

TWO YEARS IN AN INDIAN MISSION

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Two Years in an Indian Mission by Herbert Field Blackett

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HERBERT FIELD BLACKETT

**TWO YEARS IN AN
INDIAN MISSION**

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IN
AN INDIAN MISSION.

BY
HERBERT FIELD BLACKETT, M.A.

LATE OF THE CAMBRIDGE MISSION TO DEMLI.

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TO MY FATHER,
WHOSE QUIET EXAMPLE AND WISE COUNSELS
WERE THE BEST PREPARATION
FOR THE WORK OF A MISSIONARY,
THESE PAGES ARE AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED.



PREFACE.

THE first ten of these papers appeared in "Mission Life" last year. As several friends expressed an opinion that they contained some information likely to be useful, I have ventured to have them published in a connected form, with the addition of two new ones to complete the set: otherwise they remain almost unaltered, with their original imperfections. If they serve in any way to help forward in the least degree an interest in the spread of the Gospel in India, by stirring up more prayers and more work for the cause, I shall be abundantly rewarded.

H. F. B.

May, 1884.

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TWO YEARS IN AN INDIAN MISSION.

I.—INTRODUCTORY.

AN experience of two years is not a long one to provide material for a description of a country containing two hundred and fifty million people, possessing a civilisation of two thousand years' standing, and exhibiting every possible variety of belief and custom. But it sometimes happens that those who have been but a short time in a foreign country can relate, with some profit to others, what struck them most in their early experiences, before they became so familiar with the minor details as to forget that these are often just the very things which interest people at home. It will be my object in these papers to relate simply things that came under my own observation, without attempting to enter into larger questions which have been fully discussed by experienced writers, yet at the same time

endeavouring to use their experience to correct any mistakes that might arise from a partial knowledge.

The Gospel probably never met with such obstacles as in India. The first preachers of Christianity under the Roman Empire found among the educated classes a general disbelief in the old systems; they had rather to supply an acknowledged want than to create the sense of it; and among the poorer classes, and the simpler tribes of the provinces, the difficulties were of the normal kind. But when the first Missionaries landed in India, a little more than a century ago, they were confronted by a system enjoying all the advantages of remote antiquity and universal consent, affecting every act of daily life. Hinduism was firmly established when our forefathers were savages; and it was flourishing in the full pride of mature strength when Christianity first began an apparently hopeless attack on the impenetrable mass of superstition and priestcraft. Considering the immense difficulties, the shortness of the time, and the absurd inadequacy of the means, the result has indeed been encouraging, a fact which is not usually realised. People forget that nowhere, and at no time, has the progress of Gospel been rapid. It took 800 years to con-