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INDIA, AND INDIA MISSIONS :

INCLUDING

SKETCHES OF THE GIGANTIC SYSTEM

OF

HINDUISM,

BOTH IN THEORY AND PRACTICE ;

ALSO

NOTICES OF SOME OF THE PRINCIPAL AGENCIES EMPLOYED IN CONDUCTING
THE PROCESS OF INDIAN EVANGELIZATION, &c. &c.

BY THE

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CHURCH OF SCOTLAND MISSION, CALCUTTA.

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TO

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THE REV. THOMAS CHALMERS, D.D., & LL.D.

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THE REV. JAMES GRANT.

THE REV. JOHN PAUL.

THE REV. JOHN HUNTER.

THE REV. JOHN BRUCE.

MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

OF THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND

FOR THE PROPAGATION OF THE GOSPEL IN FOREIGN PARTS :

UNDER WHOSE WISE, PATERNAL, AND PRAYERFUL COUNSELS,

THE MISSIONARY ENTERPRISE OF THE CHURCH

HAS HITHERTO BEEN CONDUCTED

WITH SUCH UNBROKEN HARMONY OF DESIGN, AND

SUCH MULTIPLIED TOKENS AND PLEDGES OF THE DIVINE APPROBATION,

THIS VOLUME IS DEDICATED,

AS A HUMBLE TRIBUTE OF GRATEFUL ACKNOWLEDGMENT,

BY

THE AUTHOR.

PREFACE.

THE appearance of the following volume in its present form, demands a few preliminary explanations.

During the last four years, whenever health permitted, the Author has been in the habit of addressing mixed audiences in England and Scotland, both from the pulpit and the platform, on the subject of Christian Missions. He has also largely enjoyed the inestimable privilege of advocating the same blessed cause before the Presbyteries, Synods, and General Assemblies of the Church of Scotland. Of the Addresses delivered on different occasions, some have already been published by special request, and widely circulated. Of the greater part, no written record ever existed, beyond the reports of the public journals, and a few loose scattered headings or *notanda*,—intelligible to no one but the Author himself.

When, in May last, it was judged that, in the good Providence of God, the state of his health might reasonably be expected to admit of his once more braving the fervours of a tropical clime, it came to be a question how he could most profitably dispose of his time and strength during the interval of a few months which must elapse previous to his final departure; whether, for example, he ought to resume his wonted vocation of addressing public meetings in different parts of the country; or whether he ought to commit to writing, with the view of publication, the *substance* of what he had

so often endeavoured to enforce on the attention of his countrymen. The latter alternative was that which the friends of the missionary cause unanimously advised him to adopt : and when he states the simple fact that, with the exception of a few pages, he had, in the course of four months, not only to write out the entire volume, but at one and the same time submit to the drudgery of carrying it through the press,—and that too, amid numberless distracting interruptions,—he trusts that its manifold imperfections will be treated with that indulgence which the circumstances of the case require at the hands of the candid reader. The circumstance, that the materials of which the volume is composed, formed originally the substance of *oral* addresses, will sufficiently account for the frequent transition from the didactic to the hortatory style of composition.

The *first* chapter mainly consists of statements of *historic fact*, gleaned from Mill, Maurice, M'Pherson, and other authorities. These statements, when introduced isolatedly—as hitherto they have usually been—into the body of lengthened narratives and elaborate dissertations, are apt to be passed over by the reader without attracting any special observation, or suggesting any special inference. But when separated from the mass of general history, and represented in one continuous form, they seem to open up the most interesting and important views of the connection between India and the Western World; of the reciprocal influences which these in times past have exercised; and are still likely to exercise, on each others destiny; and of the solemn obligations under which the British Churches are laid, to fall in with the palpable designs of Providence, in reference to the evangelization of India and the East.

The *second* chapter proposes to unfold the grand theory of Hinduism. In this department the Author has nothing new—nothing original—to add to the subject-matter. His sole

