

**A LASKARI DICTIONARY OR  
ANGLO-INDIAN VOCABULARY  
OF  
NAUTICAL TERMS AND PHRASES  
IN ENGLISH AND HINDUSTANI**

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A Laskari Dictionary or Anglo-Indian Vocabulary of Nautical Terms and Phrases in English and Hindustani by Thomas Roebuck & William Carmichael Smyth & George Small

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**THOMAS ROEBUCK & WILLIAM  
CARMICHAEL SMYTH & GEORGE SMALL**

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A  
**LASKARI DICTIONARY**  
OR  
ANGLO-INDIAN VOCABULARY  
OF NAUTICAL TERMS AND PHRASES  
IN  
ENGLISH AND HINDUSTANI.

*Chiefly in the Corrupt Jargon in use among Laskars or Indian Sailors.*

ORIGINALLY COMPILED BY  
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MADRAS INFANTRY, PROFESSOR OF HINDUSTANI, EXAMINER, ETC. IN THE  
COLLEGE OF FORT WILLIAM, CALCUTTA.

REVISED AND CORRECTED BY  
WILLIAM CARMICHAEL SMYTH, ESQ., B.C.S.

AND NOW CAREFULLY RE-EDITED AND ENLARGED BY  
GEORGE SMALL, M.A., MISSIONARY,  
FORMERLY OF THE B.M.S. AT CALCUTTA AND BENGAL, NOW TO THE  
LASKARS, ETC. IN LONDON,  
IN CONNECTION WITH THE ASIATIC STRANGERS' HOME, LIMEHOUSE.

LONDON:  
W. H. ALLEN & CO., 13 WATERLOO PLACE,  
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1882.

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## PREFACE.

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THE Editor of this little work having, during the last few years, been frequently called upon officially to interpret for Indian sailors, commonly called "Laskars," at the Police and other Courts in London and its suburbs, was led, some time ago, to make inquiries as to the existence of any publication that would assist him thoroughly to understand the peculiar nautical phraseology of the men.

So long as his intercourse with them was confined to conversations or discussions on religion, or topics common to landsmen and sailors, as an old Indian missionary he felt quite at home in the language; but when launched into the deep of purely nautical technology (whether English or Indian) he sometimes found himself very much "at sea." After a long hunt among the nautical and second-hand bookshops, he at last met with a copy of Captain Roebuck's "Naval Dictionary"—the fourth and probably last edition—dated 1848; but where and by whom published are not stated. This he found exceedingly useful to him; and, such being the case, it then occurred to him how much more useful it must be to those for whose benefit it was at first especially compiled. Having reason to believe that the work was now—and probably had long

been—out of print, he conceived the idea of bringing out a new edition of it, improved in certain respects and somewhat enlarged. On mentioning his proposition to the head of the enterprising publishing house of Messrs. W. H. Allen & Co., he found that that gentleman was quite of his opinion as to the need of such a work, and he readily consented to bring it out.

From a brief memorial of Captain Roebuck by the late Professor H. H. Wilson, in his introduction to his edition of "Roebuck's Persian Proverbs," we learn that that distinguished officer and Orientalist compiled his "Hindūstāni Naval Dictionary" mostly during his return voyage to India in 1810; and, on his arrival in Bengal, committed it to the press, prefacing it with a concise grammar of the Hindūstāni language. The work was reprinted in England, and, previously to 1824 (the Professor states), had gone through two editions at Calcutta. To the officers of the Indian Pilot Service, especially, and of those vessels employed in the "country trade," Roebuck's work has proved exceedingly useful, as testified by Professor Wilson. By the officers of the grand old East Indiamen, too, it was no doubt highly prized as a valuable *Vade-mecum*. But not less so is it likely now—in its present improved form—to prove serviceable to the officers of the enormous fleet of Mercantile Marine, both steamers and sailing ships, that now ply between this country and the various Indian ports. Even passengers on such vessels might find a copy of this work an interesting and useful companion on board ship.

