

**A SKETCH OF ANGLO-
INDIAN
LITERATURE (THE LE BAS
PRIZE ESSAY FOR 1907)**

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A sketch of Anglo-Indian literature (The Le Bas prize essay for 1907) by Edward Farley Oaten

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A SKETCH OF
ANGLO-INDIAN
LITERATURE

(The Le Bas Prize Essay for 1907)

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GRADUALLY, year by year, the ranks of our Anglo-Indian writers swell, and new works are thrown with eager anxiety on the wide sea of literature and authorship. We have often wished that a full list of them all could be made out and continually supplemented as occasion required. A dictionary of Anglo-Indian writers, or a history of Anglo-Indian literature, would form a subject of immense interest and instruction, not merely to the griffin or the *littérateur*, who makes India and Indians his interested or idle study, but to the student who wishes to turn over a new page in the history of the human mind and the English language and thought in a country where circumstances, associations, and ties are so very different from those of every other land.—*The Calcutta Review*, 1855.

576481

L. BRAR /

*To
My Mother*

PREFATORY NOTE

THE subject for the Cambridge University Le Bas Essay Prize for 1907 was as follows: "An Appreciation of the chief Productions of Anglo-Indian Literature in the Domain of Fiction, Poetry, the Drama, Satire, and Belles-Lettres, during the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries, with an Estimate of the Chief Writers in those Spheres, and a Consideration of the specially Anglo-Indian Features of the Literature."

The subject, as compared with those of previous Le Bas Prize Essays, was a wide one, too wide, perhaps, for the subject of a mere essay. But the author's difficulties were increased in another way. Not only was the field vast; but he could obtain little help from predecessors in the field. No book exists that deals comprehensively with the subject. Histories of modern English literature are singularly destitute of any allusion to Anglo-Indian productions.

This Sketch of Anglo-Indian Literature,

xij Prefatory Note

dealing though it does with a subject of such wide scope, and partaking, too, so largely of the nature of pioneer work, has yet perforce been the product of spare hours snatched from ordinary University routine. Under these circumstances, no one will expect to find the essay based entirely on original reflection and judgment. For that a lifelong acquaintance with India and Indian authors were necessary. But the writer was fortunate in finding ready to his hand a rich mine of information which well repaid research. He takes this opportunity of acknowledging his indebtedness to *The Calcutta Review*, whose literary criticism has, ever since the magazine was founded in 1845, maintained a high degree of refinement and insight, while it has done Anglo-Indian literature an immense service by continually pointing out to Anglo-Indian writers the true aim which Anglo-Indian literature must always set before itself. Its literary judgments, in the case of those less important writers with whom time rendered an intimate acquaintance impossible, he has not scrupled to adopt.