

**THE AMEER
ABDUR RAHMAN**

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The Ameer Abdur Rahman by Stephen Wheeler

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By

STEPHEN WHEELER, F.R.G.S.

SOME TIME FELLOW OF THE
PUNJAB UNIVERSITY

WITH PORTRAITS AND MAPS

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PREFACE

AN Asiatic historian, who was also a man of action, observed, when introducing himself to the gentle reader, that the rank and dignity whereto writers of history may attain is not so exalted that one need strive after such distinction laboriously. Nevertheless, he hoped that his book, "driven by the whirlwind of pride and the waves of ignorance upon the shores of mean literary attainment," might be somewhat prized by them who dive in the ocean of excellence. To some extent, at least, the modest aspirations of Mirza Hyder, Dughlat, are shared by the present writer.

In no book about the East is it wise to omit a reference to the mysteries of Oriental spelling, and the transliteration of Oriental names. As when Landor wrote, every traveller in the East is still apt "to bring home a new name for the prophet Mahomed, and to trim his turban to his own taste." The system sanctioned by the British Museum is a counsel of perfection, unfitted for common usage.

The Indian Government favours a scheme almost as admirable, and the Royal Geographical Society professes to adopt it. Seeing, however, that the Indian authorities and the Society use the same accent for dissimilar purposes, the ordinary person may hesitate to follow either lead. So perhaps it would be better to take pattern by Mr. Will Honeycomb in the *Spectator*, who vowed, "with a little passion," that he disliked pedantry in spelling, and that for his part he thought it enough to spell like a gentleman, and not like a scholar.

For the rest it may be appropriate to recall the words of the learned Moor, Abu Abdulla of Spain : "Were my mind not wholly taken up with the Ameer, and with praises worthy his deserts, I should have sung the charms of my lovely Gazelle ; but engaged in the description of Majesty, I was forced to lay aside my laudation of Beauty."

ORIENTAL CLUB, *May 8th*, 1895.