

LONDON MEMORIES

S. K. BHUYAN



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FROM A HISTORIAN'S HAVERSACK
LONDON MEMORIES

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P R E F A C E

This book London Memories is primarily a record of the author's experiences and impressions gained during a stay or nearly two years in England, from September 1936 to July 1938. The author was engaged in research work as an Internal Student of London University ; and he utilized the opportunity of visiting important centres of learning and other places of interest, of meeting men and women of all strata of society, and of studying the life and character of the people of England and of the Continent. The narratives do not pretend to be a systematic chronological survey, as the author has ascribed more importance is an incident or an impression, as it came to his recollection than to a proper order of time. After all, a man's chronology is hedged in by his limited span of life; and in the present case, it is a matter of only two years, 1936 to 1938.

The first chapter of the book entitled Distant Albion's Shore depicts the author's longing is see England cherished by him since his childhood, and stimulated subsequently by the study of English authors and contacts with eminent Britishers:

The second chapter Fresh Woods and Pastures New describes his work in the field of History, culminating in an urge to continue his research in a repository of books and records in England:

The third chapter Desperate Diggings provides an account of his labours in the India Office Library, London, enlivened by extramural associations, visits and activities:

The fourth chapter Grace Abounding presents a picture of the spirit of helpfulness and courtesy inherent in the character of the British people:

The fifth chapter Piccadilly, Piccadilly, Piccadilly: offers a glimpse of the author's search for the soul in the midst of pageantry and glamour:

The sixth chapter In the Enternal City describes his visit to Rome, and his contact there with the distinguished literati of the day: and

The seventh and the last chapter The Whole World Kin embodies episodically the author's observations and reflections on unity in diversity as far as human nature in concerned. The fundamental ideas are however interspersed in the different chapters without any specific delimitation.

The author says in one place – “One has got to cultivate the common things we all men and women share; and in our contacts we have to emphasise on these common elements, forgetting the individual and environmental differences, and life becomes worth livings. Of course, one must take with him a fund of sincerity and good-will, and charity and love, and the whole world can be conquered.”All the narratives, as will be seen, have been dominated by the author's quest for sweetness and light, for the good and the beautiful, in the role of a philosophical observer and a citizen of the world.....