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PRIVATE LIFE  
OF  
AN EASTERN KING.

BY  
A MEMBER OF THE HOUSEHOLD  
OF HIS LATE MAJESTY, NUSSIR-U-DEEN, KING OF OUDE.

*Second Edition.*

LONDON:  
HOPE AND CO., 16 GREAT MARLBOROUGH STREET.

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[The Author reserves the right of Translation.]

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## PREFACE.

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THE following narrative is a record of facts—not in any case fictitious. It has been compiled from the notes I took of passing events during the three and a half years that I lived in the court of Lucknow.

Nussir-u-deen has long been gathered to his fathers; but the principal European members of his household are still alive, and in England. I have not given their names or my own; for the public would know as little of the one as of the other, had I done so. Should the truth of my statements be denied, however, or the names considered necessary to substantiate the narrative, I shall have no hesitation in giving them all.

That the professional author and the professional critic will find much that is crude and unartistic in the work, I do not doubt. Making no pretensions to literary skill, I trust I shall not be censured for displaying so little. If my “round, unvarnished tale” has been delivered in readable English, it is all to which I have aspired. Moreover, dread critic, I by no means profess to be a profound orientalist. Some years have now rolled away since I left India; and, when there, I never knew more of the vernacular

Hindustani than was just sufficient to enable me to make my way from place to place, and transact the ordinary business of life.

It would have been easy for me to have thrown something of the heroic into the account of my own residence at the court of Lucknow; but I have adhered simply to the truth, and have endeavoured solely to describe the inner life of the palace as I found it. Much there was that was strange—much there was that was horrible about that life; I witnessed many scenes which I could not describe without offending against conventional propriety; but, in all that the reader will find recorded, exaggeration has been strictly guarded against.

Finally, this book has not been written with any political object. That Oude is one of the most miserably-governed countries under heaven, is no secret; and that it would be a blessing to its numerous inhabitants were the Indian government to do for it what has been so well done for the Punjab, every one will admit. I have not written a political disquisition, but simply a personal narrative; and therefore the state of the country is but incidentally alluded to occasionally in the following pages.

My task is done.

*London, May 1855.*

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