

**AN ELEMENTARY
GEOGRAPHY OF INDIA,
BURMA AND CEYLON**

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An elementary geography of India, Burma and Ceylon by Henry F. Blanford

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HENRY F. BLANFORD

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BY
HENRY F. BLANFORD, F.R.S.

LATE METEOROLOGICAL REPORTER TO THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

London
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1890

PREFACE

IN this little book the geography of the Indian Empire is described on the same general plan as that adopted by Dr. Geikie in his *Geography of the British Isles*, but with such modifications as were found necessary in dealing with a country far more extensive, diversified, and unfamiliar in most of its aspects. In order to bring so large a subject within the modest limits of less than 200 pages, it has been necessary to restrict the description to such features as are most characteristic and important, and it has not been possible to enter into much detail. Teachers and others who may require such for their own information may readily obtain it in Dr. George Smith's excellent *Students' Geography of British India*, in Sir W. W. Hunter's *Indian Empire*, and especially the *Imperial Gazetteer of India*, and the numerous articles in the ninth edition of the *Encyclopædia Britannica*. Elphinstone's *History of India*, edited by Professor E. B. Cowell, is perhaps the best work of reference for the history of the Indian people under their Hindu and Muhammadan rulers, and for the elucidation of such few historic allusions as are to be met with in these pages. And for a philosophical insight into the character and social condition of the people of India, no work can compare with Sir Alfred Lyall's *Asiatic Studies*.

In the course of long service in India the author has had occasion to visit most parts of the Empire, and much of the general description of the country and its provinces is either based on or controlled by the results of personal observation. But of course the great mass of the information has been taken from other authentic sources, and the author is also indebted to several friends for additional information on certain subjects for which his own means of reference were insufficient.

The statistics of areas, population, etc., are given chiefly for comparison, and in order to inculcate true ideas of proportion, not for the purpose of burdening the pupil's mind with tables of unmeaning figures.

The illustrations are for the most part taken from photographs. Many of those of the natives of India have been copied, with the courteous permission of Dr. Rost, the chief librarian of the India Office, from the beautiful series collected by the Government of India. It is due to Messrs. Cooper and Sons, the engravers, to testify to the truthfulness of their reproduction as woodcuts.

In the spelling of Indian names, the authorised lists issued by the Government of India have been followed. The principle on which these lists have been drawn up is that the names of well known places that have acquired a fixed English spelling, such as Calcutta, Delhi, Lucknow, Cawnpore, etc., are written in the usual form. In the case of others, the native spelling is followed more or less closely in so far as the elemental sounds can be represented by English letters. By attention to a few simple rules the proper pronunciation of these names can be easily mastered.

Consonants have the same sound as in English, observing that *g* is always hard as in *gig*; *ch* has the same sound as in *church*; and *sh* the ordinary English sound as in *shall*. Except after these two letters *h* is always an aspirate, and the consonant that it follows is aspirated.

The accent is thrown on the accented syllable: *á* always has the same sound as in *father*; *ê* that of *a* in *mate* or *ê* in the French *même*; *î* that of *ee* in *feel*; *ô* that of *o* in *pole*; and *û* that of *u* in *rule* or *oo* in *pool*.

The unaccented *a* has generally the sound of *u* in *but*, or better, that of the *o* in *button*; *e* that of *e* in *met* or of the French *ê* in *été*; *i* that of *i* in *jill*; *o* that of *o* in *folly*; and *u* its sound in *put*.

These rules of course do not apply to Anglicised names, nor do they to those of most places in Burma, but Indian names of objects and technical terms, such as *pipul*, *pandit*, *rath*, *vihâra*, *Khâdar*, etc., are spelt and should be pronounced according to the same system. It is to be regretted, perhaps, that the system of accenting the long vowels has not been quite rigorously adhered to, since the *u* in the final syllable *pur* (*pur*, a town), so common in Indian names, though unaccented is a long vowel, and the first *A* in *Aligarh* is long, but not the second. In a few instances, also, the official lists are discordant in the different provinces. Thus the rivers *Són*, *Gandak*, *Mahánadi*, etc., of the Central Provinces and the North-West Provinces appear as the *Soane*, *Gunduk*, *Mahanuddy*, etc., in the Bengal list. In such cases both forms are given in these pages.

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