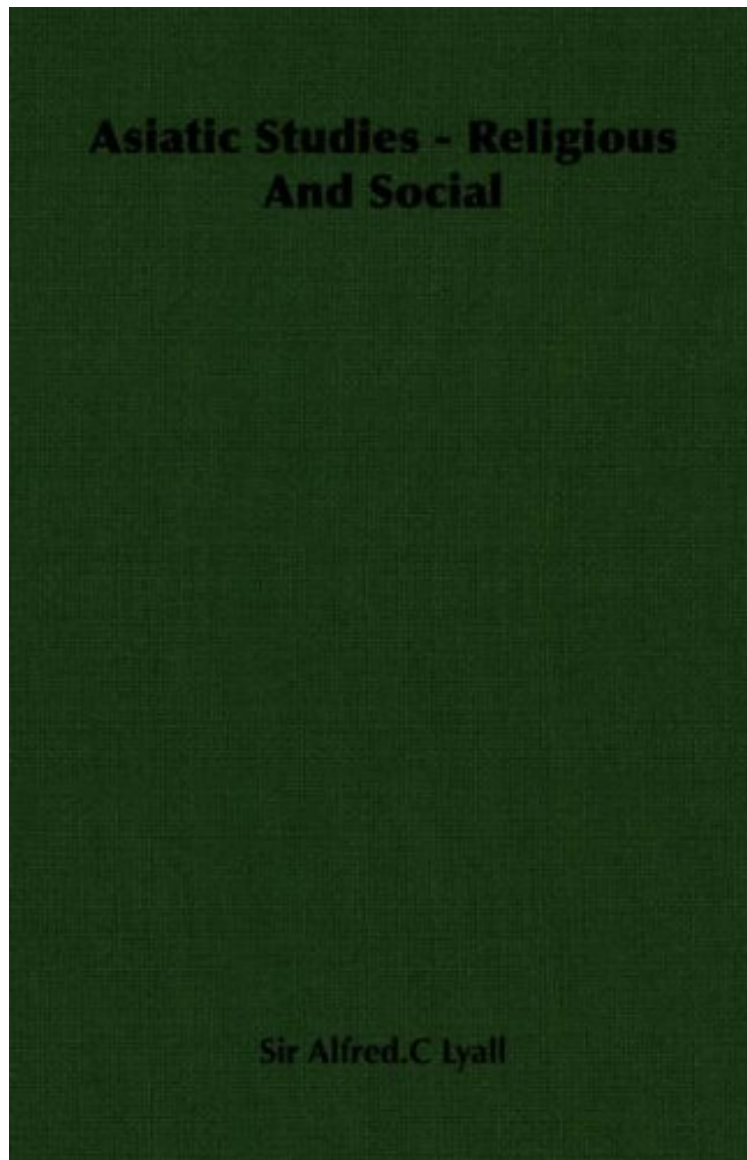


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Asiatic Studies - Religious and Social

Alfred Comyn Lyall

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Sir Alfred C Lyall 2006-11-12Original language:EnglishPDF # 1 8.50 x .79 x 5.511, .98 #File Name: 1406724033352 pagesAsiatic Studies Religious and Social | File size: 70.Mb

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ASIATIC STUDIES - RELIGIOUS AND SOCIAL BY Sir Alfred C Lyall PREFACE TO FIRST EDITION 1882

THIS book contains, in the form of chapters, eleven essays published by me during the past ten years they were written in such intervals of leisure as could be spared by the constant and occasionally urgent preoccupations of official duties in India, and they have been thought to be worth the experiment of republication together. Ten essays relate to India, being mainly the outcome of personal observation in certain provinces and of intercourse with the people one essay relates to China, with which country the writer has no direct acquaintance and since they are all so far alike in their subjectmatter that they deal with the actual character and complexion of religion and society in these countries at the present time, they may possibly be considered to have some useful bearing on the general study of Asiatic ideas and institutions. For throughout Asia, wherever the state of society has not been distinctly transformed by European. Of these eleven essays, one has been omitted in the new edition, and another on China has been transferred to Vol. II. influences, there is a fundamental resemblance in the social condition of the people, in their intellectual level, and in their habits of thought. And although India is in many respects a peculiar country, isolated and fenced off from the rest of the continent, by broad belts of high and often impassable mountain country, so that it cannot be classed either with eastern or western Asia, yet it possesses, by reason of its extraordinary variety of peoples, creeds, and manners, a strong affinity with the widely different countries on either side of it it partakes largely of the religious characteristics both of western Asia, whence it has received Mahomedanism, and of eastern Asia, to which it has given Buddhism, the pure outcome of Hindu theosophy and it has preserved specimens of almost every stage in the history of Asiatic politics and the growth of Asiatic societies. No single first class country of Asia, therefore, so well repays eSnination and it is just this part of Asia in which Europeans have had incomparably the best opportunities of accurate and continuous observation. The English know India as no other Europeans, since the Eomans, have ever known an Asiatic country in the long territorial struggle of modern times between Europe and Asia, their command of the sea enabled them to turn the flank of Indias land defences, and by pushing up from the coast to establish themselves in southern Asia, at a time when the Cross and the Crescent were still contending fiercely on the Danube and the Caspian.