

**EUROPEAN ADVENTURERS OF NORTHERN
INDIA, 1785 to 1849**



RANJIT SINGH IN DURBAR.

Facing Maharajah (standing): Court, Allard, Ventura, Avitable, Foulkes, Argond.

Hira Singh facing Maharajah.

On latter's right, the Dogra brothers, Sham Singh and Sheik Fakir Ud din.

EUROPEAN ADVENTURERS OF NORTHERN INDIA,

1785 to 1849.

“Hands that the rod of Empire might have swayed.”—THOMAS GRAY.

By
C. GREY.

Edited by
H. L. O. GARRETT, M.A.,
Keeper of the Records of the Punjab.

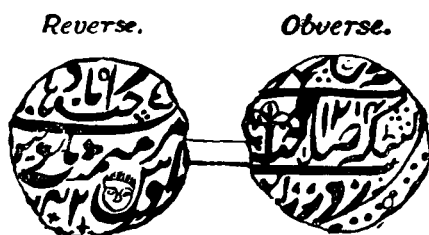
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Corrigenda.

- Page 31, line 31, *for* " of " *read* " for ".
- Page 95, line 27, *for* " ordered " *read* " was very dis. ".
- Page 125, line 29, *for* " thense " *read* " thence ".
- Page 171, line 32, *for* " slected " *read* " selected ".
- Page 265, under, portrait of Col. Gardiner *read* " 69 " *for* " 79 ".
- Page 277, *for* Major Pears' *read* Major Pearce's.

Note :—Certain articles embodied in the book have already appeared in a shorter form in the " Civil and Military Gazette " to whom we are indebted for permission to reproduce them.



SIKAH SAHEB.
A.H. 1214
(A.D. 1799-1800)

The coins of which the above is a facsimile were struck at Hansi by George Thomas in the year 1801.

The words "Sikah Sahib" indicate coins not struck by order of a Royal personage.

The initial "T" is seen near the left rim of the obverse.

PREFACE.

It is now a good many years since Compton wrote his 'European Adventurers' and our excuse for producing a new book on the subject must be that his work is both out of date and incomplete. Out of date, because a number of new facts have come to light with regard to some of the better known men, and incomplete because he was ignorant of the existence of some of the others.

The present work represents some six years of labour in the archives of the Punjab Government, as well as the consultation of a very large number of contemporary memoirs and other works, a full bibliography of which will be found in the appendix.

Roughly speaking, the Adventurers fall into two groups. There are the well known men like George Thomas and Avitabile, of whom more or less exhaustive memoirs have appeared in the past. There are also the lesser known men of whom no account has hitherto appeared, and whose careers we have had to trace from many sources. Again the Adventurers may be classified into combatants and non-combatants. The former include Generals like Ventura and common deserters like Potter. In the latter class we find medical men like Honigberger and Harlan, the antiquarian Masson, and Bianchi, the engineer. There is hardly a nation that is not included in the list of names which runs to over seventy.

One name is deserving of special mention. It is that of Alexander Gardiner. Gardiner contributed his own reminiscences to the Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal in 1852 and in 1898 his life was written by Major Pearce. Both of these portray him as the hero of many wild adventures and as a very perfect gentle

knight. An exhaustive study of the records has convinced us that both these views are entirely incorrect, that the man was a prize liar who passed off other men's adventures as his own, and who was capable of undertaking unsavoury duties with which other men entirely refused to have any thing to do.

The Journal of M. Court has not before been made public. It is a description of his travels in Central Asia and written by a trained and well educated soldier—for M. Court was by far the most refined of the Frenchmen who found their way into the service of Maharaja Ranjit Singh—it was practically a route book and as such was treated as a confidential document. For many years it has lain in its original French in the archives of the Government of India. Through the courtesy of the latter we have been enabled to make a translation which will be found in the appendix.

It may be objected that we have included in this volume the details of a number of unimportant individuals. To this we would reply that our object has been to make the record as complete as possible by including all European adventurers of whatever class or station.

H. L. O. GARRETT.

Lahore, January 1929.

C. GREY.

Note.—The Punjab Government takes no responsibility for the correctness of any statement or expression of views made in this book.

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