the British presence. Relatively small though it might have been, examining the nature of the ‘domiciled community’ (and its mixed race component) is essential to our full comprehension of the Raj’s socio-racial hierarchy. This involved attempts to create and police boundaries of race and colour as well as categorise and enumerate the religious, ethnic and caste differences which colonial administrators perceived in essentialist terms to characterize the supposedly unchanging Indian indigenous society they sought to rule over. The Raj’s racial ideologies can hardly be understood without examining miscegenation and racially mixed people. The fact that the ‘domiciled community’, and its mixed race component was limited in size was largely the result of deliberate imperial policies that sought to shape and police any permanent presence of Europeans in India and (with less success) limit miscegenation.

The early British presence in India characterized by William Dalrymple’s *White Mughals*,⁸⁵⁸ was one with a significant degree of miscegenation – the period of the

⁸⁵⁸ W. Dalrymple, *White Mughals: Love & Betrayal in Eighteenth Century India* (London, 2002).

ubiquitous Indian *bibi*. This gave way to a 19th Century intolerance of miscegenation, greatly increased by the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869 and the consequent arrival of vastly greater numbers of European women (the so called fishing fleets, looking for eligible husbands). The move towards creating a white colonial domesticity among the transient British population in India, the desire to separate and erect barriers of class and colour between themselves, Indian communities and the 'domiciled community' would define the Raj's socio-racial hierarchy. Increasingly racialised understandings of difference would come to be a crucial prop in justifying imperial rule, as miscegenation became taboo, and the existence of both 'poor whites' and mixed race people of European descent came to be viewed as an embarrassment to British racial prestige and therefore a threat to British rule. Thus the fact they existed, British attitudes and policies towards them, as well as the fact there were not more of them, all make the Anglo-Indian experience crucial to understanding the nature of the Raj.

Counterfactually it is not difficult to argue that had another European colonial power succeeded in dominating any substantial portion of South Asia a very different colonial society would have emerged, not merely in its institutional and economic development, but more profoundly in terms of the probable extent of Christianisation, European settlement, and miscegenation. Indeed Goa provides such an example writ small, although the total European presence there was more limited than would probably have been the case had, for example, the French established and maintained a large South Asian colony into the 20th Century.

Two recent works fascinatingly complement one another by exploring highly unusual cases involving mixed race subjects from India at opposite ends of the social spectrum. These contribute greatly to our understanding of the complexity and diversity of the 19th Century context from which the Anglo-Indians of the present study emerged, but neither case should be taken as characteristic of the majority experience of Indian mixed race populations. Michael Fisher's recent study explores the life of the 'first Asian and only the second non-White to be elected to Parliament' (in 1841), David Ochterlony Dyce Sombre (1808-1851): a man of mixed race background who obtained fabulous wealth (through his adoption by the equally enigmatic Indian Catholic, Begum Sombre, ruler of Sardhana).⁸⁵⁹ Dyce Sombre married into the English aristocracy, was subsequently turned into a legal lunatic in England through the efforts of his in-laws, and escaping to the continent remained legally sane outside of the British empire while gaining more control of his vast fortune and repeatedly but vainly attempting to overturn his status as a Chancery lunatic.

Fisher's study furnishes great insight into a history of global connections through the lens of a singularly well-travelled individual, who was himself, like later mixed race people from India, an embodiment of the transnational. Dyce Sombre originated from a milieu in which Indian princes hired and often lavishly rewarded European mercenaries in order to acquire their technological and organisational military skills – such individuals were drawn from a wider range of European countries, including Scandinavians, Italians, Germans and others. Dyce Sombre's 'diverse ancestry included a notorious German Catholic and an obscure French Catholic mercenary, a Scots Presbyterian subaltern who

⁸⁵⁹ Fisher, *The Inordinately Strange Life of Dyce Sombre*, 1.

died young, and their secluded Indian Muslim or Hindu female partners'.⁸⁶⁰ Many of these men fathered numerous children with Indian women, some entered formal marriages (though seldom monogamously) with Hindu or Muslim women of high birth, occasionally arranged by the rulers or courtiers of the Indian states which employed them. Dyce Sombre was a friend of other prominent mixed race families in India such as the Skinners. Chandra Mallampalli argues that among the East Indians (an early term for Eurasians) in India there were significant differences of 'class', at 'the upper end of the spectrum were unions between East Indian or European officials and Indian women from affluent families. These would have included James Skinner and Hyder Hearsay, who married into reputed Muslim or Rajput families and made names for themselves by serving the colonial army. On the lower end, however, were those of European soldiers during the French wars (1792-1815) who had temporary unions to suit their itinerant lifestyle. These were usually with *pariahs* [untouchables] and other members of the lower social classes.'⁸⁶¹

