THE INDIAN MUSALMANS

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BY

W. W. HUNTER, LL.D.

DIRECTOR-GENERAL OF STATISTICS TO THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA,

ONE OF THE COUNCIL OF THE ASIATIC SOCIETY OF BENGAL, HONORARY FELLOW OF THE ETHNOL. SOC. LONDON, AND OF THE ROYAL INSTITUTE OF NETHERLANDS INDIA AT THE HAGUE, ETC.

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DEDICATION.

SIMLA, 23*d June* 1871.

MY DEAR HODGSON,

I DEDICATE this little book to you in acknowledgment of the benefit which I have derived from your labours. You, of all the scholars whom our Service has produced, have most fully recognised the duty of studying the people. The greatest wrong that the English can do to their Asiatic subjects is not to understand them. The chronic peril which environs the British Power in India is the gap between the Rulers and the Ruled. In these pages I have tried to bring out in clear relief the past history and present requirements of a persistently belligerent class—of a class whom successive Governments have declared to be a source of permanent danger to the Indian Empire.

I am,

Yours sincerely,

W. W. HUNTER.

BRIAN HOUGHTON HODGSON, ESQ.,
Alderney Grange, Gloucestershire.

PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION.

A GREAT public calamity has given most mournful emphasis to these pages. Five days before the first copies reached Calcutta, a Musalmán assassin struck down the Chief-Justice of Bengal under the portico of his own Court. I put forth this Second Edition in the hope that it may produce a reaction equally apart from the popular alarm which has followed that crime, and from the popular apathy which had for years preceded it. To know the real truth about our position in India, seems to me to be the sole safeguard against chronic torpor on the one hand, and sudden panics on the other.

A critic, whose article proves that he knows India well, and whose eloquent appreciation has given me much encouragement, speaks of the work as a 'demi-official' one. I cannot let the revised sheets go home without guarding against the misconception to which such a statement might give rise. Government granted me free access to its Archives on a subject in which it was known I had long taken a deep interest, and with regard to which it seemed well that the whole facts should be placed before the public. But it made no attempt to influence my views, nor is it in any way responsible for my conclusions. All that this book does is to collect the documents hitherto isolated in the various Departments of the Government of India, and out of these scattered links to put together a trustworthy historical narrative.

SIMLA, 3*d October* 1871.

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CHAPTER I.

THE STANDING REBEL CAMP ON OUR FRONTIER.

THE Bengal Muhammadans are again in a strange state. For years a Rebel Colony has threatened our Frontier; from time to time sending forth fanatic swarms, who have attacked our camps, burned our villages, murdered our subjects, and involved our troops in three costly Wars. Month by month, this hostile Settlement across the border has been systematically recruited from the heart of Bengal. Successive State Trials prove that a network of conspiracy has spread itself over our Provinces, and that the bleak mountains which rise beyond the Panjáb are united by a chain of treason-depots with the tropical swamps through which the Ganges merges into the sea. They disclose an organization which systematically levies money and men in the Delta, and forwards them by regular stages along our high-roads to the Rebel Camp two thousand miles off. Men of keen intelligence and ample fortune have embarked in the plot, and a skilful system of remittances has reduced one of the most perilous enterprises of treason to a safe operation of banking.