PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION

In order to explain the aims and purposes with which I wrote this book, and the principles which I employed in writing it, I can do no better than quote from the Preface to the first edition:

"As this book is intended for the general reader I have tried, as far as possible, to leave nothing unexplained. And as I believe that civilization is more than religion and art I have tried, however briefly, to cover all aspects of Indian life and thought. Though primarily intended for Westerners I hope that the book may be of some interest to Indian, Pákistání and Sinhalese readers also, as the interpretation of a friendly mleccha, who has great love and respect for the civilizations of their lands and many friends among the descendants of the people whose culture he studies. The work may also be of help to students who are embarking on a course of serious Indological study; for their benefit I have included detailed bibliographies and appendices. But, for the ordinary reader, the work is cumbersome enough, and therefore I have not given references for every statement. I have tried to reduce Sanskrit terms to a minimum, but the reader without background knowledge will find definitions of all Indian words used in the text in the index, which also serves as a glossary.

"Sanskrit, Prákrit and Páli words are transliterated according to the standard system at present used by Indologists; this, with its plethora of diacritic marks, may at first seem irritating, but it is the only sound method of expressing the original spelling and gives a clear idea of the correct pronunciation. Modern Indian proper names are generally given in the most usual spelling* with the addition of marks over the long vowels, to indicate their approximately correct pronunciation. Throughout this work the word "India" is of course used in its geographical sense, and includes Pákistán. Though very inadequately, I have tried to include in the scope of this survey Ceylon, whose culture owed much to India but developed many individual features of its own.

"The translations, except where specified, are my own. I lay no claim to great literary merit for them, and have not been able to reproduce the untranslatable incantation of the originals. In most cases they are not literal translations, since the character of Indian classical languages is so unlike that of English that literal translations

* Except in a few cases where, to avoid confusion, I have substituted s for the more usual Š, e.g. Panjáb, Satlej, etc.
are at the best dull and at the worst positively ludicrous. In places I have taken some liberty with the originals, in order to make their purport clearer to the Western reader, but in all cases I have tried to give an honest interpretation of the intentions of their authors, as I understand them."

Whatever the shortcomings of The Wonder that was India, it has clearly served a useful purpose, and in this I take legitimate pride. Though one of a series of surveys of ancient civilizations intended mainly for the general reader, it has been widely used as a college textbook, not only in England but also in India itself and in America, and it has already encouraged several young men and women in at least three continents to proceed further in the field of Indology. When I submitted the typescript of the first edition to the publishers, I feared that my work fell between two stools, being too dull for the ordinary reader and not sufficiently erudite for the serious student. Perhaps this judgment is a fair one, and the reviewer who referred to the book as a "charnel house of facts" was not far out. Nevertheless, the fact that a new edition is demanded proves that The Wonder has met a widespread need, however inadequately.

It is now eight and a half years since The Wonder that was India first appeared. 'In that time no very startling new light has been thrown on early India, though the indefatigable work of archaeologists in both India and Pakistan is slowly revealing more of the remains of the prehistoric and historical past of the sub-continent. Recent excavations, however, have not radically altered the general picture of pre-Buddhist India, though they have tended to confirm the suspicion of some Western Indologists and the earnest conviction of many Indians that the culture of this period was by no means as backward as some minimalists have suggested.

Of the historical periods many new and valuable studies have been produced since 1954, and fresh light has been thrown on several aspects of Indian history and culture, but nothing has been written to alter the general outline, and most of the problems of Indology which were outstanding ten years ago remain unsolved. There is as yet no real certainty about the date of Kaniśka, despite the appearance of new evidence. The dark periods of Indian history, such as that between the time of the Buddha and the rise of the Mauryas, and that between the decline of the Kusāṇas and the rise of the Guptas, are still almost as dark as ever. In the field of religion many questions, such as those connected with the growth of theistic devotion and Tantricism, are still unanswered. In fact every branch of Indian studies still offers scope for unlimited research.

In preparing this edition I have taken account of several recent
archaeological discoveries. The chapter on political life and thought has been considerably revised in the light of the evidence that the Sukraniti is a 19th-century production and therefore quite irrelevant. My suspicions about this were confirmed by the work of Dr. L. Gopal (p. 81, n.), to whom I am much indebted. The section on music in Chapter VIII has been largely rewritten on the advice of my colleague Mr. N. Jairazbhoy, who pointed out several mistakes in the original text and gave me the benefit of his own researches in the history of Indian music. My friend Mr. D. Barrett, of the British Museum, has given me valuable advice on the most recent views on the dating of certain important works of art, and the text has been amended accordingly. Various errors and anachronisms have been corrected, and many stylistic lapses, of which the first edition was all too full, have been put right. Some of the illustrations have been replaced by better ones.

In the last ten years several changes have taken place in the state boundaries of India, such as the disappearance of Hyderābād and the division of the former Bombay State into Mahārāshtra and Gujarāt. These changes have been taken into account, and as far as possible I have employed for place names the new official spellings of the Indian Government. In some instances I have done this with considerable misgiving, especially in the case of Vārānasī which seems an unnecessary archaism for Benares; but as this is now the name by which the sacred city is officially referred to in India, and which is likely to become more widely known with the years, it seems right, on balance, that I should use it. Ganges has no real justification except that it is traditionally the name by which the great river is known in Europe and America, so I have no misgivings about substituting the officially accepted Gänghä, the name by which the river is known in every Indian language.

Several additions have been made to the bibliography and a few works which were included in the first edition have been omitted. I am quite conscious of the inadequacy of the bibliography as a guide to the serious student. In defence I can only point out that it is meant primarily for the general reader who wishes to go further in one or other branch of Indian studies; the university student will obtain the bibliographical information he requires from his teacher. Certain Continental reviewers have complained of the absence from the bibliography of several important books in French and German. I must make it clear that works in languages other than English have been included only when particularly significant. Few "general readers" in the English-speaking world are able to read lengthy volumes in German, and even those who have some equipment in
French are disinclined to use it for such purposes. This is very regrettable, but it is a fact which cannot be ignored. Hence many important Continental works are omitted. If ever a translation is made of this book in French or German it is to be hoped that the bibliography will be adapted to the language concerned.

In conclusion I would again record my gratitude to those who assisted me in one way or another in the writing of the first edition: Dr. F. R. Allchin, Dr. A. A. Bake, the late Dr. L. D. Barnett, Professor J. Brough, Professor A. T. Hatto, Dr. J. R. Marr, Professor A. K. Narain, Professor C. H. Philips, Mr. P. Rawson, Mr. C. A. Rylands, Dr. Devahuti Singhal and Dr. Arthur Waley. I am also grateful to numerous reviewers, some of whose suggestions have been adopted in this edition, and to many friends who have offered helpful advice and criticism.

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PREFACE TO THE THIRD EDITION

The second edition of this book was published in New York in 1963, and before it could appear in Britain a paper-back edition was called for, thus making it possible to incorporate further alterations and corrections. No drastic changes have been made in this edition, but a few notes on recent archaeological discoveries have been added. Small emendations and stylistic improvements have been incorporated, and additions have been made to the bibliography.

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