purpose has been to furnish a reply to the question so often put to him, What is Hinduism? The *existing* materials for furnishing such a reply are more than abundant. Indeed, it is their very superabundance which constitutes the difficulty of generalizing and reducing them to a consecutive form, and within reasonable limits. They are to be found in works translated, in whole or in part, from the Sanskrit language; such as the Institutes of Manu, the Bhagavad Gita, the Ramayan, &c. They are to be found in analyses, reviews, and dissertations scattered in profusion over the ponderous series of "Asiatic Researches;" the transactions of various Asiatic Societies at home and abroad; and the miscellaneous papers inserted in Asiatic Journals and Registers. They are to be found in separate treatises on the history and literature, the philosophy and mythology, of the Hindus. Now what seemed wanting was a *brief connected summary of leading principles*;—a summary which might open up to the inexperienced, or to such as have no time for ampler investigations, a brief but comprehensive glimpse of the stupendous system of Hinduism;—a summary which might tend to show how the varied parts of so incongruous and multifarious a scheme are made to hang together;—a summary which might enable readers ever afterwards to refer the apparently unconnected, and boundless variety of practical details to their proper bearing and position in the great chart of theoretic Brahmanism. Such a summary the Author has endeavoured, however imperfectly, to supply. In preparing it, he has freely availed himself of the writings of Sir W. Jones, Wilkins, Colebrooke, Vans Kennedy, and others; who have expatiated at large over the wide domains of Orientalism. At the same time, in his choice and rejection of materials—in his exposition of the views and opinions which may be said to constitute Brahmanical orthodoxy—he has been guided solely by his own vivid recollection of oral dis-

cussions and mutual interrogatories, carried on for several years, in his familiar and habitual intercourse with the sons of Brahma on the banks of the Ganges. In fact, he had constantly before his mind's eye the image of a learned Brahman of the orthodox school; and his endeavour has been to present such a statement on every division and subdivision of the complex theme, as experience has taught him to believe would be rendered by a skilful advocate and expounder of the Brahmanical creed, if required to act the part of Commentator and Interpreter. On this account, by seizing simply on those generic features which a sagacious Brahman would hold to be soundest and most genuine; and by excluding all consideration of the endless variations, discordances, and downright contradictions, which abound in the sacred repositories of his faith, the present summary may well be regarded as exhibiting the theory of Hinduism in its most favourable aspect. That theory, in its vastly complicated artificial form, is an heterogeneous compound, resulting from a strange combination of corruptions of primeval tradition and monstrous exaggerations of historic facts, conjectural physics and baseless metaphysics, philosophic speculations and dialectic subtilities,—the production of widely distant realms—the growth of successive ages! How, or by what *precise* steps, all the parts of the immense system came to be what they now are, must ever remain an undeterminable problem. Still, the system itself bears internal evidence of the rise and progress of many of its parts; and our knowledge of the authentic history of man's primitive condition and subsequent fall, supplies a clew wherewith, inferentially and deductively, to track other parts in the windings of the labyrinth. Hence it was the Author's original design to prefix an introductory chapter under the designation of "The Natural History of Hinduism." But as he advanced, he found the discussion

becoming involved in so intricate a maze, and threatening to expand into such unreasonable dimensions, that he was constrained wholly to abandon the design; and to confine himself exclusively to an expository description of *what Hinduism actually is*, in its last and most elaborate form.

The *third* chapter is devoted to an account of some of the leading superstitions and idolatries of Eastern India. Here, too, the Author does not pretend to advance any thing novel. He is not aware of referring to any particulars, which, in some shape or other, have not been already adverted to by Buchanan, Heber, Peggs, Ward, and others, who have been eye-witnesses of the scenes they respectively describe. All that he has to state is, that having witnessed many of the same scenes as his predecessors, he has endeavoured, in his own way, to picture forth some of the more noticeable phenomena which offered themselves to his own ocular observation. Having mentioned the name of Ward, the Author cannot but render his humble tribute of grateful acknowledgment to that great and good man,—as an observer and recorder of Hindu superstitions, manners, and customs. The more intimately he became acquainted with the state of things in Bengal, the more did he find reason to marvel at the exceeding variety, as well as minute accuracy of detail, which characterise the volumes of Ward.

In the *fourth* chapter, there is a consideration of the general agency to be employed in evangelizing India. In the views there unfolded, the Author is not conscious of proposing any thing new, or merely experimental. Quite the contrary. All he contends for is, that the lessons of past history and experience should be carefully treasured up, and brought to bear upon the modern evangelistic enterprise. He may be wrong in some of his opinions and conclusions; but if he has erred, he has erred unwittingly, and will rejoice to have the truth pointed out to him. He may possibly

have offended some of the more zealous and devoted friends of the missionary cause; but if he has given unnecessary offence, he has done so unwittingly, and will, on being convinced of this mistake, rejoice to tender any acknowledgment which charity may prompt, or justice may demand. To avoid, as far as possible, even the very appearance of offending, the different questions have been discussed wholly apart from any specific reference to the proceedings of particular individuals or particular societies. Conscious in his own mind of desiring nought but to discover the most effectual method of promoting God's cause and glory in the world, he has striven to discuss principles and measures apart from personalities altogether. The question ought never to be, Whether, in proposing to alter or amend such a measure which may have been adopted by such an individual or such a society, we thereby intentionally or unintentionally appear to impeach the wisdom of the one or of the other? No; the real question ought ever to be, Whether, in proposing any alteration or amendment of previously sanctioned measures, the great end which all have in common—the diffusion of the blessed Gospel, and the salvation of lost souls,—can be more successfully promoted thereby? If so, all who love the Lord Jesus and the souls of men better than the gratification of their own natural desires, or the following out of their own individual views or self-originated schemes, must unitedly rejoice in any suggestion, proceeding from whatever quarter, which may hold out the prospect of greater efficiency and success in subverting Satan's empire,—in hastening on the reign of grace now, and the kingdom of glory hereafter. Friendly remarks or corrections from the members of any denomination of Christians, addressed directly to the Author, to the care of his Publishers, will be gratefully received and duly attended to.

