

THE LAST DAYS OF THE COMPANY
A SOURCE BOOK OF INDIAN HISTORY
1818-1858

I
THE EXPANSION OF BRITISH INDIA

**THE LAST DAYS OF
THE COMPANY**

A SOURCE BOOK OF INDIAN HISTORY

1818-1858

BY

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PREFACE

THIS volume purports to be a collection of excerpts from original sources dealing with a most interesting period of Indian history. We intend that it shall shortly be followed by other volumes dealing with the same period but from different points of view and discussing in particular the development of an Indian policy and the economic and industrial policy of the Company. In the present volume we have tried to tell the story of the expansion of British India from the conclusion of the Mahratta wars in 1818 until the end of the Mutiny in 1858. It has therefore been necessary to deal at some length with the annexation policy of Lord Dalhousie and the conciliation policy of Lord Canning. We have tried as far as possible to give such introductory comments as may be necessary to enable the general reader to understand the trend of events without showing any particular bias one way or the other, and also to enable students of history to form their own conclusions with the assistance of these excerpts. We have also tried to give excerpts representing different points of view on these much-debated problems of history. In dealing with the Mutiny, we have omitted intentionally references to unpleasant happenings, to deeds of violence on the one hand and acts of vengeance on the other. We have preferred rather to dwell on matters of more permanent importance in the development of Indian policy, the nobility of men such as the Lawrences, Havelock, and Canning, the bravery and perseverance of the British soldiers, and the touching loyalty of many Indians. The dark side of the Mutiny, the treachery, the blunders, the violence, the anger, may well disappear, but the nobler features of that period should remain, for it is

upon them that the foundations of Indian development under British rule depend.

This book has been written primarily for the use of the student. The study of Indian history in Indian schools and universities has been degraded by the use, or rather abuse, of text-books. Yet there is no lack of original material, which may be accounted for by the necessity of the British rulers explaining their actions to the Court of Directors in England. It is our desire, therefore, to induce the Indian student to turn more readily to these writings and to learn from them the great events and the motives of the chief actors in the history of his own country. One of the chief objects of historical study is to inculcate in the student the power of judging facts and drawing his own deductions. We have therefore tried to provide the Indian undergraduate with the facts, and leave him to complete the task. We trust also that the period of history dealt with in this volume is of such interest and importance that it may also appeal to some extent to the general reader. If such be the case, we would ask him to forgive our deficiencies and remember our primary object in writing this book.

In the spelling of proper names we have tried as far as possible to make such alterations in the excerpts as are necessary to ensure a certain degree of uniformity.

In conclusion we have pleasure in expressing our appreciation of the kind courtesy of the following Publishers in allowing us to take extracts from their copyright publications as specified. If in any case we may have included any extract for which special permission should have been obtained we can only ask the Publishers' indulgence, and assure them that the oversight has been inadvertent.

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