

**EL DORADO; OR, BRITISH
GUIANA AS A FIELD
FOR COLONISATION**

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El Dorado; Or, British Guiana as a Field for Colonisation by W. T. Veness

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BY THE REV. W. T. VENESS.

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P R E F A C E .

FEELING the immense importance of adding to the population of the colony, and the splendid opening presented to thousands of the labouring population of our mother country, who are striving from year to year for a mere subsistence, but who in such a country as this might soon acquire an easy competence, I have thrown together a few loose thoughts upon the subject, in the hope that the public attention may be turned in that direction.

“We dwell,” said Lieutenant-Governor Walker, at the opening of the Local Exhibition at Georgetown in 1861—“we dwell, then, in a country rich beyond calculation, not only in the quantities, but in the varieties of its products; yet the application of human skill and industry has lagged so far behind this munificent liberality of an all-pervading Providence, that even the surface has been but lightly skimmed, while all the depths remain unstirred and unapproached.

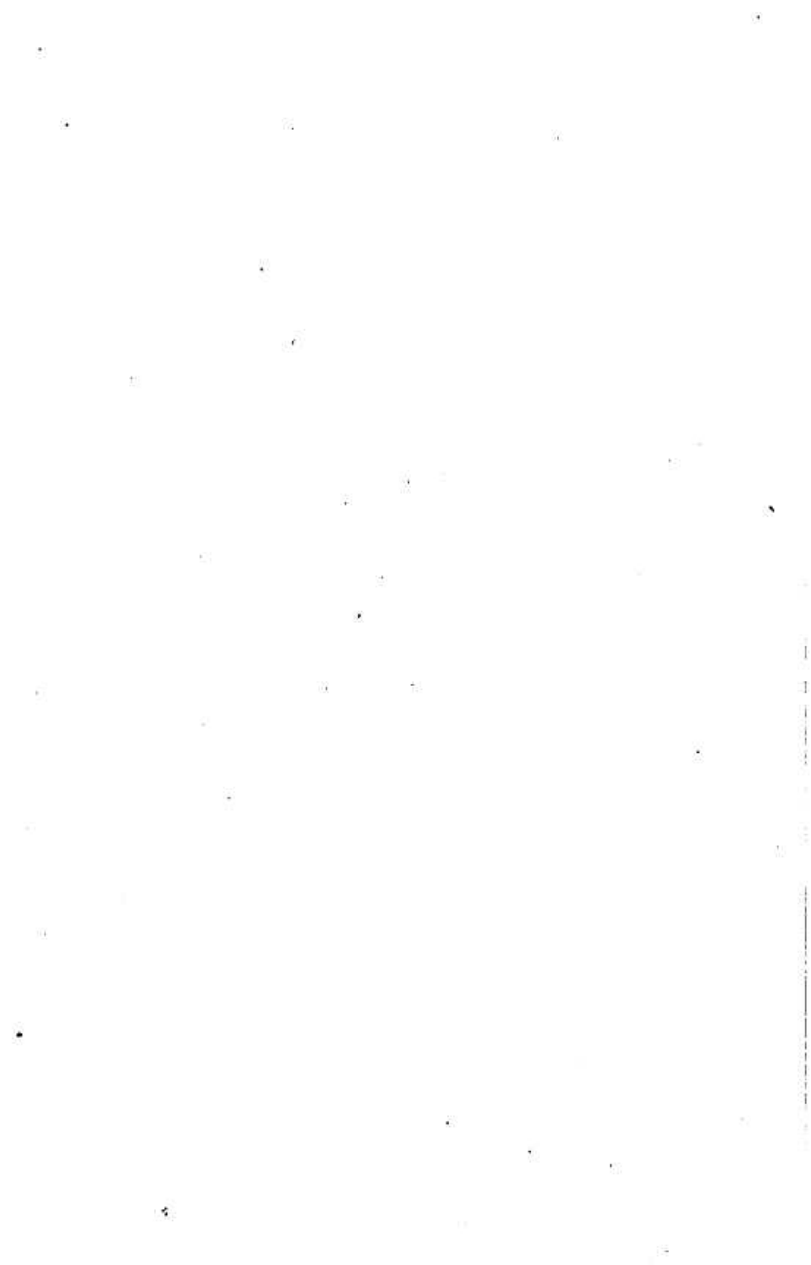
. . . Even our forests themselves still hide in their dark recesses rich stores of balms, and dyes, and

healing drugs, which, were their properties but developed, would add to the wealth and minister to the enjoyments of our race."

The avocations of a missionary clergyman in the colonies leave scant time for literary occupation; and this must be the author's apology for the crudeness of his production. The pressing importance of the subject, too, seemed to demand that no time should be wasted in putting a polish on pages thrown together in the odd half-hours of rest from ministerial duty. Nor has completeness been aimed at, for the same reason. The task of drawing up practical directions for settlers taking up their abode in this new "land flowing with milk and honey," which would form naturally a sequel to this work, is bequeathed to abler hands: still, something may be gleaned on this head from the relations of Indian life and the habits of our travellers. It has been my object to collect such materials as will enable the intelligent reader to decide for himself the important question, Is British Guiana a promising field for colonisation? It is beyond my province to give a geographical description of the colony; but I have not failed to select a few passages which describe some of its most striking features, and from which a general idea of the whole may be formed. It is not improbable that much information may be conveyed by these pages even to the colonists themselves, who mostly display a profound ignorance of their own country, many of them never going

twenty miles beyond their habitations. Instances are common of people in Demerara never visiting Berbice, and *vice versâ*. Some excuse may be pleaded for this on account of the difficulties attending locomotion, railways and steam carriage being still in an infantile condition. Those works, too, which have been written on the colony (excepting Waterton's "Wanderings" and Trollope's "West Indies," which by their general interest have obtained a large circulation) are difficult to be procured.

I have to acknowledge my obligation to numerous friends who have kindly facilitated my task by furnishing me with information, books, &c.



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