

**THE OVERLAND GUIDE-BOOK; A
COMPLETE VADEMECUM
FOR THE OVERLAND
TRAVELLER, TO INDIA VI? EGYPT**

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The overland guide-book; a complete vademecum for the overland traveller, to India vi? Egypt
by James Barber

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A
COMPLETE VADE-MECUM

FOR

THE OVERLAND TRAVELLER,

TO INDIA *vid* EGYPT.

BY

CAPTAIN JAMES BARBER, H.C.S.

"GLOSTER--Knowest thou the way?"

EDGAR--Both stile and gate, horseway and footway.

Poor Tom shall lead thee.--Take my hand."--SHAKESPEARE.

SECOND EDITION.

LONDON:

W. M. H. ALLEN AND Co.,
7, LEADENHALL-STREET.

1850.

LONDON:
LEWIS AND SON, FINCH-LANE, CORNHILL.

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1850

TO THE
CIVIL AND MILITARY SERVICES

OF

BRITISH INDIA,

THIS WORK IS DEDICATED,

WITH GRATEFUL RESPECT

AND

CORDIAL GOOD WISHES,

BY

THEIR OBEDIENT HUMBLE SERVANT,

THE AUTHOR.

INTRODUCTION.

THE purpose of this little volume, which I have now the honour to submit to the public, is to combine, in a compact and convenient form, all the information necessary to the prosecution of the journey Overland to India and *vice versâ*.

Scarcely a day passes that I am not asked, either personally or by letter, to guide some intending traveller in his arrangements for the trip, and even to advise him as to the preferable routes, the expense, the manner of the voyage, &c. Ignorance on all these points induces inapposite and irrelevant questions; and it is not unusual to find, at the end of correspondence or a prolonged interview, that the querist is as far from the possession of the knowledge he desired to acquire as he was when he first preferred his application. No clear and satisfactory information can possibly be obtained by a desultory conversation or fragmentary epistles; hence the value of a systematic and comprehensive arrangement of all the facts and suggestions pertaining to the subject.

There is another reason why I should put forth this Guide,—it completes, in a measure—as far, at least, as the great Overland scheme is in itself complete—my humble labours in the mighty cause of steam-communication between England and India. For the past fourteen years, I have earnestly and ardently advocated the accomplishment of this great object; and, though treated as a vain and visionary enthusiast, when I have presumed to predict the establishment of a semi-monthly intercourse (which I did in 1836!), my endeavours never relaxed, nor did my hope in the least degree abate. I may be pardoned, therefore, some measure of exultation and self-approval, when, looking back upon the state of the steam question some years ago, and tracing its rise and progress through a thousand difficulties and obstructions, I venture to associate my own zeal and exertions with the triumphant consummation apparent in the scheme now adopted and carried out by the “Peninsular and Oriental Company,” and the “East India Company,” not only with the Presidencies of India, but also with our Chinese possessions.

I laboured long and strenuously; for I could not persuade myself that British enterprise and public spirit would suffer so obvious a means of extending commerce and civilisation, and of the approximation of our vast Indian empire to the seat of its supreme rule, to be neglected. The great cause *has* triumphed,

—some of my wildest dreams have become sober realities, and, while I feel grateful for the past, I am hopeful for the future.

Those who take a prominent and active part in promoting great schemes of public utility, where doubt and timidity, and envy and selfish interests are to be combated, must expect to meet with rebuffs and misrepresentations. Of these evils I have had my share, but I have also, from time to time, been unexpectedly cheered on the way by receiving voluntary and public testimonials of unspeakable value, graciously transmitted through various channels. I may be excused for publishing the following letter from the present excellent and much esteemed Bishop of Calcutta, for it displays a truly Christian spirit,—it grapples comprehensively with the question, and corroborates the view taken by the late Lord William Bentinck, who expressed his opinion “that steam-communication with India would be cheaply bought at any price.”

“ BISHOP'S PALACE, CALCUTTA,

“ 22nd of October, 1838.

“ DEAR SIR,

“ I should never forgive myself, if I conveyed to you the accompanying resolution without, at the same time, assuring you of the sincere gratitude I feel in the bottom of my heart to a gentleman who has laboured so assiduously, diligently and successfully in one of the greatest cause that ever interested humanity.

“ I can truly say, that the consequences, immediate and remote, of steam-communication between India and Europe defy calculation. Such a wonderful adaptation of science is full of ‘ the seed of things,’ as was said of Lord Bacon’s philosophical writings and principles two centuries since.

“ The invention of printing, and the discovery of the mariners’ compass, did not more immediately bear upon the happiness of mankind. The human family is now indeed approximating, and, by inter-communication of knowledge, the times may be expected to draw on, when the illumination of the more prostrate nations will be borrowed from the most remote and exalted.

“ Allow me, sir, to conclude with saying that, not only as a Chairman, but as a man and a Christian, I have sincere pleasure in transmitting to you the enclosed resolution, and am

“ Your most obedient,

“ D. CALCUTTA.

“ To CAPTAIN JAMES BARBER,

“ &c., &c., &c.”

The journey to and from India, by way of Egypt, is now one of comparative ease and pleasure; and, as it is my intention to publish periodically a revised edition of “ The Overland Guide Book,” I shall feel grateful to those persons who, from time to time, will communicate with me on the subject, in order that the best and fullest information gained by experience may be made available to the traveller who prefers this route.

JAMES BARBER.