Mallampalli's fascinating recent work tackles the other end of the socio-racial spectrum of Anglo-Indian life. While Fisher dealt with an exceptional and wealthy 'Anglo-Indian' Mallampalli treats the marriage of an East Indian woman, Charlotte Fox, whose mother 'was Indo-Portuguese, [and] had been married twice to English officers', whose family he judges 'likely stood somewhere between these two [above-mentioned] poles', and who suffered from 'economic hardships' to Matthew Abraham, a 'Tamil *paraiyar*' convert to Protestantism who had achieved great wealth through building up a successful business supplying liquor and other commodities to the British military and its personnel, had adopted English speech and European dress in order to gain acceptance with Bellary's

⁸⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 2.

⁸⁶¹ Mallampalli, *Race, Religion and Law*, 42-43.

East Indian community. Abraham's son Charles Henry was unusual among those accepted within the Eurasian fold as his mother was Anglo-Portuguese and his father an Indian Christian, which would in the period of the present study have precluded his membership in the Anglo-Indian Association. Mallampalli notes that attitudes towards Matthew's acceptance into 'East Indian' circles differed between his home of Bellary and Bangalore, and that Bellary was a rather distinctive socio-racial environment even in the context of South India.

Unions between Indian men and British, European or mixed race women took place in all periods, their notoriety and occurrence could not be entirely obscured when the men in question were Indian princes (as can be seen in Coralie Younger's work)⁸⁶², but they were rarer than the continuing sexual relations between British men of all classes and both Indian and mixed race women, which persisted even in the face of social censure and the threat of scandal. His father's acquired wealth allowed Charles to travel to England (1841-1853) where he gained admission to Queen's College, Cambridge and Middle Temple with the aim of becoming a barrister, although he only managed to run up debts, be swindled by fellow students, suffer rustication and was never called to the bar. Nonetheless given his conscious experience of the difficulties and prejudices facing him as a 'half-caste' son of an untouchable, his admission to Cambridge as 'Most likely... the first Indian' in 1841 was no small achievement in itself.⁸⁶³ While neither of these interesting cases is broadly representative of the Eurasian experience during the 19th Century, they do furnish evidence on a great many points of wider interest as well as illustrating that individual experiences were always more varied and multifaceted than any

⁸⁶² Younger, *Wicked Women*.

⁸⁶³ Mallampalli, *Race, Religion and Law*, 126-128.

metanarratives of broader, more generalized, communal experiences that we may seek to construct. We could similarly cite the example of the Eurasian poet, educationalist and early Indian nationalist Henry Louis Vivian Derozio (1809-1831) whose pioneering political views would not become mainstream amongst Anglo-Indians until more than a century after his death from cholera, when he was rediscovered by those seeking to advance Anthony's message that Anglo-Indians should embrace Indian nationalism.

Both studies also highlight another important point, the historical and contemporary reasons that people of mixed race have tended to disappear from our narratives of the Raj. Fisher argues that although the case of Dyce Sombre entered the literary imagination of both the French and the Germans through works by Jules Verne and Hermann Goedsche he 'has not appeared in the national narratives of either India or Britain' and though he was the first Asian MP 'most authors and politicians who wish to highlight Indians who rose to prominence in Britain select Dadabhai Naoroji as the 'first Indian' elected to Parliament. As a true Indian nationalist hero, Naoroji articulates well the successful struggles of progressive Indians in Britain. Britons can also point to their election of Naoroji as proof that race was not an insurmountable barrier in England. Neither Dyce Sombre (elected to Parliament half a century earlier) nor even Sir Mancherjee Merwanjee Bhownagree (who followed Naoroji by a few years, but was a Conservative) can be used to make these Indian or British nationalist arguments.'⁸⁶⁴ Fisher argues that as well as having political reasons to ignore the case of Dyce Sombre, his history and life also pose

⁸⁶⁴ Fisher, *The Inordinately Strange Life of Dyce Sombre*, 326.

