THE RELIGION OF THE CRESCENT: BEING THE JAMES LONG LECTURES ON MUHAMMADANISM

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649111183

The religion of the Crescent: being the James Long lectures on Muhammadanism by W. St. Clair Tisdall

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Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd. Cover @ 2017

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W. ST. CLAIR TISDALL

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NON-CHRISTIAN RELIGIOUS SYSTEMS

THE RELIGION OF THE CRESCENT

BEING THE JAMES LONG LECTURES ON MUHAMMADANISM

REV. W. ST. CLAIR TISDALL, M.A., D.D.

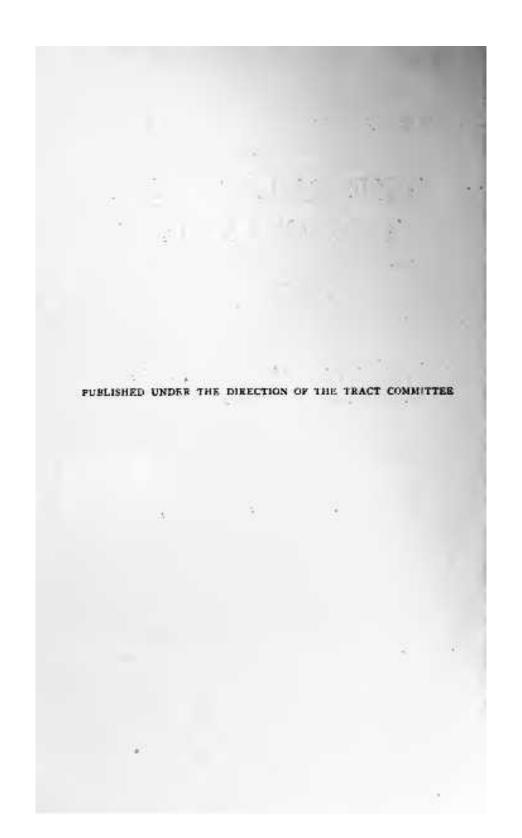
Sometime Secretary of the C.M.S. Mission, Jul/a, Isfahan, Persia

THIRD EDITION, REVISED NASIAN

LONDON

SOCIETY FOR PROMOTING CHRISTIAN KNOWLEDGE NORTHUMBERLAND AVENUE, W.C. ; 43, QUEEN VICTORIA STREET, E.C. BRIGHTON : 120, NORTH STREET NEW YORK : E. S. GORHAM

1910



BP 161 T5242 1910

TO THE RIGHT HON. SIR JOHN H. KENNAWAY, BART., C.B., M.P., PRESIDENT OF THE CHURCH MISSIONARY SOCIETY,

THIS LITTLE BOOK

IS DEDICATED

By THE AUTHOR.

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PREFACE.

IN publishing a third edition of these Lectures, I do not find much to alter. The James Long Lectureship was founded some years ago with the object of endeavouring to spread among the people of England reliable information with reference to the nature and teachings of the main non-Christian religions of the world, and also regarding the methods adopted by and the measure of success vouchsafed to Christian Missions among the adherents of such faiths. The Trustees endeavour to secure the delivery of lectures on Hinduism, Buddhism, Muhammadanism, etc., by competent Lecturers, whose acquaintance with their respective subjects is not only literary and theoretical but practical also. On several occasions they have appointed me to lecture on Islâm, as well as on other religions and philosophies. The Lectures contained in the present volume are one result of my attempts to discharge the pleasing duties thus imposed upon me. I trust they may meet with as favourable a reception in this third edition as in

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the second. They have also been delivered orally in many parts of England.

I may be permitted to point out the limits within which I have attempted to confine myself in dealing with the very extensive subject of Muhammadanism. To do so is necessary in order to anticipate possible misunderstanding. Sunni Muhammadanism alone is treated of. I have taken four points and four points only, and endeavoured to deal with them as fully and accurately as space permitted. The four aspects of Islâm dealt with in this volume are (1) its Strength, (2) its Weakness, (3) its Origin, and (4) its Influence. It will be seen therefore that it did not lie within my province to dwell at any length upon the biography of Muhammad, the psychological problems presented by his character, the history of the spread of Islâm, the number of Muhammadan sects and their various tenets, the vast subject of Muslim mysticism and its origin, its connexion with Hindû Pantheism and Gnosticism, and many other very interesting subjects connected with the religion. When compelled to deal with any of these matters, I have done so as briefly as possible consistently with clearness. Though I have more than once referred to Neo-Muhammadanism, if I may so style the new Muslim (so-called) school of thought now coming into prominence in

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