

POTTER'S CLAY

HILTON BROWN

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SOME STORIES OF SOUTH INDIA

BY

HILTON BROWN

Author of 'Dismiss', 'Dictators Limited', 'Susanna', etc.

GANESH & Co.

MADRAS

1929

FOREWORD TO THE ENLARGED EDITION

WHEN *Potter's Clay* made its first appearance in 1927, I said that the primary responsibility for its existence lay with the Editor of the *Madras Hindu*. That still holds good ; but the responsibility for this Enlarged Edition lies rather with the present publishers whose enthusiasm has been boundless. However this may be, I beg that what was said in preface to the First Edition may be taken to apply here. 'Mere passing comments' these stories are ; and I have never been more astonished in my life than when kind folk have told me that they show a deep understanding of India and Indians. God knows they don't and can't, for I am only too well aware that I stand but on the frontier of an enchanted country ; yet, in so far as one must write, I suppose, with sympathy of that which one loves, they may perhaps show glimmerings of comprehension. If it be so, I am proud to think it.

There is one thing, however, these idle tales may accomplish ; they may stimulate others—others who really do know and understand—to follow in the same line. There is already growing up

in South India a school of indigenous fiction which holds within itself, I do believe, the promise of something really excellent. Men like K. S. Venkatramani, like Nagarajan, like G. K. Chettur are, I hope, but the forerunners of a company who will yet put stories about India in a high place among the world's fiction. If these will but be true to their own traditions and will follow their own line where it will lead them, there will be books worth reading and there will be no further need of half-instructed interpreters—like me.

All the stories which made up the original edition are reproduced here and I have added one or two others. It is at least a bigger book, therefore, if not a better.

HILTON BROWN.

EGMORE, MADRAS,

1929.

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