‘too many questions and problems’, contain too many seeming contradictions, and ‘therefore, continues unresolved.’⁸⁶⁵

Anglo-Indians in the late colonial period also pose many more questions, contradictions and problems than there are easy answers to. Mallampalli argues that the effect of the ‘classification raj’ and its ‘ordering of difference’ on Indian Christians are largely omitted in recent scholarship ‘partly due to the fact that Protestant Christianity, especially its Evangelical variety, is widely associated with the civilizing mission and its logic of cultural assimilation.’⁸⁶⁶ Mallampalli argues that the ‘impulse to divide humanity into clearly defined blocks of racial and religious identity is anchored in the imperial ordering of difference... [and] levels a critique of any ideology that “deletes overlaps and hybridities” and ignores the multiple affiliations of individuals and families.’⁸⁶⁷ It is not a stretch to suggest that the mixed race population of India, having been seen historically as an embarrassment to British racial prestige and more latterly a group let down by the British, would be conveniently omitted from the colonial archive where possible. Or that, from the point of view of contemporary British historians, a group who can neither be cast as simply the victims or the beneficiaries of the Raj, who practiced racism towards Indians and even darker skinned members of their own group but who were also the victims of British racism, might be difficult to categorise and fit into broader narratives of colonisers and colonised. Hawes noted that ‘the hangovers of British attitudes towards Eurasians still exist amongst historians’.⁸⁶⁸

⁸⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 326-327.

⁸⁶⁶ Mallampalli, *Race, Religion and Law*, 5-9.

⁸⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 243.

⁸⁶⁸ D’cruz, ‘Christopher Hawes in Conversation’.

For Indian nationalists, eager to present a vision of Hindu caste purity surviving the colonial encounter untarnished, miscegenation might appear equally problematic and easier to ignore. In her study of early miscegenation in India (and the so often invisible Indian women in such relations), Durba Ghosh has argued that for ‘middle-class Indians, the creation of a modern family – with an educated and spiritually minded mother who protected the spiritual realm of the family and sustained traditions untouched by colonialism – was a necessary part of an emergent Indian nationalism. Because the majority of colonial companions were neither middle-class nor politically desirable within the imperialist or nationalist project, their role in historical narratives of this period has been erased.’⁸⁶⁹

Another issue emphasized in Ghosh’s study is with the colonial archive itself. Ghosh has argued that ‘In early British India, the absence of native women’s names in colonial archives correlated with the state’s interests to suppress the visibility of subjects who threatened the whiteness of colonial society.’⁸⁷⁰ ‘Anglican church records, baptismal and marriage records... court records, such as wills and court cases’ crafted a coded language that subtly revealed issues like legitimacy of offspring and offer clues to the historian as to racial status while seeking to obscure the ‘natal forms of identification’ and the presence of native women in interracial unions.⁸⁷¹ The present study has shown that Anglo-Indians in the 20th Century knowingly and sometimes unknowingly, through their own aspirations to whiteness and through intergenerational transmission of inaccurate family histories that

⁸⁶⁹ Ghosh, *Sex and the Family*, 255-256.

⁸⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 18.

⁸⁷¹ *Ibid.*

also sought to expunge the memory of an Indian maternal ancestor in order to buttress claims to exclusive European ancestry which would give fairer complexioned family members the chance to ascend the Raj's socio-racial hierarchy, became complicit in making native women and miscegenation invisible. The early records in Ghosh's study came from a time when miscegenation was widely tolerated particularly if it remained within a relatively private and domestic sphere. If anything, anxiety about miscegenation and the desire to conceal it in the colonial archive, was made more pressing by the rise of increasingly racial justifications for British rule and increased attempts to police the boundaries of whiteness in the 19th and early 20th centuries.

19th Century racial theorists such as Robert Knox attempted to dispute 'the examples supposed to prove that hybrid races exist by arguing point blank that none can be found in the world.'⁸⁷² According to Knox the reproduction of mixed race peoples depended on the infusion of fresh blood from the parent stocks, which was one way of denying the existence of racial hybrids. Conversely in their attempts to create and police a colour line and prevent further miscegenation in India it was in British interests to view the existing mixed population as small, fixed and entirely endogamous. Anglo-Indians sought to police the boundaries between their own group and Indian Christians because of the higher position they held in the socio-racial order of the Raj. By the 1910s, having abandoned the collective project of being accepted as white,⁸⁷³ Anglo-Indian leaders had an interest in concurring that their community was entirely endogamous in order to deny they were any accretions to the community from Indian Christians and in order to foster a self-confident communal identity as an antidote to individual and family strategies of racial passing and

⁸⁷² Young, *Colonial Desire*, 15.

⁸⁷³ See Mizutani, *Meaning of White*, 184.

hypergamy which they perceived to damage the group (materially and numerically) as a whole. This study has revealed that while the Anglo-Indian community had become increasingly endogamous, it was never entirely so, and to the disapprobation of the British miscegenation continued to take place, to differing degrees between British men and mixed race and Indian women, and to a lesser extent between Indian men and European and mixed race women. Unions between Domiciled Europeans (either whites or pass-whites) and Anglo-Indians, with their overlapping social and economic existence, were even more prevalent.

