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NARRATIVE

OF THE

POLITICAL AND MILITARY TRANSACTIONS

OF.

BRITISH INDIA,

UNDER THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE

MARQUESS OF HASTINGS.

1813 то 1818.

BY HENRY T. PRINSEP,

OF THE HON. EAST INDIA COMPANY'S CIVIL SERVICE, BENGAL.

"Res poscere videtur—ut non modò casus eventusque rerum, qui plerique fortuiti sunt, sed ratio etiam causeque noscantur."—TACITUS.

LONDON:
JOHN MURRAY, ALBEMARLE-STREET.

1820.

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PREFACE.

THE work, now presented to the public, pretends to not merit, beyond that of a faithful relation of the very important changes and transactions, which have occurred in India between: 1814 and 1819. The labour of the narrator has been chiefly occupied in compilation and extraction from the voluminous records of the Supreme-Government, which contain the most? minute details of every political or military occurrence in every quarter of India. To all these he had free access; and, thus, the only qualities requisite for the undertaking, were those of diligence in research, and discrimination in the use or rejection of the materials before him. If he shall have succeeded in selecting so much, as may render the politics of India, during the period under review, intelligible to those, who may approach the subject with motives of curiosity or utility,—if readers of this: class shall retire from the perusal, tolerably satisfied with the insight it has given them into the affairs of the period, and enabled to form a fair judgment upon the propriety of the measures adopted, his grand and primary object will have been attained. At the same time, he is not ignorant, that, in skilful;

hands, the train of events, of which a faithful and plain relation is here submitted, might have been wrought into a form, that would have awakened a lively interest in the general, as well as the curious or interested reader. The facts recorded are both singular and important; the only circumstances, that can give a legitimate attraction to a work of the historical class. But Indian habits and occupations, as well as the example of his precursors, prevent the narrator from anticipating much success, except with those of his readers, whose attention may be excited by the recollection of Indian scenes, wherein they have themselves borne a part, or by the tie of kindred with the present actors upon that wide field for British energy,

In any other department of writing, the narrator would probably have followed the bent of his inclination, and have ventured his first literary work without the appendage of a name, which can give no title to favourable notice. But the public has a right to demand, that every thing, pretending to the character of history, should bear that certificate at least; and, in some cases, a notice of the sources of information, and of the circumstances which may have given a peculiar command of them, or a pretension to more than usual authenticity. feels himself compelled by this consideration, in addition to his name, to state briefly, that, on the first occasion of the Governor-General's leaving the presidency in the year 1814, to make the tour of the western provinces, he had the good fortune to be selected as one of the suite of the Marquess of Hastings, then Earl of Moira, and was, during the tour, attached to the secretariat. On the occasion of his Lordship's second progress to the westward, that is to say, when he personally took the field in 1817, he had the honour of again filling the same capacity as before, and continued to form part of the suite throughout the campaign, and until his Lordship's return to the presidency.

Notwithstanding the extensive means of observation, which this employment opened to him, it never would have occurred to the narrator himself, that his time could be employed with advantage in the preparation of any thing for the press. It is not the fault of the service to which he belongs, causelessly to obtrude itself on the public in print. Its manifold duties generally give full employment to all, who might be supposed to possess the capability; and the office, to which he happened to be attached, was by no means one of the least laborious.

However, when the rise of the Mahrattas in arms, to oppose the execution of the Governor-General's plans for the suppression of the Pindarees, brought on a crisis of no common interest, it became a matter of evident importance, that the public curiosity should be satisfied in respect to the causes that had produced the juncture; and that the conduct of the Indian authorities, as well in the previous intercourse with the native powers, as in the efforts to avert the mischiefs, which then assumed a threatening aspect, should be secured from the possibility of misrepresentation, by a candid and early expose of all their operations. In the compilation of such a memoir, if executed with but a moderate portion of skill, there seemed to be so much of public utility, as, in the narrator's circumstances, would warrant his regarding it as a point of public duty to make the attempt. Yet, though soon convinced that such a work was

most desirable, it was some months before he could bring himself finally to resolve on commencing it. His employment in India, except on the two occasions abovementioned, had been confined exclusively to the internal branches of administration; and he felt the disadvantage, under which he must undertake a task that, from its nature, required a general survey of the political relations of the British dominion in the East. But, as no one of established political reputation appeared inclined to step forward on the occasion, and there was reason to fear, that, unless he took it up, an authentic account of the period might long be a desideratum, he was induced to consult on the subject with the Secretary to the Governor-General, whose idea of the importance of the matter appearing to correspond entirely with his own, he at length made the tender of his services, provided the assent of the Governor-General could be obtained, and there should be no objection to his unlimited. use of the records of Government. The proposition was received by Mr. Adam with his characteristic liberality, and met with his very decided encouragement. Through him the narrator obtained the Governor-General's permission to avail himself of the records of the Secretary's office, without which, as all the most important articles of information are usually recorded while matters are still in train, it would have been impossible to execute the work, except in the most imperfect manner.

