
The Life of ... Sir Henry Marion Durand

Durand Henry Mortimer

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Author: Durand Henry Mortimer

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THE
LIFE OF MAJOR-GENERAL
SIR HENRY MARION DURAND,
K.C.S.I., C.B.,
OF THE ROYAL ENGINEERS.

BY
Henry Marion
H. M. DURAND, C.S.I.,
OF THE BENGAL CIVIL SERVICE, BARRISTER-AT-LAW.

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SIR HENRY DURAND.

ESSAYS AND MINUTES.

I.

CENTRAL INDIA UNDER BRITISH SUPREMACY.

(Written for the *Calcutta Review* in 1850.)

THREE-AND-THIRTY years ago, the few British statesmen, who in those days paid any attention to the affairs of India, or were interested in its welfare, knew that the time had arrived when a great effort on the part of the British Power was inevitable. They were aware that that Power—from its character and constitution the friend of order and of security of person and property—was necessarily in permanent antagonism to the chaotic misrule and license, which were devastating not only Central India, but also all the adjacent territories. Our statesmen felt, therefore, that the decisive struggle between the Anglo-Indian armies and their numerous, but ill-organized, opponents could not longer be deferred. The conflict was for the ascendancy of good or evil. Never, in the course of our rapid rise to supremacy in India, has the sword been drawn more justly, or with more humane motives, than by the Marquis of Hastings in 1817; and seldom did God grant a good cause more entire success.

In these times it is not easy to realize in idea the state into which the ceaseless strife and turmoil (internal and external) of the Mahratta Governments, and of the Rajput principalities, abetted by the common foe of all, the Pindarris, had plunged the wretched people of Central India. One-and-thirty years of com-