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ENGLAND AND INDIA



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ENGLAND AND INDIA

A RECORD OF PROGRESS DURING

95 A HUNDRED YEARS

1785—1885

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BY

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CONTENTS

	PAGE
PREFACE	vii
CHAPTER I.	
THE AGE OF PITT AND WELLINGTON (1785—1815)	1
CHAPTER II.	
THE AGE OF CANNING AND GREY (1815—1835).	28
CHAPTER III.	
THE AGE OF PEEL AND PALMERSTON (1835—1865)	61
CHAPTER IV.	
THE AGE OF DISRAELI AND GLADSTONE (1865—1885).	98
CHAPTER V.	
CONCLUSION	120
APPENDIX.	
INDIAN EXPENDITURE IN 1887 AND 1897	161

P R E F A C E

THE present year has been a year of rejoicing all over the British Empire in all parts of the globe; in India it has been the most disastrous year since the country passed under British rule. A severe plague has all but depopulated the great cities of one province; a destructive earthquake has ruined the towns and villages of another; and a famine, the most widespread in its area ever known in India, has desolated the country from one extremity to the other.

But the famine of 1897 is only one of a series of such calamities which have visited India almost periodically within the present century. Famines are a thing of the past in Western Europe; in India every generation, every period of twenty years, has its tale of distress to tell. The year of the accession of the Queen was marked by a severe famine which desolated Northern India, and counted its victims by the million. The year of the Indian Mutiny was the commencement of the next twenty years, marked by three great famines—the famines of the North-West, of Orissa, and of Behar. The year in which the Queen assumed the title of the Empress of India was the year of a more terrible famine in Madras, which swept away five millions of the people of Southern India. And the year of the Queen's Diamond Jubilee has, unfortunately, been