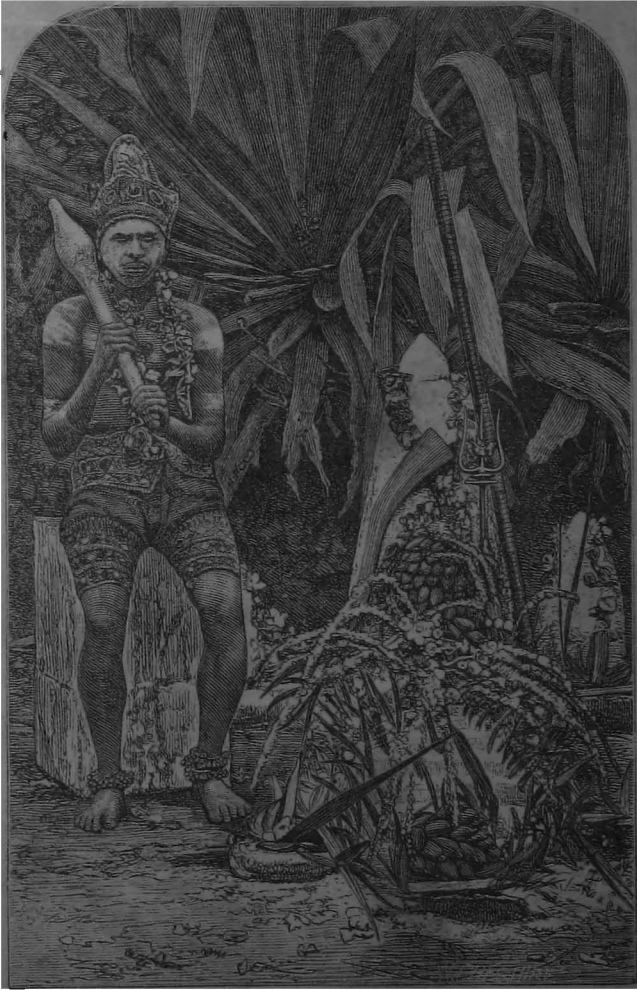


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FRONTISPIECE.



DEVIL-DANCER, WITH INSTRUMENTS AND OFFERINGS.

“THE LAND OF CHARITY:”

A DESCRIPTIVE ACCOUNT OF

TRAVANCORE AND ITS PEOPLE,

WITH ESPECIAL REFERENCE TO MISSIONARY LABOUR

BY THE

REV. SAMUEL MATEER, F.L.S.,

OF THE LONDON MISSIONARY SOCIETY.



VIEW OF SEA COAST FROM MUTTAN.

LONDON

JOHN SNOW AND CO.,

2, IVY LANE, PATERNOSTER ROW.;

1871.

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P R E F A C E.

A POPULAR, comprehensive work upon Travancore and Missionary operations in that territory, for the use of missionaries and students and the friends of missions at home, has long been felt to be a desideratum. During a residence of over nine years in India wholly occupied in vernacular labours amongst the natives, and constantly enjoying as close familiar intercourse with them as is possible for a European, the writer continued, both as a matter of duty and of pleasure, to collect information of all kinds about the country and people, and several years ago sketched out the plan of this work.

Having conceived, however, a high ideal of the excellence, both in substance and style, which ought to characterize a work produced by a competent and graphic pen on a subject so extensive and so interesting in every aspect, he waited for other and abler hands to undertake the duty, and repeatedly expressed his surprise that this had not been done.

In his frequent tours during the last two years in Great Britain and Ireland, lecturing and preaching on behalf of the London Missionary Society, receiving everywhere the kindest hospitality, and enjoying Christian intercourse with many friends of the Society, he has had special opportunities of learning what kind of information is wanted by the supporters of our Indian missions; and this he has attempted to supply in the present volume. Nearly the whole of the multitudinous questions which are naturally put to an Indian missionary are here answered. Ministers and other friends at

home ask their missionaries to give them *facts*. Here is what might be called a Handbook of Travancore—a compendium of facts grouped, classified, and arranged for convenient reference.

