



Charles H. E. Brookfield.

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Charles H. E. Brookfield.

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REMINISCENCES

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RANDOM REMINISCENCES

BY

CHARLES H. E. BROOKFIELD

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TO
P. B.

PREFACE

I HAVE endeavoured in these random reminiscences to avoid an error into which the autobiographer is prone to fall—that of taking himself, his actions, and his thoughts too seriously. I am not aware that I have included in this volume anything which appears to me of importance; I trust that I have not, either, committed the impertinence of expressing any views.

One of my grandfathers used to tell a story of an old Quaker who lived in the North of England about a hundred years ago. One morning, as he sat in his study, his son burst into the room clad in a scarlet coat with his hunting-cap cocked on one side. The young man half seated himself on the corner of the writing-table, set his arms akimbo, swung his leg defiantly, and exclaimed, 'Father, I'm an atheist, and I don't care who knows it!' The old man looked up from his work, pushed his spectacles on to his forehead, and then replied in measured tones, 'Well, John, if tha beest, tha needst not mak' sic a Tom-fool o' thase!'

Everything in this book is, to the best of my belief, absolutely true, though here and there I have altered a name. If one or two stories should seem familiar, I would remind the reader that lack of novelty is an essential element in a reminiscence. Owing to an unfortunate weakness which I have for hearing myself speak, I have repeatedly told my stories to my friends, but I am so sanguine as to hope that some may buy my book whom I have not yet the honour of numbering in that long-suffering sodality, and that they may find here and there something to entertain them.

For personal and other reasons I have omitted nine-tenths of what I remember.

CHARLES H. E. BROOKFIELD.

DORKING, 1902.

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