

**RULERS OF INDIA:
LORD
WILLIAM BENTINCK**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649639571

Rulers of India: Lord William Bentinck by Demetrius C. Boulger & Sir William Wilson Hunter

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Rulers of India

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London
HENRY FROWDE
OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS WAREHOUSE
AMEN CORNER, E.C.



New York
112 FOURTH AVENUE.

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RULERS OF INDIA

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Lord William Bentinck

By DEMETRIUS C. BOULGER

include to Kavanagh
AUTHOR OF 'THE HISTORY OF CHINA,' ETC.

Oxford

AT THE CLARENDON PRESS: 1892

Oxford

HORACE HART, PRINTER TO THE UNIVERSITY

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NOTE

The orthography of proper names follows the system adopted by the Indian Government for the *Imperial Gazetteer of India*. That system, while adhering to the popular spelling of very well-known places, such as Punjab, Lucknow, &c., employs in all other cases the vowels with the following uniform sounds:—

a, as in woman: ā, as in fathers: i, as in police: ī, as in intrigue:
o, as in cold: u, as in bull: ū, as in sure: e, as in grey.

LORD WILLIAM BENTINCK

CHAPTER I

EARLY LIFE

THE administration of Lord William Bentinck was one of peace. Following the administrations of Cornwallis, Wellesley, Hastings, and Amherst, and preceding those of Auckland, Hardinge, and Dalhousie, through the absence of foreign adventure and territorial conquest his Governor-Generalship may seem commonplace in comparison with conquerors who crushed the Mysore and Maráthá confederacies, planted the banners of the Company on the Indus and the Irrawaddy, and put forward the right of the rulers of India to exercise a controlling influence over Afghánistán. But the very contrast between the character of Lord William Bentinck's administration and that of the other British Governor-Generals whom we have named serves to bring into stronger relief the importance of the work he accomplished in the making of the India of to-day.

The youngest student of the growth of the British power in India does not need to be told that we first went to that country as traders, and that our only representatives were merchants who thought nothing about the politics of the country or of interfering with the Native Powers, and who were exclusively engaged in their counting-houses. That condition of things went on for nearly 150 years, and when the competition with the French, who would have expelled all other European traders if the programme of Dupleix had been realised, resulted in our unexpected triumph, accomplished by the genius of Clive, the East India Company—still cherishing above territorial possessions and military glory the commercial monopoly granted by Elizabeth and extended by Anne—preserved its character as a society of merchants, esteeming its annual investment in country goods, whether in Bengal, Bombay, or Madras, of far higher importance than matters of administration.

The East India Company, true to its origin, clung to its pacific vocation to the end, in spite of every temptation to play a sovereign part. Greatness was forced upon it by the many remarkable men who appeared in its service for sixty years after Clive had pointed out the easy and attractive road to wider dominion. It regretted the diversion of money from the legitimate pursuit of trade to the maintenance of armies, and it only reconciled itself to the course because Warren Hastings proved that the execution of a great policy in India did not necessarily entail the