It is time, however, that the Editor should state briefly the alterations and additions he has thought proper to



introduce into the present issue. In the first place, he has deemed it advisable to change the mode of spelling the Hindūstāni words. Captain Roebuck, as the co-adjutor of the celebrated Dr. Gilchrist, naturally adopted the system of Romanizing that goes by his name, of which indeed he was an enthusiastic advocate. But that system has already seen its day, and has been almost universally supplanted (among Indian writers) by that introduced by Sir William Jones, or modifications thereof, such as that of Sir Charles Trevelyan. The present Editor, therefore, has taken considerable pains in re-writing the whole work in accordance with the more modern and generally approved mode of Romanizing. That adopted is for the most part the Jonesian; but, in a few letters, preference has been given to the systems of Trevelyan and others. A table is prefixed explaining the system followed. 2ndly. Occasional misprints or misspellings in previous editions have been corrected. 3rdly. A few words peculiar to naval warfare have been omitted. And, lastly, a considerable number of additional words have been inserted—most of them, however, rather in pure Hindūstāni than in ascertained *Laskari* nomenclature.

To the original edition of this work, Captain Roebuck, as Professor Wilson informs us, prefixed a concise Hindūstāni Grammar. In these days, however, this is quite unnecessary. But the Editor would strongly advise all officers of vessels having Laskar crews to acquire a grammatical knowledge of the language, and, if possible, to learn and get familiar with the native (Persi-Arabic) character. The Editor's edition of Eastwick's Grammar (Quaritch, London) is a handy and comprehensive little

work ; but is nearly (or quite) out of print. Professor Dowson's (Trübner) and Dr. Forbes's (Allen) are both excellent grammars, and not too large. But, for the Roman character only, Professor Monier Williams's Grammar (Longmans) or that of Dr. Yates (B. M. Press, Calcutta) will be sufficient. One little work Mr. Small would specially recommend, as an almost indispensable companion to this Vocabulary, viz., Forbes's " Hindūstānī Manual " (last Edition, W. H. Allen & Co.) ; and as most useful and handy dictionaries, those of Mr. Bryce (Trübner) and D'Rozario (printed at Calcutta, 1837), both in the *Roman* character only—the former Hindūstānī-English, and the latter English, Bengālī, and Hindūstānī. A short course of lessons with a competent English or native teacher would also be most desirable.

The Editor deeply regrets that, owing to a misunderstanding with the Printer as to the revision of proofs, a number of typographical errors have crept into the work. The most important of these have been inserted in a list of Errata ; and those who intend using the Dictionary are strongly advised to correct them with a pen at once, and any other obvious misprints, not in the list, as they are observed.

In an Appendix will be found a list of sea-terms usually inserted in English Nautical Vocabularies, but not in Roebuck's Dictionary, and for which the Editor is at a loss for accurate or trustworthy *Laskārī* equivalents. He will be thankful for any suggestions from practical seamen that might be of use in a future edition.

LIMEHOUSE, Dec. 1881.

## THE ROMANIZED HINDŪSTĀNĪ ALPHABET,

*With the Powers of the Letters as adopted in this  
Work.*

	Pronounced as in
ا	a woman.
آ	ā art.
ای	ai aisle.
او	au Germ. frau, or ou in our.
ب	b but
بھ	bh Hobhouse.
چ	ch church.
چھ	chh church-hill.
د	d dental, touching the upper front teeth with the tip of the tongue.
دھ	dh madhouse.
ڈ	ḍ (palatal) touching the palate with the upturned tongue.
دھ	ḍh cold-hand.
ی	e there.
ف	f fair.
گ	g go (never as in gin).
گھ	gh loghouse.
غ	ghh ghost, gargle (a pe- culiar guttural).
ہ	h here, common aspi- rate.
ت	h hot, strong ditto.
ل	i in.
پ	i police.
ج	j just.
جھ	jh college-hall.
ک	k king.
کھ	kh Blackheath.
تھ	khh Scotch ch in lock.
ل	l little.
م	m man.
ن	n noon.
ن	ñ French bon (nasal).
ن	ṅ guṅ (palatal).
و	o go.
پ	p pin.
پھ	ph up-hill.
ق	q quoit, the root of the tongue being pressed back on the throat in uttering it. A guttural pecu- liar to Semitic languages.
ر	r race.
ر	r French éternel.
رھ	rh perhaps.
س	sin.
ش	sh shine.
ص	sirrah! (strong si- bilant).
ت	t take (as dental ḍ nearly).
تھ	th potthouse.