

**'ONLY A SOLDIER,' BEING
EXTRACTS
FROM THE JOURNAL OF
AN INDIAN SUBALTERN**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649323982

'Only a soldier,' being extracts from the journal of an Indian subaltern by James W. Bryans

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

www.triestepublishing.com

JAMES W. BRYANS

**'ONLY A SOLDIER,' BEING
EXTRACTS
FROM THE JOURNAL OF
AN INDIAN SUBALTERN**

"ONLY A SOLDIER."

BRING

*EXTRACTS FROM THE JOURNAL OF
AN INDIAN SUBALTERN.*

BY

JAMES W. BRYANS,

*Captain (Retired). Late Bombay Army,
Fellow of the Royal Geographical Society.*



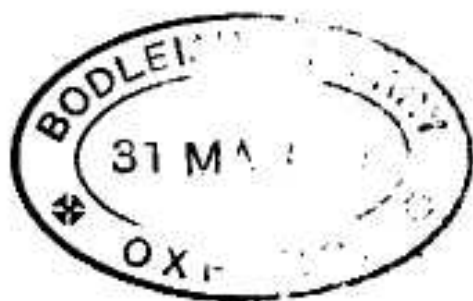
LONDON :

JAS. NISBET & CO., 21, BERNERS STREET.

1882.

Copyright. All rights reserved.

251. g. 676.



"Whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses."—1 TIM. vi. 12.





“ONLY A SOLDIER.”

BEING EXTRACTS FROM THE JOURNAL OF
AN INDIAN SUBALTERN.

THE scene of my simple story is laid in the first instance at Poona, a large and favourite military station in Western India. The time is about six o'clock one sultry afternoon, early in the month of July, 1852. Let us turn into this bungalow in H. M. 8th Lines, and what do we see on entering? On a somewhat ricketty old charpoy, or bedstead, which

has seen many a long dusty march and much ill-usage, lies a young man evidently on the sick list. I say "young," because he cannot be above two-and-twenty. He is alone, the doctor having just left him a few minutes since. The English mail, with letters and papers from Westmoreland, has arrived but remains untouched, not even looked at. He is restless and feverish. The articles of furniture in the room, you observe, are few and far between, and in "light marching order," and you might have some difficulty in guessing who the occupant is; but as you see a sword and crimson sash hanging up on a peg against the wall, a black cloth cap with a regimental number "XXII" on it suspended by a chin-strap on another peg, together with two bullock trunks and sundry other indications of military life scattered here and there, you at once very naturally come to the con-

clusion that the owner is an officer. So far you have guessed rightly.

Presently the tall and youthful figure of a soldier in his red jacket,—for it is the rainy season—with the black facings of H.M. 64th, enters the room, and the man asking in a half playful, yet respectful tone, “May I come in, sir?”, the officer, who is greatly cheered by the friendly voice, motions him to take a seat near his side. After a little conversation, which seems an effort to the invalid, the soldier gently washes the officer’s face and hands, combs his hair, re-adjusts the pillow and bedclothes, puts within convenient reach some little necessaries for his comfort during the night, lights an oil wick tumbler lamp; this done, he kneels down, and with his face in his cap commends in audible and simple prayer the young officer to God’s fatherly and gracious keeping for the night. He con-

cludes in these touching words, "Lord, hear this my poor prayer for Christ's sake, and pardon me if I have asked anything amiss, for, Lord, thou seest me and knowest that I am *only a soldier!*"

The man now rose from his knees, raised his hand respectfully, and said, "I'll be here, sir, first thing in the morning after gun fire, Good night." He then drew aside the bamboo check in front of the door, and, joining a comrade outside, ran across the parade ground and disappeared in the direction of the Horse Artillery lines.

Having now briefly introduced the reader to these two personages, whom God was going to draw so nearly together for his own good and wise purposes, let us make their more intimate acquaintance.

Lieutenant Brandon of the 22nd Regiment N. I., and of about four years

service, had been, as we see, laid aside from all active duty by a sharp attack of Deccan fever, which not unfrequently attacks new comers during the rains, and thus prevented him from rejoining his regiment, then stationed at Kurrachee, in Scinde, about 800 miles distant.

Private Harry Johnson of the 64th, a Cumberland man from the neighbourhood of Keswick, and then at the Poona School of Musketry, was the son of a dependent in Brandon's home.

These two had therefore been acquainted in early life as lads together in that kind of intimacy which subsists between boys of different station. Many a row on Lake Windermere they had together, many a prowl in the woods looking after birds' nests and nuts, many—I grieve to say—raids in the orchards after forbidden fruit, when unripe apples and plums were sur-