Paradoxically by creating a colonial society that attempted to maintain the whiteness of the ruling elite, forge a socio-racial hierarchy with whiteness at its apex (that extended to discriminatory employment and remuneration), the British created the incentives for widespread attempts at racial passing which transgressed and challenged that order. As Young has argued 'at the heart of racial theory, in its most sinister, offensive move, hybridity also maps out its most anxious, vulnerable site: a fulcrum at its edge and centre where its dialectics of injustice, hatred and oppression can find themselves effaced and expunged.'⁸⁷⁴ Widespread racial passing (on the individual or familial scale) by Anglo-Indians in the 20th Century involved both complicity with the ideals of whiteness (and the expunging of native ancestry) embodied in the Raj's socio-racial hierarchy, as well as resistance, contestation and transgression against the attempts to erect, maintain and police the colour lines and boundaries of that hierarchy.

⁸⁷⁴ Young, *Colonial Desire*, 19.

For global historians, Anglo-Indians provide a fascinating case study. Racial passing amongst Anglo-Indians can fruitfully be compared to the experiences of ‘Cape Coloureds’ preceding and during Apartheid,⁸⁷⁵ and to passing in the United States during slavery and segregation,⁸⁷⁶ although the Raj’s socio-racial hierarchy was more complex than the attempt to create and police a biracial social order in the American South (often obscuring the Native American presence) according to the ‘one drop’ rule of the colour line.⁸⁷⁷ Future research may fit Anglo-Indians into a broader understanding of mixed race populations and empire and so emulate Fernando Henriques 1974 comparative work *Children of Caliban: Miscegenation*.⁸⁷⁸

The Anglo-Indian biologist and activist Cedric Dover saw other Asian Eurasians as sharing a common experience with, and possibly a common future with, Anglo-Indians under his schemes of pan-Eurasianism. We have explored the idea of pan-Eurasian colonisation in German New Guinea. In his works *Half-Caste* (1937) and *Know This of Race* (1939) Dover entered a global discourse at a critical time launching prominent attacks on the contemporaneous NAZI racial theories of Aryanism and racial purity, and offering instead the opposite view that all peoples were mixed to varying degrees and that mixture rather than purity led to greater likelihood of genetic strength and wellbeing – a view which though not often voiced owing to the continuing political sensitivity attached to race in our own age would be supported by contemporary biologists’ view that genetic heterozygosity is preferable to homozygosity in order to prevent hereditary diseases and promote the overall health of a population.

⁸⁷⁵ See Watson, *Passing for White*.

⁸⁷⁶ See E. Ginsberg (ed.), *Passing and the Fictions of Identity* (Durham NC, 1996).

⁸⁷⁷ A. Piper, ‘Passing for White, Passing for Black’ in *Ibid.*, 268.

⁸⁷⁸ F. Henriques, *Children of Caliban: Miscegenation* (London, 1974).

Anglo-Indians' complex ideas of home and space, examined by the geographer Alison Blunt, included identification with Britain. Blunt's *Domicile and Diaspora* explored Anglo-Indian attempts to build a colony within India named McCluskiegunge after its Anglo-Indian founder, an experiment which we have examined and historically contextualised in this study. Anglo-Indians also looked further afield to the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, to Australia, New Zealand and even Brazil as sites for an Anglo-Indian colony. Seeing themselves in a truly global perspective Anglo-Indians drew on examples for how settlement might take place from the colonization and agricultural development of Australasia and were inspired by Jewish settlement efforts in Palestine prior to the Second World War. Through the pages of the *Anglo-Indian Review* (1929 – the present), the journal of the All India Anglo-Indian and Domiciled European Association and one of the main sources for this study, Anglo-Indians and other contributors who took an interest in their affairs connected Anglo-Indian problems and possible solutions with the wider world through wide ranging discussions of the relevance of various unusual examples – such as the principles of equality and lack of prejudice in the USSR, race relations in the American South, the organization of NAZI German youth movements, and even the Italian invasion of Abyssinia and the flaws in attempts at Italian settlement there.

