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Henry Yule, A. C. Burnell, *Hobson-Jobson: a glossary of colloquial Anglo-Indian words and phrases, and of kindred terms, etymological, historical, geographical and discursive*. London: Murray, 1903. 1021 pp. New edn by William Crooke.

Reprinted: London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1985. 0-7100-2886-5. Reprinted as: *Hobson-Jobson: the Anglo-Indian dictionary*. Ware: Wordsworth, 1996. 1-85326-363-X.

1st edn: 1886.

'My first endeavour in preparing this work has been to make it accurate; my next to make it – even though a Glossary – interesting' (Yule). No one with an interest in history or language can fail to find *Hobson-Jobson* interesting. It is a historical dictionary of words current in 'Anglo-Indian' and on the Eastern trade routes, from the sixteenth to the end of the nineteenth century. Illustrative quotations, in date order, are drawn from travel narratives and other literature in numerous languages: those in Arabic and other Asian languages are given in translation. In the 2nd edition Crooke added a few entries and some further quotations, and corrected some etymologies.

Entries are under Anglicised (sometimes laughably Anglicised) Victorian spellings. Where words remain current at all, a different spelling has usually come into use by now, but the index, pp. 967–1021, offers many alternatives.

Difficult to classify in the terms of this Guide, *Hobson-Jobson* might as well have been placed under 'Foreign words' (see **407–411**), since most of the words it deals with are of Asian origin – or among the multilingual dictionaries (see **13–15**), since its word histories and its quotations are relevant to Portuguese, French, medieval Latin, Persian, Arabic and Urdu studies as well as to English. It is unique in English lexicography.

The catch-title is only partly explained by the relevant entry:

HOBSON-JOBSON, s. A native festal excitement ... This phrase may be taken as a typical one of the most highly assimilated class of Anglo-Indian *argot* ... peculiar to the British soldier and his surroundings ... an Anglo-Saxon version of the wailings of the Mahommedans as they beat their breasts in the procession of the *Moharram* – "Yâ Hasan! Yâ Hosain!"

For further help see Yule's preface, p. ix, which concludes: 'At any rate, there it is.'

From *A Guide to World Language Dictionaries* by Andrew Dalby.

London: Library Association Publishing, 1998.