In the *fifth* chapter, miscellaneous objections to the mis-

sionary enterprise are considered. Individuals in different classes of society, may reckon this objection or the other now obsolete; because to their own minds such objections may not have occurred; or because such objections may not prevail in those circles in which they usually move. During several years past, it has been the Author's lot to have come in contact with individuals of every grade and profession in society, from the highest to the lowest. He therefore begs to assure the reader, that he has noticed no objection which he has not found influentially current among some one class or another. And as the work has been written for *general* perusal, he has deemed it his duty to meet and satisfy, as far as practicable, the peculiar demands of generic sections of the community. Those who still object to Indian Missions in particular, on mistaken grounds of State policy, he would refer to the learned, argumentative, and eloquent work of the Rev. W. M. Hetherington, on the "Fulness of Time,"—in which, amongst other important matters, the proposition, that "true religion is not only the source and measure of national prosperity, but the very end of national existence," is established by a resistless train of historic fact and logical inference.

The *sixth* chapter can only be regarded as a *fragment*. The original intention of the Author was to enter at large into the history of the Church of Scotland's Foreign Missions from their rise to the present time. But the unexpected length to which the preceding chapters extended, left him no other alternative than to limit himself to the briefest period which could furnish an intelligible conception of the principles, working, and design of these Missions. On this account he has confined his brief notices exclusively to the station first selected—Calcutta; and in the educational department, to the operations of the first twelvemonth there;—merely glancing at the present and anticipated results.

For a year and a-half the first Missionary had to stand alone. At the termination of that period he was joined by an able and respected colleague,—Rev. W. M'Kay;—who, entering on the discharge of his office with promptitude and power, has since almost fallen a martyr in the cause. May the Lord in mercy spare his invaluable life; and restore him to his chosen field of usefulness in the missionary vineyard. The Rev. D. Ewart reached Calcutta towards the close of 1834; and has ever since been privileged to labour with unwearied zeal and untiring energy. The Rev. Messrs M'Donald and Smith have subsequently gone forth in the fulness of the blessing of the Gospel of peace. Concerning Bombay, Puna, and Madras, where vigorous branches of the India Mission have within the last four years been established, the Author can scarcely regret that necessity has constrained him to be silent. The facts within his possession could not have enabled him to do any thing like justice to the labours of all the talented and noble minded Missionaries at these stations. Besides, though at each Presidency the *general principles* of the missionary system pursued be identical, there must necessarily be variations arising from local peculiarities, which tend to modify these principles in their practical application. Of these variations it would be difficult for any one else besides the living agent to furnish an adequate statement. Who but Mr Anderson could fully elucidate the occasions, causes, and applicability of the energetic measures adopted by himself and his coadjutors at Madras? Who but Dr Wilson could sufficiently unfold and vindicate the Herculean labours of himself and his colleagues at Bombay? It is fondly hoped that the day is not far distant, when these honoured servants of the Lord will be empowered to supply a connected narrative of their intensely interesting proceedings at the sister Presidencies.

What would have formed a distinct chapter in the history

of the Calcutta Mission, is, for want of space, now thrown into an abridged form in the Appendix. The subject tends to present a large and influential portion of Hindu society in so novel an aspect,—tends also to present a sphere for the application of Missionary labour of so novel a character,—that the Author could not withhold the present fragment, however unworthy of the theme. Besides, it serves the purpose of proving, if any such proof were at all necessary, that, from the earliest period, the Christian education of the young, with a view to the noblest ulterior objects, formed practically as well as theoretically *only a single department* of the general scheme of missionary procedure. While the Missionaries of the Church of Scotland have been sent forth with a special commission to prosecute the only means within their reach, in the absence of miracles, towards rearing a superior race of *native* teachers and preachers of the everlasting Gospel; they have been sent forth with an equally special commission to preach as they have opportunity,—to be instant in season and out of season, in communicating the blessed knowledge of salvation to all around them, of every class and of every grade,—and that too irrespectively of those conventional forms and modes of address, all those mechanical arrangements as to places of stated resort, which, in a Christian land, ages have served to consecrate.

