# THE HUMOUR AND PATHOS OF ANGLO-INDIAN LIFE; EXTRACTS FROM HIS BROTHER'S NOTE-BOOK

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The humour and pathos of Anglo-Indian life; extracts from his brother's note-book by  $\,$  J. E. Mayer  $\,$  8. Ticklemore

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## J. E. MAYER & TICKLEMORE

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## THE HUMOUR AND PATHOS

OF

# ANGLO-INDIAN LIFE.

Extracts from bis Brother's Hote=book,

MADE BY

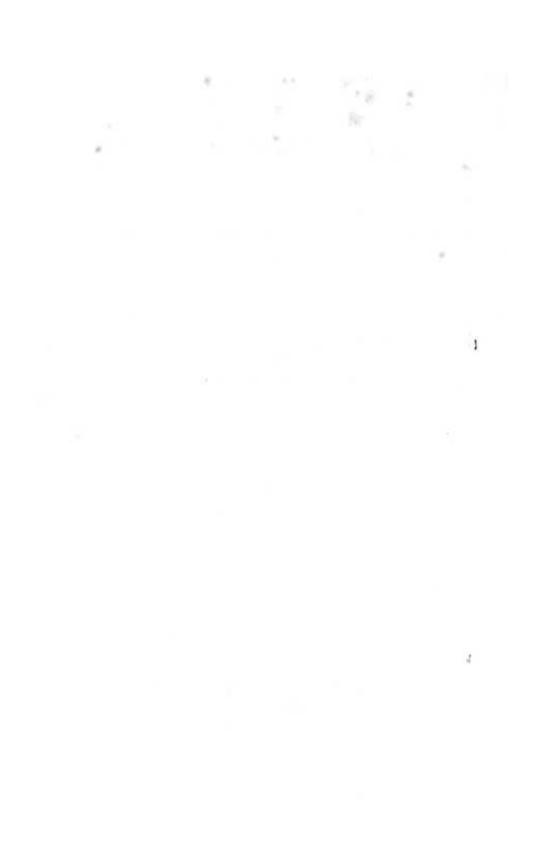
DR. TICKLEMORE.

EDITED BY

J. E. MAYER, M.D.

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### No. I.

INTRODUCTORY,—THE 'ELEPHANTA': CAPTAIN TREVANION
AND MR. MARSTON.

If the reader could call back the flight of time some twenty  $\ell$  years, and with an Ariel's wing transport him or her self on board the homeward-bound P. and O. steamer *Elephanta*, he or she would, on a certain evening between the hours of 7 and 8 p.m., or rather on most evenings at that time, have seen assembled in the saloon, near the piano, some twenty persons, ladies and gentlemen, standing, sitting, or lounging about. In the centre of the group stood Captain James Ward, the commander of the vessel, a tall, thin, wiry man, with handsome, but weather-beaten, features, who had been for many years in her Majesty's Navy, and retained in all respects the manner and bearing of a gentleman.

On the Captain's right hand sat Lady Jervois, the young widow of old General Sir Thomas Jervois, K.C.B., and a very pretty sample of widowhood the Lady Sarah was. Her mourning became her wonderfully, and showed the graceful outlines of her figure to perfection—a figure so beautifully proportioned that the most rigid censor could find nothing to object to, unless it might be a slight tendency to embonyoint, which many regarded as an additional charm. Generally Lady Jervois bore her recent loss with heautiful resignation; sometimes, indeed, the piquancy of her observations or replies

showed that her vivacity, if subdued or scotched by affliction, was not altogether killed; and as the world at large, and especially small worlds like those on board ship, will ever build on slight foundations, the universal opinion seemed to be that she would not long remain a widow.

The two ladies next in place to the Lady Sarah were Mrs. Smythe and Mrs. Forbes; the former of these ladies sat on the Captain's left hand, and the latter next to Mrs. Smythe; both possessed pleasing features, and were good-looking persons, and both estimated the value of their respective positions to a hair's breadth. Both of them were wives of civilians in the Indian Service of about equal standing; the first a commissioner, the second a collector. In manners and appearance both these ladies had much in common; both exhibited certain points of difference, which attracted the attention of the oi polloi on board, and probably caused them some amusement. Mrs. Smythe was shocked, and felt immediately called on to correct the transgressor, if anyone was thoughtless or unmannerly enough to call her Mrs. Smith; and Mrs. Forbes, whose sister kept a milliner's shop in Ayr, lost no opportunity of calling attention to the pedigree of her husband. She possessed several books on heraldry, and was in some degree acquainted with the shields, cognizances, and crests of most of the titled families in Scotland. She was absolutely perfect in those with whom her husband's family had internarried, or were entitled to claim kindred. Whenever an heraldic séance had taken place (as Mrs. Smythe used to term the researches and expositions of Mrs. Forbes), the former lady would compassionately remark, as soon as her friend was out of hearing, ' Poor thing! her little weakness in this respect serves to amuse her and occupy her mind; her own family were nobodies, that we all know, and she has no children, therefore we must make excuses for her.'

Good-nature, perhaps, was not one of Mrs. Smythe's strongest points, and she was a little over-sensitive regarding the pronunciation of her own name, but, nevertheless, her talents as a musician won universal, well-merited admiration. A good voice had been greatly improved by good training, and the results were very charming. She was also a very superior performer on the piano, and was consequently regarded as a great acquisition to the whole party on board the *Elephanta*.

Two other ladies only (although the number of lady passengers was nearly forty) appear to have attached themselves to the Captain's party. They were both spinsters, Miss Perkins and Miss Wiseman. These two girls were certainly to be commiserated, inasmuch as they had gone out to friends or relatives in India in the hope of exchanging their maiden names for some others, and had not succeeded in effecting this much-coveted exchange. Their temporary protectors having been removed by death, sickness, war, or other unhappy causes, nothing remained for them but to return to the land from whence they came. Under such circumstances it is not wonderful that an air of disappointment hung over them, and that they sometimes gave utterance to remarks that betrayed the feeling which it would have been wiser to have concealed. How it happened that these young ladies failed to achieve their object I am quite unable to explain; they each of them possessed an average share of good looks and feminine attractions, nor were they destitute of most of those accomplishments in which young ladies strive to shine. They played and sang a little: they were grand at croquet, first rate at converting a glass or delit jug into a china vase: did card and shell marks; under stood the language of flowers; could talk with their fingers; danced round dances with a constancy and resolution that defied fatigue, exhaustion, or even daylight; and, to crown