

## TWO ENGLISH LANDOWNERS IN BENGAL.

Messrs. J. R. and H. J. RAINEY.

The two brothers whose portraits are here given are members of a family which, during the last hundred years, has closely followed the growth of our Indian Empire, from the time when their grandfather, Major James Rainey, of the Bengal Cavalry, served throughout the first Nepal War, at the beginning of the present century. This distinguished officer's son, Captain W. H. S. Rainey, after serving for some years in the 3rd Buffs, retired from the army, and, having acquired extensive landed properties in India, remained in that country until his death in 1861. His two sons, Mr. J. Rudd Rainey and Mr. H. James Rainey, then succeeded to the estates, and are, we believe, the only Europeans to be found in the whole of India who are actual owners of landed estates held under the famous Permanent Settlement of Lord Cornwallis, dating from 1793. This important property is known as the Khulna Estate, extending over very many square miles in the district of that name in Lower Bengal, rather more than a hundred miles from Calcutta, the headquarters being known as Rainey Villa, Khulna. It is, perhaps, needless to say that the Messrs. Rainey are more intimately acquainted with Lower Bengal and its inhabitants, their customs and their religion, than any other living English-



MR. J. RUDD RAINEY.

man. There is no subject connected with the progress and welfare of the Bengali community on which their opinion and advice could not be safely sought and adopted, a merit which has been recognised on very many occasions by the high authorities responsible for the Government and well-being of the Province. The exigencies of the public service have so frequently necessitated the transfer of district officers from one part of the province to another, making it thus very difficult for them to gain any great local experience, that the invaluable aid rendered by these two gentlemen has been frequently acknowledged during the 30 years for which the Messrs. Rainey have administered their extensive estates. In addition to the arduous duties inseparable from their position as landholders, each of these gentlemen has devoted much time and attention to other matters of great interest concerning their adopted country. Mr. J. Rudd Rainey, who is a Fellow of the Royal Geographical Society, is a profound Bengali scholar, and has accomplished the unexampled literary work of translating into that language the voluminous "Life of H.R.H. the Prince Consort," by Sir Theodore Martin—this

being the first time that the book has been translated into any Indian language. Her Majesty the Queen-Empress and other members of our Royal Family, as also the Emperor of Germany, have honoured Mr. Rainey by accepting copies of his work, for which they thanked him; and at the time of its publication high commendation was accorded to it in the columns of the *Times*, as well as by such great authorities as Professor Max Müller and Sir Monier Williams. Indeed, in completing successfully his arduous task, Mr. Rudd Rainey did good service to the nation. On another occasion he delivered an address to the Agricultural Society of India on "The Protection of Insectivorous Birds in the Interests of Agriculture," a paper which not only created much sensation in India, where, at the instance of the Chamber of Commerce, the Government instituted an inquiry into the matter, but also was very favourably noticed at home by the *Field* and other influential journals. Viscount Cross, who was then Secretary of State for India, took an opportunity of fully recognising the public spirit displayed by Mr. Rudd Rainey in this matter. A valuable paper on the Gangetic Delta, or Sunderban, was also contributed by him to the Royal Geographical Society a few years ago, whilst to his other public services he added much good work as Honorary Magistrate during a long period. Mr. H. James Rainey has been in no way behind his brother in literary enterprise: he is the author of a "History of Calcutta," and has contributed numerous papers on historical and scientific subjects to the well-known Indian quarterly, the *Calcutta Review*, and to the "Proceedings of the Asiatic Society." In his character as Shikari and naturalist he is well and popularly known throughout India under his *nom de plume* of "Young Nimrod," and has amply justified his sporting fame by slaying many tigers on foot, instead of from the comparatively safe retreat of a howdah. No less could be expected from the great-grandson of so well-known a sportsman of his day as Captain William Rainey, of Greenville, Deputy-Lieutenant of county Down, Ireland. Both brothers have remained young in spirit throughout their most active career, and may look forward to many more years of good service and popular esteem and respect.



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