Such were the circumstances, under which the collection of materials was begun in February, 1818, when the campaign was drawing fast to a close. It has taken just a year to bring it to a conclusion. To those acquainted with the nature of the records of the Indian Government, this will not be thought an immoderate time, when it is recollected, that it was necessary carefully to peruse and note the entire proceedings of the political department for upwards of four years, before the narrative itself could be commenced. Much of the narrator's attention was besides devoted to other objects, being all the while in active employment. Thus, however desirous he may have been, that the work should appear while the curiosity of the public was yet at its height, he has found it impossible to present it at an earlier moment. As it is, in his own judgment, too much has been sacrificed to the desire of expedition.

It is necessary to premise, that the design has been, to trace the political transactions of India from the origin of the hostile spirit amongst the Mahratta powers to the final crisis of the season of 1817-18; to relate the operations of that season; and explain, as far as may be possible, the settlement resulting therefrom. Else it might create some surprise, that, while events of comparatively minor interest are dwelt upon with a minuteness, which may, perhaps, be found tedious, the particulars of the Goorkha war are passed over with a mere cursory notice. But these were in a measure foreign to the crisis in question; and, as the time had gone by, when they could be considered to have a peculiar claim to interest, it was thought best to limit the mention of that war to its influence upon the conduct of other powers, and only so far to allude to the operations of it, as might be necessary to explain that influence.

Such as it is, the work is now given to the public, with the full confidence, that it will not be regarded as a laboured exculpation of any specific scheme of policy. He can affirm, that he has not, in a single instance, designedly given a colouring to a fact, in order to make it suit the peculiar views of any class of statesmen: but he does acknowledge with some pride, that the present head of the Indian Government has claims to his personal attachment, which may have given a bias to his political views and reasonings; and further, that the habit of daily contemplating the development of his particular plans, from the moment of their conception, until they have been crowned with the predicted success, has produced a warmth of admiration, that may have warped his judgment upon the character of the system pursued. Yet has it been his exclusive aim throughout, to give a plain and candid statement of his own impressions on the events recorded: indeed, to have done otherwise would have been consistent, neither with the liberal confidence reposed in him by the Marquess of Hastings, nor with the spirit, in which he himself undertook the task.

The narrator is, at the same time, proud to own, that his situation has given him the means of verifying several points of material import, by personal inquiry at the fountain head, and that his impressions, in respect to the political measures adopted, have been submitted to the test of severe examinations, which have either confirmed their accuracy, or pointed to the means, by which they could be thoroughly sifted. Hence has resulted a further confidence, both of the authenticity of the facts detailed, and of the correctness of his own views and opinions.

PREFACE.

The narrator does not feel himself at liberty, for the present, to obtrude his personal acknowledgments: it will suffice to declare, that he has deeply felt his obligation to the superior judgment, which has enabled him to discover errors and inaccuracies, that might have escaped his own observation; and shall consider whatever value may hereafter be thought to attach to the performance, as an authentic continuation of the political history of India through the period in question, to be more ascribable to the aid he has received in its revision, than to any pains of his own in the compilation.

Calcutta, February, 1819.

ADVERTISEMENT.

THIS work was transmitted piecemeal for publication; and its appearance has been retarded, partly by the negligence of the hands to which the manuscript was confided, and partly by some unforeseen difficulties, which it is impossible, and perhaps immaterial, to explain. For any inaccuracies of the type, or discrepancy in the spelling of Indian words and names in the map and text, the Editor's professional avocations and total ignorance of Eastern orthography must plead in excuse.—A short glossary, and a catalogue of the native princes and persons of distinction, that figure in the narrative, is added for the convenience of the untravelled European reader.

C. R. P.

Temple, April, 1820.

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GLOSSARY.

