

**BENARES: THE SACRED
CITY; SKETCHES OF HINDU
LIFE AND RELIGION**

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Benares: the sacred city; sketches of Hindu life and religion by E. B. Havell

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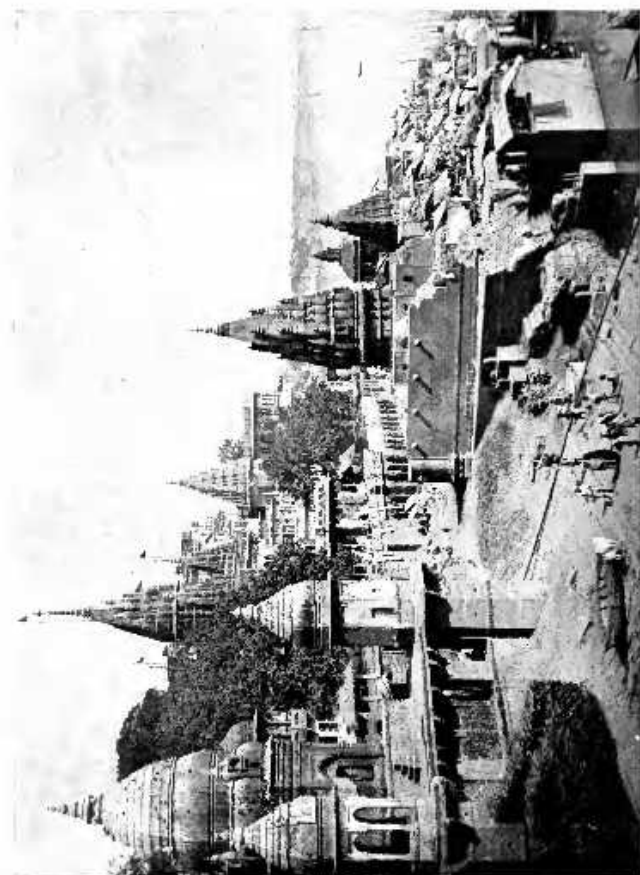
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E. B. HAVELL

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MANIKARNIKA GHÁT (page 134)
(From a photograph by Johnston & Huffman)

BENARES

THE SACRED CITY

SKETCHES OF HINDU LIFE
AND RELIGION

BY
E. B. HAVELL, A.R.C.A.

LATE PRINCIPAL OF THE GOVERNMENT SCHOOL OF ART, CALCUTTA

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PREFACE

It is, perhaps, because Benares is not forbidden, that such a mine of human interest, and one of the most extraordinary cities of the East, is now probably less known to most Europeans than Lhasa. Even of the Europeans who have seen Benares, few have any adequate conception of the ideas and beliefs which many millions of our fellow-subjects associate with it. Few, indeed, have either the time or the inclination to read through the increasing accumulation of very solid literature which deals with the philosophic side of Hinduism; and the more popular missionary accounts (with our national tendency to underrate the enemy's strength) generally make the mistake of representing all Hinduism as a mass of degraded superstitions and idolatry, only held together by the profound ignorance and backwardness of the Indian people.

These sketches are not offered as a contribution to oriental scholarship, or to religious controversy, but as an attempt to give an intelligible outline of Hindu ideas and religious practices, and especially as a presentation of the imaginative and artistic side of Indian religions, which can be observed at few places so well as in the sacred city and its neighbourhood—the birthplace of Buddhism and of one of the principal sects of Hinduism.

The illustrations have been, for the most part, specially prepared to elucidate the text, and include some of the re-

markable discoveries made this year at Sarnath. They will, it is hoped, give some idea of the wonderful artistic wealth of Benares life, and at the same time be more instructive than those of ordinary books of travel.

The authorities consulted include Sherring's *Sacred City of the Hindus*; *The Life and Times of Sri Sankaracharya*, by C. Krishnasami Aiyar; and the works of Barth, Beal, Sylvain Lévi, Rhys Davids, Monier Williams, Max Müller, Taylor, and many others. My acknowledgments are due to Messrs. E. J. Lazarus & Co., of Benares, for permission to use Mr. Ralph Griffiths' translation of the Rig-Veda; and to Messrs. Som Brothers, Calcutta, for extracts from Pandit Tattvabhushan's translations of the Upanishads.

I am indebted to H.H. the Maharajah of Benares and staff for much courteous assistance; and to Babus Abanindro Nath Tagore, Dinesh Chandra Sen, and other Indian friends for valuable information.

Mr. J. H. Marshall, Director-General of the Archæological Survey of India, Dr. Vogel, Messrs. Johnstone & Hoffman, Calcutta, and Messrs. Saced Bros., Benares, have kindly helped me with some of the illustrations.

E. B. HAVELL.

CALCUTTA, October, 1905.

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