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TRAVELS

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I N D I A,

DURING

THE YEARS

1780, 1781, 1782, & 1783.

BY WILLIAM HODGES, R. A.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR THE AUTHOR,
AND SOLD BY J. EDWARDS, PALL-MALL.

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PREFACE.

THE intimate connexion which has fo long fublished between this country and the continent of India, naturally renders every Englishman deeply interested in all that relates to a quarter of the globe which has been the theatre of scenes highly important to his country; and which, perhaps, at the moment when he peruses the description of it, may be the residence or the grave of some of his dearest friends.

It is only matter of furprize, that, of a country so nearly allied to us, so little should be known. The public is, indeed, greatly indebted to the learned labours of gentlemen, who have resided there, for the information which they have afforded concerning the Laws and the Religion of the Hindoo tribes; as well as for correct and well digested details of the transactions of the Mogul government. But of the

face of the country, of its arts, and natural productions, little has yet been faid. Gentlemen who have refided long in India lose the idea of the first impression which that very curious country makes upon an entire stranger: the novelty is soon effaced, and the mind, by a common and natural operation, soon directs its views to more abstract speculation; reasoning assumes the place of observation, and the traveller is lost in the philosopher.

To supply, in some slight degree, this hiatus in the topographical department of literature, is the immediate object of the following pages. It will, I flatter myself, not be difagreeable to my readers to be informed, that they confift of a few plain observations, noted down upon the spot, in the simple garb of truth, without the smallest embellishment from fiction, or from fancy. They were chiefly intended for my own amusement, and to enable me to explain to my friends a number of drawings which I had made during my refidence in India, some of which accompany the present publication. The apology is trite; but in this case its truth, and the respectability of the name to which I refer, must plead my excuse.....it was owing entirely to the influence and persuasion of my most justly esteemed friend, Henry James Pye, Esq. Poet Laureat, that these observations have been submitted to a tribunal, which I have ever regarded with awful respect..... THE PUBLIC.

While I acknowledge my heart-felt obligations to one friend, it is not confistent with my present feelings to omit the kind attentions of another. My learned friend, Dr. Gregory, by his perusal and revision of my manuscript, contributed greatly to lessen my apprehensions of that ordeal to which I was about to commit myself; and though he insists upon my stating, that his corrections were almost entirely verbal, yet I cannot but be conscious, that, without them, the work would have appeared in a still more impersest state.

AFTER all, I am aware that I stand in need of every candid allowance on the part of my readers. It is evident that the studies absolutely requisite to any degree of prosiciency in a liberal art, and the practice of that art afterwards as a profession, can leave but little leisure for the cultivation of literature; and perhaps my engagements have been even more unfavourable to this object than those of most artists. A long circumnavigation, and the professional labour required in completing the works for Captain Cook's second voyage, occupied me for several years; and a voyage to India, with my different excursions in that country, absorbed no inconsiderable portion of my time and attention.

On another part of this work I can speak with rather more considence, because I am less personally concerned; and because, as far as I am concerned, I appear in my pro-

per professional character. The drawings, from which the plates for this work are engraved, I have already mentioned were made upon the spot: and, to the utmost of my ability, are fair and accurate representations of the originals. Of the execution of the plates, while I feel that too much cannot be said, my senses sufficiently convince me that it is unnecessary to say any thing. I therefore conclude with shortly returning my thanks to the artists for the care and attention they have bestowed upon them.

QUEEN STREET, May Fair, Feb. 18, 1793.

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WITH HISTORICAL ACCOUNTS AND DESCRIPTIONS OF EACH.

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