

THE
POLITICAL
HISTORY OF INDIA,

FROM
1784 TO 1823.

BY
MAJOR-GENERAL SIR JOHN MALCOLM,
G.C.B., K.L.S., F.R.S., &c. &c. &c.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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TO
HIS GRACE
THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON.

MY LORD DUKE,

NEITHER the long and sincere friendship which I entertain for your Grace, nor the pride which I take, in common with every Englishman, in your achievements, could of themselves have induced me to offer you this mark of my respect. I dedicate these volumes to you as one who thoroughly understands and appreciates the consequence of the subjects of which they treat to the interest and reputation of his country, and who, I trust, will add to his former great services by employing the force of his abilities, and the weight of his character, to promote the prosperity of an empire in which he obtained his first celebrity as a commander and a statesman.

I have the honour to be,

Your Grace's most faithfully,

JOHN MALCOLM.

London, May, 1826.

PREFACE.

It is fifteen years since the Author published a *Sketch of Political India*, the first five chapters of which have been incorporated into this more extended work, which gives the history of political events from 1784 until 1823, including the administration of the Marquess of Hastings. He has chosen this period to close his labours, as the epoch at which the complete supremacy of the British power over all India was avowed and acknowledged. The necessity of adequately fulfilling the great duties which this condition imposes, combined as it is with other changes, may require some alterations in the form, if not the constitution, of our government, both in India and in England. On the character and extent of such alterations the Author has

ventured to express his opinions. Additional experience, and more maturity of judgment, have led to a confirmation of some of his former sentiments upon these subjects, and to a different view of others; but his object is more to give his readers the means of forming their own judgments upon the various and extensive matter treated of in these volumes, than to press his opinions upon their adoption. With reference to this object, he has added to the account of the administration of the several governments of India since the passing of Mr. Pitt's Bill, a brief summary of the motives and principles which appear to have actuated those at their head from the time of Lord Clive, and given his own observations and opinions upon every branch of the administration of our eastern empire; but the character and limits of this work have not permitted more than opening those subjects to that fair discussion and examination to which they are entitled, not only from their own magnitude, but their import-

ance in relation to general principles of rule. Our empire in India is one of which the study cannot safely be confined to parts : a competent knowledge of the whole is indispensable to the decision of every question connected with that extraordinary possession.

The Author is much indebted to the Earl of Minto for access to valuable documents connected with the administration of his father ; and to the Earl of Powis, whose kind and unreserved confidence has placed him in possession of all the papers, public and private, belonging to his lordship's father, Lord Clive. Reference to a few only of these has been necessary in the present volumes. A separate work may probably be formed from this interesting collection, which will throw equal light upon the history of our rise to political power in India, and the character of that great man, who may be called its founder.

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