

**THE NAMES OF THE STARS  
AND CONSTELLATIONS  
COMPILED FROM THE  
LATIN, GREEK, AND ARABIC**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649017331

The names of the stars and constellations compiled from the Latin, Greek, and Arabic by W. H. Higgins

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**W. H. HIGGINS**

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THE NAMES OF THE  
STARS AND CONSTELLATIONS

COMPILED FROM THE LATIN, GREEK,  
AND ARABIC;

WITH THEIR DERIVATIONS AND MEANINGS:

TOGETHER WITH THE TWENTY-EIGHT MOONSTATIONS,  
OF THE ZODIAC, KNOWN TO THE ARABS.

BY

W. H. HIGGINS, M.B.



LEICESTER: SAMUEL CLARKE, 5, GALLOWTREE GATE.

LONDON: HAMILTON, ADAMS, & CO.

1882.

184. g. 76

SAMUEL CLARKE, PRINTER, 5, GALLOWTREE GATE, LEICESTER.

## PREFACE.

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THE Author has hastily compiled the following notes originally intended to form part of a small book, that he hopes to publish later on, upon the Names connected with the Stars and Constellations. He finds that otherwise he runs every risk of being forestalled, and of losing all credit for the arduous labours and research of many months.

Just as the Constellation, "*Canis Minor*," was called "*Procyon*" and "*Antecanis*,"—meaning the "*Precursor-Dog*," from the fact of its rising before and giving warning of "*The Sultry Dog-Star*," "*Sirius*," or "*Caniculus*" (whose appearance, in turn, foretold the Rising of the Nile to the ancient Egyptians)—so this compilation may be looked upon as the Author's "*Probiblion*," or "*Antelibellus*"—his "*Precursor book*"—the publishing of which anticipates and gives notice of the "*Liber*" that he is preparing upon the "*Names of the Stars and Constellations*:" Latin, Greek, Arabic, &c. (and which he trusts will not foretell the rising of "*nil*").

Certain Star-names are met with in Lists or Tables, and on Celestial Spheres or Charts. These are apparently in some eastern language; since, with a few exceptions, they are obviously not Latin, Greek, or from any modern tongue. They appear to be put down without rule, and are often much mutilated; probably because writers have carelessly copied from one another from time to time, and being ignorant

of the meaning of the Names have spelt them according to fancy and at hap-hazard.

No English writer on Astronomy seems to have had any interest in tracing these "Star-Names" to their original languages, and thus assigning some meaning to them; though they are pretty well known to be chiefly Arabic, however corrupted.

The compiler of this little work has endeavoured—"non sine magno labore"—to rescue these interesting relics of past ages, to discover the correct way of spelling them, and thereby to elicit their original meanings.

In short, he has laboured to extricate the original names (first bestowed probably by Arabs in the level Desert, as they lay awake during the sultry eastern nights, and surveyed in their clear skies the glittering stars in fanciful Groups, and watched their risings and settings) from the absurd corruptions and truncations due to the lapse of centuries and to ignorance of the language from which they have been taken.

Much information has been obtained from "*Ideler*," a German, who wrote a work on the Arabic Star-names in 1810, but every name has also been worked out, with some aid from a scholar in Eastern tongues, and also independently, from the Arabic itself and other languages.

In conclusion the compiler begs to observe, that so far as he can learn, the meanings of the Star-names from Arabic, &c., have never before this been published in English, and that he here offers information not known even to students of the Stars and Constellations, and trusts that his "*Libellus*" may interest them and meet with a favourable reception not only from them, but from the reading public generally.

W. H. H.

*Leicester, April, 1882.*



## CONTENTS.

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			PAGE
1	Ursa Major .. ..	The Great Bear .. ..	15
2	Ursa Minor .. ..	The Little Bear .. ..	17
3	Boötes .. ..	The Herdsman .. ..	18
4	Draco .. ..	The Dragon .. ..	19
5	Hercules .. ..	The Kneeler .. ..	20
6	Ophiuchus .. ..	The Serpent-Bearer .. ..	21
7	Serpens .. ..	The Serpent .. ..	21
8	Corona Borealis .. ..	The Northern Crown .. ..	22
9	Lyra .. ..	The Lyre .. ..	22
10	Cygnus .. ..	The Swan .. ..	23
11	Aquila .. ..	The Eagle .. ..	24
12	Delphinus .. ..	The Dolphin .. ..	25
13	Cepheus .. ..	The King .. ..	25
14	Cassiopea .. ..	The Lady in Chair .. ..	26
15	Andromeda .. ..	The Chained Lady .. ..	26
16	Perseus .. ..	The Lover .. ..	27
17	Pegasus .. ..	The Winged Horse .. ..	27
18	Auriga .. ..	The Charioteer .. ..	28
19	Orion .. ..	The Hunter .. ..	29
20	Lepus .. ..	The Hare .. ..	31
21	Columba Noachi .. ..	The Dove .. ..	31
22	Canis Minor .. ..	The Little Dog .. ..	31
23	Canis Major .. ..	The Great Dog .. ..	32
24	Argo Navis .. ..	The Ship Argo .. ..	33
25	Hydra .. ..	The Water Snake .. ..	34
26	Crater .. ..	The Goblet .. ..	34
27	Corvus .. ..	The Crow .. ..	34
28	Eridanus .. ..	The River .. ..	35
29	Cetus .. ..	The Whale .. ..	35
30	Piscis Australis .. ..	The Southern Fish .. ..	36

	PAGE
CONSTELLATIONS OF THE ZODIAC .. .. .	37
MOONSTATIONS OR MANSIONS .. .. .	37
Aries .. .. . The Ram .. .. .	40
Taurus .. .. . The Bull .. .. .	41
Gemini .. .. . The Twins .. .. .	42
Cancer .. .. . The Crab .. .. .	43
Leo .. .. . The Lion .. .. .	43
Virgo .. .. . The Virgin .. .. .	44
Libra .. .. . The Balance .. .. .	45
Scorpio .. .. . The Scorpion .. .. .	46
Sagittarius .. .. . The Archer .. .. .	47
Capricornus .. .. . The He-Goat .. .. .	47
Aquarius .. .. . The Water-Bearer .. .. .	48
Pisces.. .. . The Fishes .. .. .	49
ALPHABETICAL INDEX OF NAMES .. .. .	51

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## INTRODUCTION.

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It is customary among English Astronomers to designate the Constellations by their Latin names; for example the group of stars known as "*The Swan*," is called "*Cygnus*." The Group of "*The Lion*," "*Leo*," &c. ; and the stars forming them by the letters of the Greek alphabet.

The characters and names of these letters are

$\alpha$	Alpha.	$\nu$	Nu.
$\beta$	Beta.	$\xi$	Xi.
$\gamma$	Gamma.	$\omicron$	Omicron.
$\delta$	Delta.	$\pi$	Pi.
$\epsilon$	Epsilon.	$\rho$	Rho.
$\zeta$	Zeta.	$\varsigma$	Sigma.
$\eta$	Eta.	$\tau$	Tau.
$\theta$	Theta.	$\upsilon$	Upsilon.
$\iota$	Iota.	$\phi$	Phi.
$\kappa$	Kappa.	$\chi$	Chi.
$\lambda$	Lambda.	$\psi$	Psi.
$\mu$	Mu.	$\omega$	Omega.