It was the Author's intention to subjoin references to authorities at the foot of the different pages. This, however, would have greatly increased the size of a volume already too large. Besides, the work having no pretensions whatever of a literary character, never was designed for the use of the learned at all; but solely for the great mass of general readers, who are only very partially acquainted with the subjects treated of; and who have neither inclination nor opportunity for consulting references, even if these were redundantly supplied. Moreover, many of the minor quotations are given wholly

from memory ; and though the name of the authority might be mentioned, the page or section of the book very frequently could not be furnished.

It was also the Author's intention to add a large Appendix of *Notes*,—partly explanatory, and partly vindicatory. The bulk to which the volume has swoln, and this alone, has prevented the accomplishment of that part of the design. Without such Notes, he is conscious that many of his statements are peculiarly liable to misapprehension. To illustrate what is meant :—At the bottom of page 57, it is asserted, that “no where can a single moral attribute, *properly so called*, be found ascribed to the one God—the Supreme Brahm of the Hindus.” In a *note*, the reason of the qualification expressed by the words in italics, would be illustrated—the *precise nature* of those generalized “qualities” which Brahm is said to assume when he awakes from his slumber, would be defined. Again, in page 99, an account is given of the Hindu *theory* of the nature and origin of *caste*. In a *note*, the various *modifications* to which in *practice* that theory has been subjected, would be largely pointed out ; and thus, might numberless doubts, difficulties, and misapprehensions, be anticipated and obviated. In the unavoidable absence of such notes, therefore, the Author must throw himself on the indulgence of the candid reader ; as in the text itself it would be plainly impossible to introduce all those minute details which might act as so many fences and safeguards of the meaning.

The train of remark in some of the following chapters having led the Author to refer almost exclusively to *generic* principles and modes of procedure in the history of modern missions ; and his own labours having been mainly conducted within a sphere which, in the metropolis of British India, had not previously been occupied,—it did not fall in with the scope of his very brief sketches to bestow a more specific

notice on the operations of his brethren and coadjutors of other Christian denominations. Of the American Mission in Ceylon, which possesses so many features in common with that of the Church of Scotland he, at the time to which his historic observations refer, knew nothing but the name. He cannot, however, refrain from once more doing what he has already repeatedly done in oral and written forms,—he cannot help giving expression to the delight which he has heretofore enjoyed, and the profit which he has heretofore reaped, in the society of his predecessors and contemporaries in the missionary field. With the agents of all the great English societies it was his happy lot to associate on terms of the most familiar and endearing intercourse. To the Adams and Lacroixs of the Independents, the Reichardts of the Church of England, the Yates and the Pearces of the junior Baptist mission, Calcutta, he has again and again been laid under the deepest obligation for their counsels and freely communicated experience. And what shall he say as to the senior fraternity at Serampore now no more! Often since his return to Britain has he been pained to hear these devoted men accused of worldly extravagance, oriental pomp, princely grandeur, and sundry other foibles, errors, and inconsistencies! Knowing, from ocular evidence, that these and such like charges were, to say the least, most grossly exaggerated, he has ever felt it a special privilege to have had it in his power to vindicate the name and memory of these venerated labourers. What!—men who, for *thirty* or *forty* years, braved the noxious influences of a tropical clime,—taught and preached the Gospel to thousands, and tens of thousands,—gave versions of the Bible in whole or in part, and more or less perfect, into the majority of the Indian dialects!—men who, besides supporting their own family establishments, actually expended, for the promotion of Christianity in India, from *their own*

earnings, more than sixty thousand pounds!—Talk of flaws and imperfections in the multitudinous sayings and doings of such men!—would it not be miraculous if none such could be detected? Owing to man's fallibility, errors in judgment may lead to the projection of inadequate measures; owing to man's frailty, there may often be feebleness in the execution of good ones. But, in all Christendom, let any three men be pointed out, who have done more than Ward, Marshman, and Carey, to earn new trophies for the Redeemer in the hitherto unconquered realms of Paganism,—and then, but not till then, would the Author consent to remain silent when the first stone was thrown at the noble, the immortal, triumvirate of Serampore!

In conclusion, the Author cannot but publicly return his unfeigned thanks to his kind and revered friend, the Rev. Dr Brunton,—under whose hospitable roof he has during the last four months found a congenial home,—and for all whose counsels and valuable suggestions, when the present Work was passing through the press, he has been laid under obligations which can never be adequately repaid.

Now, to Him, “who is the blessed, and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see;—to Him be honour and power everlasting. Amen.”

BILSTANE NEAR EDINBURGH,

25th October 1839.

*** Should any profits arise from the sale of this Publication, they are to be devoted exclusively to purposes promotive of the interests of the India Mission.*

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