



The Stranglers: The Cult of Thuggee and Its Overthrow in British India

By George Bruce

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Dust jacket notes: "'Bring tobacco!' says the prosperous Brahmin merchant to his companions, and the timorous traveler who has taken refuge in their party smiles with anticipation. A moment later a yellow-and-white scarf flashes around his neck from behind, and he is jerked to the ground with the life throttled out of him. This is no kindly company of merchants, but a party of death-dealing Thugs, the ritual murderers who terrorized the roads of early 19th-century India in the name of the bloodthirsty goddess Kali. This book tells in grim yet fascinating detail the story of the cult of Thuggee in British India during the years 1828 to 1841 and of the young Bengal Army officer who finally managed to suppress its bloody activities. William Sleeman was one of those rare Englishmen who came to the East without an Occidental chip on his shoulder. Alert, versed in Hindustani and in the labyrinths of the Hindu religion, he was one of the first to suspect how deeply Thuggee had penetrated all of Indian life, and almost alone in the struggle to bring its menace to the attention of an indifferent administration. In the process Sleeman learned the Thugs' secret language, recorded their confessions, and involved his life inextricably with theirs. George Bruce has created this engrossing book from Sleeman's own reports to Governor-General Bentinck of India and from the confessions of the Thugs themselves, in which these proud, fatalistic assassins divulged the grisly secrets of their trade. Both as history and as crackling true adventure, this book provides an unforgettable glimpse of a society in which the cult of death was deeply rooted in life." Hardcover, 5 7/8" x 8 7/8", 234 pages, with 8 illustrations and a map.

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