Our examination of the history of Anglo-Indians in this period has also raised issues of interest to other historians of South Asia, most importantly the minorities question during the long process of decolonisation. The Anglo-Indian leader Sir Henry Gidney received thanks and support from other small minorities on whose behalf he spoke as part of his 'minority block' strategy during the Round Table Conferences. Indian minorities shared similar concerns, fears and interests, and were in the process of defining themselves as

political minorities, enumerating their constituencies and making demands for protective safeguards under successive phases of constitutional reform (most notably the 1919 and 1935 Government of India Acts). In this context Anglo-Indian leaders sought to redefine and locate Anglo-Indians as an Indian political minority community, often facing strong internal opposition as this had never been part of Anglo-Indians self-image in the past. Prior to 1919 Anglo-Indians had primarily identified themselves in contrary distinction to Indians and ‘natives’ as the offspring of the British, entitled to (but not receiving) a status in common with their British brethren to whom they loyally adhered, especially in times of crisis.

Acceptance of the legal position of Anglo-Indians as ‘Statutory Natives of India’ was recognised as necessary by Anglo-Indian leaders in order to protect their community from Indianisation within their existing fields of state and railway employment, but remained highly contested amongst a significant proportion of Anglo-Indians. This study has revealed that Indianisation, was not merely an elite process, transferring senior positions within the armed forces and the ICS from Britons to Indians, it extended to the lowest rungs of state and railway employment and including not only workers employed from Britain into such jobs, but through what Anglo-Indians argued was a misapplication of the principle, to themselves. Anglo-Indian leaders’ work in the Legislative Assembly was often at variance with the aims of Indian nationalists whilst being carefully in broad sympathy for Indian demands for home rule. The evidence presented on the Assembly reveals much about its function as a contestatory arena for Indian nationalists demanding greater freedom of information and accountability from government, denouncing the Raj’s socio-racial hierarchy of employment, and unpicking opaque gradations of rank and

remuneration that structured recruitment and promotion to subordinate non-white groups and preferentially reward the domiciled community as a loyal buttressing agent of imperial power.

Given the broad scope of the present study it was not possible to explore the role of the numerous Anglo-Indian members of provincial legislative assemblies. However, we have seen ample evidence of the significance of some of the provincial Association branches to debates within the community and challenges to the Association President. Anglo-Indian leaders during this period attempted to create and build up political institutions (consolidating and amalgamating what political, social and/or philanthropic bodies had previously existed) and attempted to foster political consciousness and communal feeling in order to respond to the changing political and economic climate of late colonial India. In attempting to build up an organisation that could claim to be representative of the community across India, Anglo-Indian leaders faced similar challenges to those experienced by the Congress Party, many of whose early branches had been little more than a plaque on the door of some provincial professional's workplace office. The work of the Anglo-Indian Association's Travelling Secretary in encouraging the formation of small branches in remote railway stations across India, and the focus on building up membership of the Association (in order to secure its financial strength and bolster its representative claims) as part of Anglo-Indian political strategies should be of interest to historians of South Asia.

Anglo-Indian strategies both paralleled and diverged from those of other groups within late colonial India. The British and Indians were speaking in a language of political minorities, and like the Sikhs, the overarching strategic framework for the Anglo-Indian leadership was to create an Indian political minority community and generally seek to protect the community's position on this basis. Anglo-Indians were also playing the numbers game, seeking to bolster their claims to representation by establishing an organisational infrastructure for the Association with as wide a membership base as possible and campaigning within the community for the maximum overall communal population to be returned in successive censuses. The attitude of the colonial state, as well as the legal framework of Raj employment in the context of official (often ill-defined) policies of Indianisation, made it essential for Anglo-Indian leaders to assert a legally Indian status. Even this admission of nationality (which as they argued had no bearing on cultural identity) aroused contestation and opposition within the ranks of the domiciled community. This was part of the context in which collective and individual (or familial) strategies diverged. Anglo-Indians individually continued to engage in racial passing and hypergamy strategies, which were felt to deplete the strength and resources of the community as their successful practitioners ascended the Raj's socio-racial hierarchy and exited the community while those with unrecognised pretensions to a status they did not achieve were likely to be apathetic towards or opposed to the collective strategies of Anglo-Indian leaders.

Acceptance as whites, or being granted an equivalent legal status to the transient British, had, as Mizutani's work suggests, been abandoned as the prevailing collective communal strategy before the 1919 Government of India Act and the accompanying policy of

Indianisation which made it dangerous for Anglo-Indian employment prospects. However, the chance for some Anglo-Indians to be granted access to the British Army officer class on terms of equality with Britons was never abandoned, and had this been opened up as an avenue for the advance of any considerable portion of Anglo-Indians the calculus of the Anglo-Indian leaders' priorities might have changed. Gidney generally worked within the framework of building an Indian political minority community, but he continued to flirt with alternative and parallel communal strategies. Colonisation within India, creating a homeland, that might aspire to autonomy or separation from the rest of India, could be compatible with asserting minority status, and was paralleled in the emerging rhetoric of other communities, which ultimately resulted in partition.