Buneea, a merchant, or dealer.—Sansc. Chelā, an elève, or ward.—Sansc. Chitnavees, a private secretary.—Pers. Chout, black mail; redemption from tribute; the fourth part of any thing .- Sansc. Choultry, an inn, or caravansera.—Hind. Coss, a measure of length; about two miles.—Pers. Dak, post for letters or travellers.—Pers. Dhurna, sitting in, a mode of importunate demand.—Sansc. Durbar, the court of a prince.—Pers. Durra, a horde or band of freebooters.—Hind. Furnavēes, a secretary.—Pers. Gooroo, a family priest.—Sansc. Guddee, the cushion or seat of state.—Hind. Hurkāra, a courier.—Pers. Jageer, a fief.—Pers. Jungul, forest.—Sansc. and Pers. Killadar, a governor.—Arab. Khutree, the military caste.—Hind. Khilat, a dress of honour.—Pers. and Sansc. Kūtra, a walled town. Looteea, a common plunderer.—Sansc. Lubbur, a foray or marauding party.—Sansc. Moonshee, a linguist, or interpreter.—Arab. Musnud, the cushion or seat of state.—Arab. Moolkgeree, conquest.—Arab. Nulla, a dry torrent bed.—Sansc. Petta, a town: the suburb of a fort.—Sansc. Raj, a kingdom, or royal residence.—Sansc.

Rēsāla, a body of horse resembling a pulk of Cossacks.—Sansc.

Sĭrdār, a chief, or superior officer.—Pers. Sebundee, the militia, or gens d'armerie.-Pers. Sĭpāhee, or Sepoy, a foot soldier.—Pers. Sooba, a province, or government.—Arab. Srad'h, a funeral ceremonial.—Sansc. Sunnud, a deed of grant, or warrant.—Sansc. Sŭrunjamee, military service tenure.—Pers. Syce, a groom, or horse-keeper.—Sansc. Vakeel, an envoy, or negotiator.—Arab.

TITLES.

Hindoo.

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Pêshwā, minister.
         Pêshkar, deputy.
Sansc.
         Rājā,
Hind.
         Rānā,
                   ruling prince.
Hind.
         Nānā,
Sansc.
         Rāj-Rānā, regent, or viceroy.
Hind.
         Scna-puttee, general; title of the Raja of Berar.
Hind.
         Sēna-Khas-Khel, commander of the faithful band.
         Bhâo, 7
                  prince.
Sansc.
Sansc.
         Rām, a title of nobility.
Sansc.
         Thakoor, a feudal lord.
         Bāee,
                   dowager princess.
         Baych,
```

Moosulman.

Nizam, title of the Nuwab of Hyderabad originally; viceroy of the Dukhun under the Moghuls.

Arab. Nuwab, a governor; a ruling prince. Arab. Vizier, a minister of state. Pers. Dewan, an administrator, or minister. Pers. Khān, a lord; a title of nobility. Turk. Bēgum, a dowager princess.

Arab. Säheb, lord; an appellation of rank.

TRIBES OF HINDOOS.

Bheels, a tribe on the borders of Rajpootana. Jäts, a north-western tribe. Goands, a north-western tribe, inhabiting the Mohadeo range. Grasseas, a tribe inhabiting the Satpoora range. Soandees, a tribe between Oojeen and Rampoora.

Names of the principal Native Princes mentioned in the Narrative, with their respective seats of government, and the names of the British Residents.

Nizam.	Hyderabad.	Mr. H. Russell.			
Nuwab Vizier of Oude,—Ghazee	Lucknão.	-			
Nuwab Viziers of Bhopâl. 1. Mahommed. 2. Nuzur Mahommed.	Bhopâl.				
Mahrattas.	•				
Hindoo Princes. Raja of Suttara—Noor Nerayun.	Suttara.	Captain Grant, assistant.			
Pêshwa—Bajee Râo.	Poona.	Mr. Elphinstone.			
Gykwar. Anund Rao, nominal. Futteh Singh, actual.	Brodera.				
Rajas of Nagpoor. 1. Ragoojee Bhoosla. 2. Pursajee Bhoosla (Bala Saheb). 3. Moodajee Bhoosla (Appa Saheb.) 4. Bajee Rão Bhoosla.	Någpoor.	Mr. Jenkins.			
Sindheea—Maha Raja Doulut Râo Sindheea.	Gwalior.	Mr. Strachey. Captain Close.			
Holkar—Maha Raja Mulhar Rao }	Indore.	Major Agnew, assistant.			
Nana of Sågur. Govind Rao, legitimate. Bunaeek Rao, intrusive.	Sigur.				

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Raja of Jypoor-Purtab Singh.	Jynagurh.	
Raja of Joudhpoor-Man Singh,	Joudhpoor.	-
Raja of Kota-Kishwur Singh.	Kota.	
Raj-Rana—Zalim Singh.		•
Nipálese.		
Goorkha Raja.	Katmândhoo.	Mr. E. Gardner.

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