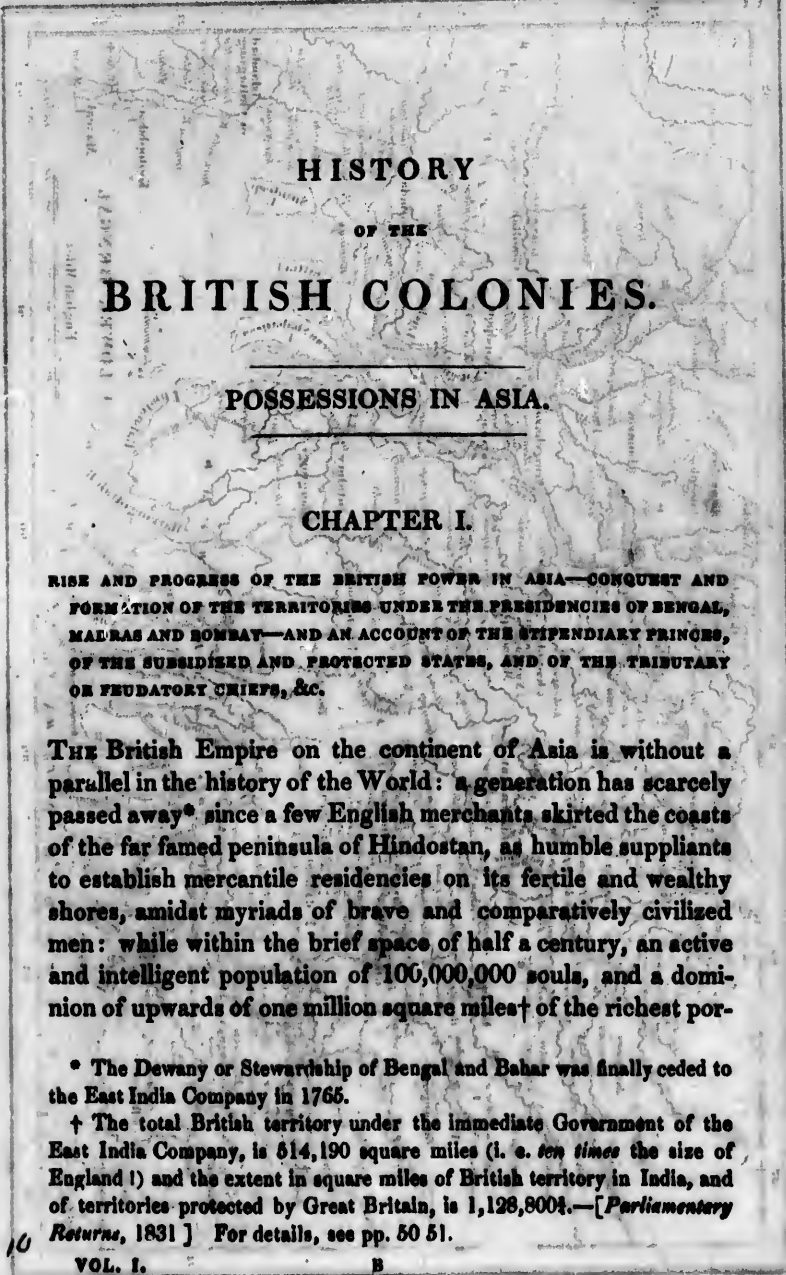




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HISTORY OF THE BRITISH COLONIES.

POSSESSIONS IN ASIA.

CHAPTER I.

RISE AND PROGRESS OF THE BRITISH POWER IN ASIA—CONQUEST AND FORMATION OF THE TERRITORIES UNDER THE PRESIDENCIES OF BENGAL, MAHRAS AND BOMBAY—AND AN ACCOUNT OF THE STIPENDIARY PRINCES, OF THE SUBSIDIZED AND PROTECTED STATES, AND OF THE TRIBUTARY OR FEUDATORY CHIEFS, &c.

THE British Empire on the continent of Asia is without a parallel in the history of the World: a generation has scarcely passed away* since a few English merchants skirted the coasts of the far famed peninsula of Hindostan, as humble suppliants to establish mercantile residencies on its fertile and wealthy shores, amidst myriads of brave and comparatively civilized men: while within the brief space of half a century, an active and intelligent population of 100,000,000 souls, and a dominion of upwards of one million square miles† of the richest por-

* The Dewany or Stewardship of Bengal and Bahar was finally ceded to the East India Company in 1765.

† The total British territory under the immediate Government of the East India Company, is 614,190 square miles (i. e. ten times the size of England!) and the extent in square miles of British territory in India, and of territories protected by Great Britain, is 1,128,8004.—[*Parliamentary Returns*, 1831] For details, see pp. 50 51.