Anglo-Indian rhetoric contained curious combinations of ideas which were not apparently taken to conflict with one another – crucially Gidney's embrace of India as Motherland was based on continued loyalty to Britain and belief or hope that a self-governing India would remain tied to the crown and empire. Anglo-Indians' identification with India was taken as absolutely compatible with their insistence that the only Anglo-Indian national flag which could secure their loyalty would have to be a defaced union jack; this rhetoric also implied that numerous nationalities could exist within a federal nation. Whether they might lead to separation or to federal existence within the broader nation or within the British Empire the assertion of other communities to the status of a nationality (as in the Lahore Resolution of 1940) was not unique to Anglo-Indians. Gidney threatened (affecting scant realisation of the impotence of his own numerically tiny community) that failure to address the issues of the smaller minorities would lead to Anglo-Indians forming one of many 'Ulsters'. Similarly coexisting conceptualisations which our own

retrospective analysis might conclude to be problematic applied to Anglo-Indians' evolving discussions of race and identity. Numerous competing and occasionally internally inconsistent ideas about Anglo-Indians' racial status were advanced through the pages of the *Review*, though the emerging consensus was that Anglo-Indians constituted a new and distinct hybrid race (and according to the ideas put forward by Dover, one that was more genetically healthy through its diverse ancestry). Here a key insight from Young should be borne in mind 'The question is whether the old essentializing categories of cultural identity, or of race, were really so essentialized, or have been retrospectively constructed as more fixed than they were. When we look at the texts of racial theory, we find that they are in fact contradictory, disruptive and already deconstructed.'⁸⁷⁹ As Young goes on to argue hybridity is key to this as 'wherever it emerges it suggests the impossibility of essentialism.'⁸⁸⁰ We should also remember that these evolving ideas emerged in a context of great uncertainty as to the future shape of a self-governing India, which along with surprise at the speed of ultimate decolonisation, amply come across in Anglo-Indian sources.

It has been argued in this study that Gidney hoped that the British could be persuaded to acknowledge a kind of paternal responsibility for Anglo-Indians and their future, to provide an all-encompassing solution and to pay for it. Gidney emphasised Britain's paternal obligations and Anglo-Indians' loyal service to the security of the Raj. Gidney allowed himself to be directed in the main thrust of his efforts by British supporters such as the former Viceroy Lord Hardinge during the Round Table Conferences towards a formula that Parliament would accept. Against Government opposition, Lord Lloyd, who

⁸⁷⁹ Young, *Colonial Desire*, 27.

⁸⁸⁰ *Ibid.*

as Governor of Bombay had encouraged Gidney's early political rise to the presidency of the Bombay branch of the Anglo-Indian Empire League, helped Gidney to secure the crucial last minute House of Lords amendment to the 1935 Government of India Act providing statutory economic safeguards (reserved proportions of posts in the railways and telegraphs) for Anglo-Indians. The Government of India's initial response was to assert that the amendment was merely declaratory of intent and not binding on government, before backtracking and allowing its provisions to be somewhat watered down in their implementation, leading Anglo-Indian leaders at the provincial level to expend much of their efforts attempting to monitor and secure their effective implementation.

Lord Birkenhead, the Secretary of State for India, responded to the 1925 Anglo-Indian Deputation (which among its many demands asked for a resolution of Anglo-Indians' tripartite legal statuses for different purposes, which seemed to benefit the imperial state more than Anglo-Indians themselves, and asked for help in overturning colour-based barriers to Anglo-Indian emigration to the white dominions of Australasia and Canada) by redirecting Anglo-Indians away from thoughts of emigration or any non-Indian status – telling them to throw their lot in with the peoples of India. These instructions had helped to frame Gidney's core strategy of defining Anglo-Indians as a political minority community in need of protection. However, in his cautious support for colonisation and apparent willingness to embrace mass emigration (as long as it was not restricted by a colour bar), Gidney, we have argued, was hoping to receive the backing of the Indian Government or the British Parliament. Gidney thought that the British might be persuaded to provide a comprehensive solution of some kind, and financially back and implement that solution. It has been argued that mass emigration (to Britain or a white dominion) or

colonisation overseas (in the Andamans or Australasia) were probably his favoured solutions, though without comprehensive British support it would have been dangerous to have focused his political energies in those directions, as they ran counter to securing the community's future within India. Failing this, Gidney expended some of his last energies on plans for a kind of severance package from the British (in return for valiant wartime service) involving large grants of land in India and/or funds towards colonisation within India or towards the establishment of new educational institutions sufficiently solvent to effectively meet the needs of Anglo-Indian youth to face growing economic competition in perpetuity. As we have seen Gidney died shortly after being bitterly disappointed by the suggestions made during the Cripps Mission of 1942 (an immediate end to reservations and no certainty that Anglo-Indians would even have a seat at the negotiating table).

