SIR CHARLES WOOD'S ADMINISTRATION OF INDIAN AFFAIRS FROM 1859 TO 1866

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ALGERNON WEST

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SIR CHARLES WOOD'S

ADMINISTRATION OF

INDIAN AFFAIRS,

FROM 1859 TO 1866.

BY

ALGERNON WEST,

DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF INDIAN MILITARY FUNDS, AND LATELY
PRIVATE SECRETARY TO

THE RIGHT HON. SIR CHARLES WOOD, BART., M.P., G.C.B.,

AND

THE EARL DE GREY AND RIPON.

LONDON:
SMITH, ELDER AND CO., 65, CORNHILL.
1867.

TO THE

HEADS OF DEPARTMENTS IN THE INDIA OFFICE,

WHO HAVE HAD THE AMPLEST OPPORTUNITIES OF

OBSERVING THE BENEFICIAL EFFECT OF

Sir Charles Wood's Administration,

AND TO WHOSE UNOBTRUSIVE ASSISTANCE, AND UNSELFISH LABOURS,

NOT ONLY SUCCESSIVE SECRETARIES OF STATE, BUT THE

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA AND THE BRITISH NATION,

OWE A LASTING DEBT OF GRATITUDE—

THIS WORK IS DEDICATED.

As a monument of his ability, industry, and judgment, Sir Charles Wood may fairly point to his six years' administration of India, during a period of transition and unexampled difficulty at home and abroad. He found everything in disorder, and had everything to reconstruct.

He had to recast the whole judicial system of India—to create for her a paper currency—to superintend the remodelling of her taxation, and the reorganization of her finances. He had to develope a railway system, and last, and most difficult of all, to carry through the herculean labour of amalgamating the Queen's armies. If it has been impossible to do justice to every individual, we believe that, upon the whole, the Indian army has been a gainer under the change.

Where is the man possessed of that extent and variety of knowledge, that quickness, industry, and versatility, that acquaintance with matters financial, military, naval, judicial, and political, which will enable him to rule with a firm and unfaltering hand the mighty destinies of 150,000,000 of the human race?—*Times*, Feb. 6, 1866.

No tale in Hindoo mythology is more wonderful than the change which has been wrought in India within the last few years. The enchanters that have worked the spell have been peace, justice, and commerce. It may be added, that the system first fairly tried of governing India through a Secretary of State, directly and personally responsible to Parliament, has proved beyond expectation successful.—*Edinburgh Review*, July, 1864.

PREFACE.

I HOPE the statements contained in the following sketch will be found accurate.

If this merit be conceded to them, the credit will not be due to me, for, great as are the advantages which I have derived from the possession of all the private correspondence of Sir Charles Wood and Lord de Grey with the successive Governor-Generals and other high authorities in India, I feel that accuracy has only been rendered possible by the additions, revisions, and corrections of many friends in and out of the India Office, whose assistance has been freely given, not so much from motives of personal kindness to myself, as from the affection borne by them to their old chief, who, though now sitting in the House of Peers as Viscount Halifax, will ever be remembered in connection with India as Sir Charles Wood.

ALGERNON WEST.

India Office,
January 1, 1867.

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