Works on India are sometimes full of misstatements and error, generally arising, in such cases, from insufficient acquaintance with the native languages and customs. Throughout this work we have aimed at special accuracy in every assertion that has been made, and at giving a fair, unvarnished statement of both sides of every question. Intelligent readers can thus form their own conclusions. These facts can also be adduced and enlarged upon by preachers and public lecturers. They will be found, we think, powerfully to illustrate the moral guilt and spiritual wretchedness of the heathen, their urgent need of the Gospel of Christ, the converting and renewing power of Divine grace, and the bright prospects already opening up of the complete and final triumph of Christian truth in India.

The circumstances of the *young*, and of general readers who may not have had time or opportunity for studying many works on India, have been borne in mind; and the attempt has been made to explain everything very simply and clearly, without taking for granted the possession of much special knowledge on the part of our readers. In order to bring the matter at our disposal within as small a compass as possible, and to furnish a cheap illustrated volume for wide popular distribution and perusal, suitable for placing in Sunday school and Congregational libraries, &c., we have condensed our remarks, and for the most part omitted practical observations and the discussion of

principles which otherwise would have found place in such a work, but would have made it much larger and more expensive.

Where Indian customs appear to throw light, either directly or indirectly, upon Holy Scripture, the passages have been suggested for comparison, examination, and inquiry.

In the statistical chapters and in the history of our Mission I have, where necessary, freely compiled from the annual Reports of the various missionaries (including my own); the Selections from the Government records of Travancore; and the Dewān's Reports of the Administration, with copies of which I have been favoured by that statesman. Other works, a list of which is subjoined, have also been consulted and used to a greater or less extent. Still it would only appear pedantic and cumbersome to give formal references to volume and page of each minor quotation or allusion.

My best thanks are due to the Rev. R. Robinson, Home Secretary, London Missionary Society, for the use of a number of woodcuts; and to the Rev. C. C. Fenn, M.A., Secretary, Church Missionary Society, for the use of two engravings for the illustration of this volume.

It is, of course, possible that, notwithstanding all the care that has been taken, errors may have crept in. Should a second edition be required, we shall be happy to avail ourselves of any further information, corrections, or suggestions which may tend to render the book more complete or useful.

Indian words, some of them rather formidable in length and appearance, must of necessity occur. To

assist our readers in their pronunciation, please observe that—

<i>ā</i>	is pronounced like <i>a</i>	in father.
<i>i</i>	„	„ <i>ee</i> , or like <i>i</i> in pique.
<i>ai</i> or <i>ei</i>	„	„ <i>eye</i> , or English <i>i</i> .
<i>u</i> generally,	„	„ <i>oo</i> in food.
<i>e</i>	„	„ <i>α</i> in fate.
<i>a</i> often	„	„ <i>u</i> in drum, or <i>a</i> in avoid.

If such terms are otherwise pronounced like English words, a sufficiently accurate approximation to the true pronunciation will be made.

May that one true and living God, whose kingdom and the saving knowledge of whose Son we humbly seek to extend, grant that this little work may be of some service in exciting, reviving, and nourishing a more intelligent and prayerful interest in the great work of Christian missions!

S. M.

LONDON, 29th November, 1870.

PRINCIPAL WORKS REFERRED TO.

Madras Journal of Literature and Science.	
Fra Bartolomeo's Voyage to the East Indies.	London, 1800.
The Tinnevelly Shānars Caldwell.	London, 1850.
Comparative Grammar of the Drāvidian Lan- guages Caldwell.	London, 1856.
Missionary Life and Labours of Xavier ... Venn.	London, 1862.
The Land of the Permauls, or Cochin ... Day.	Madras, 1863.
The Useful Plants of India Drury.	Trevandrum, 1858.
Popular Description of the Palmyra Palm... Ferguson.	Colombo, 1850.
The Christians of St. Thomas and their Liturgies Howard.	Oxford, 1864.
The Syrian Christians of Malabar... Philipos and Howard.	Oxford, 1869.
The Tulāpurushadānam, by a Tra- vancorean	Trevandrum, 1870.
&c., &c.	

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ERRATUM.

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