Anthony took on board the message of the Cripps Mission, was disinclined to believe that the British could be trusted to exert themselves significantly on Anglo-Indians' behalf and believed that the only secure future for Anglo-Indians lay in obtaining the goodwill of the Congress Party. Accordingly Anthony attempted to radically reformulate Anglo-Indian identity, away from Gidney's ultimate loyalty to Britain and empire (even as he spoke of what Blunt has called a dual loyalty to Britain as Fatherland and India as Motherland), and towards a strategic embrace of Indian nationalism. Anglo-Indians were 'Indian by nationality and Anglo-Indian by community' according to Anthony's new formula. This approach, and Anthony's burial of the term Domiciled European, met even more contestation and bitter opposition within the community than Gidney's more cautious moves to foster identification with India. At this point the collective strategies pursued by

Anthony came into sharp conflict with the individual and familial strategies of a significant proportion of the community who opposed his message and tone.

Anthony saw colonisation outside of the Indian mainland and individual or large scale emigration as a threat to the demographic, numerical and financial strength of the community which would weaken it politically and imperil his attempts to secure the best future for the community within India which he could through negotiations with Congress leaders. The pages of the *Review* during this period reveal widespread panic and anxiety along with Anthony's attempts to stem the tide of early emigration through gendered arguments (which probably astutely perceived Anglo-Indian women to be at the heart of most decisions to emigrate) and harrowing accounts of those who had migrated and having found life abroad unbearable had returned to India or were desperate for the Association to assist them in doing so. Finally we saw that while Anthony could not prevent a substantial proportion of wealthier Anglo-Indians who had the means to do so from emigrating, he provided hope for those who by choice or necessity were destined to remain in India with stirring rhetoric and a formula that achieved a surprising degree of success. Even Anthony was surprised by the ultimate goodwill of the Congress leaders towards the Anglo-Indian community as he managed to secure not only a recognised status in the Indian constitution and nominated seats in the Lok Sabha and provincial legislatures but a ten year continuation of some reserved posts in the railways. Though the British did not provide any grants of land or funds Anthony pressed ahead with Gidney's idea for founding new Anglo-Indian schools which would ensure that Anglo-Indian youth would continue to be educated to face the increasing economic competition the community was to face in independent India.

Anglo-Indians have been largely absent from broad histories of the British Raj, although they have appeared on the margins in works such as Kenneth Ballhatchet's *Race, Sex and Class Under the Raj*.⁸⁸¹ It is encouraging that the subject of South Asian mixed race people is starting to come to prominence among professional historians, although these works deal almost exclusively with Eurasians prior to the Twentieth Century. The present study therefore, will fill a considerable gap, in our historical understanding of a group of people, whom, as has been argued, are critical to a broader understanding of the Raj's socio-racial hierarchy and in particular its state and quasi-state employment and the defence of its security infrastructure. Building on Hawes' insights we have seen that Anglo-Indians were, in many ways a 'reluctant community', as evidence by the prevalence of racial passing amongst them. However, what Anglo-Indians seemed most reluctant to accept was a marginalised position of socio-economic subordination at arms-length from the British with whom they felt an identification and kinship (which went largely unrecognised and unreciprocated). We have argued that Anglo-Indians' commonality of experience, even when they lived in different settings and dispersed across a vast subcontinent, provided the basis for communal feeling.

Anglo-Indians amounted to a community, albeit one with complex internal stratification, and whose designations, ancestries and identities remained highly contested. Anglo-Indians were not reluctant to enjoy a social existence within their own community and often with Domiciled Europeans (whether white or pass-white) that amounted to an experience of community. In their individual choices to racially pass or to remain within

⁸⁸¹ Ballhatchet, *Race, Sex and Class*.

their community while asserting varied socio-racial and domiciliary statuses (sometimes multiple, even contradictory, depending on their audience) Anglo-Indians expressed their own agency, transgressed against and contested the attempts of the state and of the transient British society to impose upon them socio-racial categories which were constructed in pejorative ways and policed in order to limit their socio-economic opportunities.

