

**CAPTAIN MUSAFIR'S  
RAMBLES IN  
ALPINE LANDS**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649412686

Captain Musafir's Rambles in Alpine Lands by G. B. Malleson

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**G. B. MALLESON**

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LANDS.

BY  
COLONEL G. B. MALLESON, C.S.I.  
UNIV. OF  
CALIFORNIA  
Illustrated by  
G. STRANGMAN HANDCOCK.

"I've taught me other tongues, and in strange eyes  
Have made me not a stranger."  
CHILDE HAROLD.

LONDON:  
W. H. ALLEN & CO., 13 WATERLOO PLACE. S.W.

1884.

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LONDON:

PRINTED BY W. H. ALLEN & CO., 13 WATERLOO PLACE.

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Inscribed,

BY PERMISSION,

TO



IN WHOM TWENTY YEARS HAVE NOT DIMINISHED  
THE GENIALITY,  
NOR CLOUDED OVER THE BRIGHTNESS,  
WHICH RENDERED HER THE LIFE OF OUR PARTY  
IN 1863.

*Christmas Day,*  
1888.

901879





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## P R E F A C E .

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AFTER a residence of nearly fifteen years in India, to which country I had proceeded at the early age of seventeen, I paid, in 1858, my first visit to Germany. With the tastes for mountaineering, for exploring, and for fly-fishing which I possessed, I very soon realised the fact that, whilst the southern portions of that country offered a field for enjoyment practically unlimited, yet that enjoyment could only be perfectly realised by those who could speak easily the language of the people.

I did not then possess that accomplishment. So penetrated, however, was I with the charms of Bavaria and Austria, that on my return to India I devoted myself with assiduity to the study of German. Fortune greatly befriended me in my masters. They were both—for during the four years of my study I had two—privates in the 38th Regiment:—and they were both very remarkable men. The first, Henry Blochmann, was the youngest son but one of a book-seller at Dresden. Naturally very clever, his talents had been fully developed at the University of Leipzig. There he had mastered, besides the literature of France and Germany, Latin, Greek, Hebrew, and Arabic. His thorough acquaintance with the last-named language prompted his father to send him to Paris to push his fortunes in connection with Algeria. Circumstances, into which it is not necessary to

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enter, occurred at Paris which decided Blochmann to throw up all his prospects and embark on a new career. Every young German has one specially intimate friend, his second self, his "du," or "thou." The "du" of Blochmann was a young man, somewhat older than himself, named Jäkel, the son of a merchant at Breslau, and occupying a position in a mercantile house in Silesia. Blochmann wrote to Jäkel a letter, in which, stating that circumstances having rendered it necessary that he should quit France and not return to Germany he had decided to enlist as a private in the English army, he summoned him, in the name of friendship, to join him at Paris, to accompany him to England, and to enlist with him. He added that the prospects in the British army were excellent, as a mutiny was raging in India, and, in all probability, they would both soon become officers.

Without a moment's hesitation Jäkel locked up his desk, resigned his office, and made his way to Paris. He found Blochmann anxiously expecting him. Between them, the two friends could raise a sufficient sum to pay their way to London and defray their expenses for about a week. Although Blochmann was thoroughly grounded in other languages, he did not know a word of English. Jäkel shared his ignorance. The out-look before the two travellers was certainly not promising.

However, they started, arrived in London, and managed to find their way to the Horse-Guards. On the road thither Blochmann stopped at the shop of the publishers of this book, and purchased a grammar of the Hindustani language. Something whispered to him, he has told me, when narrating his story, that his knowledge of Arabic would render the study of Hindustani easy, and that acquaintance with that

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language could not but help him on in his new career. At the Horse Guards in 1857 the late Sir Henry Storks occupied a prominent position. Sir Henry Storks understood French thoroughly, and to him the two aspirants were introduced. Sir Henry listened to their story, granted their prayer, and sent them to his own regiment, the 38th Foot, then at Colchester, under orders for India.

A few days after the young men had joined the regiment, the capabilities of Blochmann, who had devoted himself with assiduity to his Hindustani Grammar, were recognised. He was excused all duty, and appointed instructor in general to the officers. That position he held not only during the short stay of the regiment at Colchester, but throughout the period of the voyage to India. From first to last he never was in the ranks. So exemplary was his conduct, and so much did he impress his commanding officer by his intelligence and his high qualities, that, on arriving in Calcutta, he was appointed, with the grade of sergeant, to a small post in one of the offices in Fort William. He was holding that post when, in 1859, I made his acquaintance, and arranged with him that he should read with me for an hour daily.

I may add that Blochmann had not been more than six months in India before he passed the examination, called the Higher Standard, in the native languages—an examination which very few officers indeed dare approach under two years, that he then bought his discharge, and, rising from post to post, became ultimately Principal of the Madrasah, and a Gold Medallist and M.A. of the University of Calcutta. His translation of the *Ain-i-Akbari*, his great attainments as a Persian and Arabic scholar, had secured him a reputation spreading even to the learned in Europe, when he was unhappily cut off by cholera in 1878.