Although racial categories are constructed, heredity with its varied and unpredictable markers (such as complexion) has some grounding in fact. Building on Ghosh's work we must conclude that though race is constructed, the act of eradicating or obscuring the memory of an ancestor based on their place of birth, cultural and religious origins and/or colour is one that matters and that is worthy of historical analysis. The disappearance of Indian maternal ancestors from the colonial archive was a process which was abetted by the choices of many of their mixed descendants owing to the oppressive and discriminatory socio-racial order under which they were compelled to live. As historians it matters for us to observe the nature of this process, and to seek, as Ghosh has done, to restore the presence of those who have been rendered invisible. Racial passing may appear an outdated prism through which to view changing assertions of identity through categories that are ultimately invalid, but these are not mere social constructions, they are historical constructions, and how they were constructed, challenged, and transgressed remains important. The analytical framework of racial passing, which proved so useful in the South African case, is equally so in understanding British attempts to create and police a certain kind of socio-racial hierarchy in late colonial India.

Buettner and Mizutani's work has highlighted how important the construction of whiteness was for the transient British in their anxieties to preserve their racial prestige as part of the justification for imperial rule. However, the present study has argued that racial passing was even more prevalent than these scholars have supposed. Their work is also crucial in presenting the domiciled community (comprised of Anglo-Indians and Domiciled Europeans) as to some extent sharing a common social and economic existence based on their collective exclusion from undisputed whiteness by the transitory British group.

In highlighting the socio-economic internal stratification of Anglo-Indians this study has also departed from the tendency of Hawes and Mizutani to perceive Anglo-Indians through the prism of British private philanthropic and colonial state perspectives (mediated through the colonial archive) which almost exclusively emphasize their impoverished condition. Poverty and unemployment were certainly key facets of the Anglo-Indian experience, our understanding of which has been greatly enhanced by the work of these historians. However, the present study has built on their work by addressing a broader range of Anglo-Indian experience and utilising more sources which convey the Anglo-Indian voice. It is clear that a significant number of Anglo-Indians who were gainfully employed achieved a standard of living which was impressive by the standards of the metropole and would sometimes have surprised the transient British had they deigned to accept the hospitality of a relatively affluent Anglo-Indian family. A small minority of Anglo-Indians even managed to travel to Europe for leisure or education, an essential marker of domicile that some transient Britons (according to Buettner) struggled to afford.

The relative paucity of historical research on mixed race peoples in India has had the advantage of encouraging more interdisciplinary insights through the necessity of reliance on the work of geographers, literary theorists, sociologists and anthropologists. Blunt's work provided a critical starting point, particularly in her pioneering use of Anglo-Indian sources that help to redress the weaknesses of the colonial archive, in which Anglo-Indians are often under-represented and presented in a tone which is at best sympathetic, but more often pejoratively dismissive. Of course Anglo-Indian sources have their own biases and there is a danger of falling victim to the self-consciously constructed political narrative put forward by the Anglo-Indian Association, but used in tandem with British official sources the *Anglo-Indian Review* and *Colonisation Observer* (both central to Blunt's work) are invaluable. Blunt also insightfully explored topics – Gidney, Anthony, Anglo-Indians' dual affinity to Britain as Fatherland and India as Motherland, and McCluskiegunge – which have been taken up in the present study and placed into an arguably broader historical context. Colonisation strategies have benefited from an understanding of the state-backed Punjab Canal Colonies. Anglo-Indian politics has been explored in greater detail. Gidney, we have argued, remained at heart a conservative and imperialist, more closely tied to his loyalty to Britain than his dualistic rhetoric might suggest.

Despite his post-independence focus Caplan's anthropological insights into the Anglo-Indian family and Anglo-Indian womens' more ready adaptation to new areas of employment that allowed them to financially hold their families together, has been

particularly relevant.⁸⁸² Works by Watson and others on miscegenation and passing in other contexts have proved highly useful for their analytical insights.

Young has asserted that ‘Since Satre, Fanon and Memmi, postcolonial criticism has constructed two antithetical groups, the colonizer and colonized, self and Other, with the second only knowable through a necessarily false representation, a Manichean division that threatens to reproduce the static, essentialist categories it seeks to undo.’⁸⁸³ If racially mixed groups do anything to our historical understanding of colonisation they complicate artificial dichotomies of ruler and ruled, white and non-white, foreign and indigenous, and colonizer and colonized. Future research re-examining our period through the lens of Anglo-Indian attitudes and concerns may yield new and better understandings of the British and other Indian communities.

⁸⁸² Caplan, *Children of Colonialism*.

⁸⁸³ Young, *Colonial Desire*, 5.

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