

# **A MANUAL OF PUSHTU**

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## AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

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SINCE I have been President of the Central Committee of Examination in Pushto, I have had many inquiries from students of the language as to what books they should get, and whether I could recommend any guide or manual giving a progressive course of lessons and based on the requirements of the Lower and Higher Standard Examinations. I have examined every book I could get hold of on the subject, and have not succeeded in finding what my correspondents ask for, and the idea has thus been suggested to me to produce a manual modelled on "Clarke's Persian Manual," which, with the official text books (the *Ganj-i-Pukhto* and *Tarikh-i-Mahmud-i-Ghaznavi*) and a dictionary, will enable a student to study

the language with the assistance of any fairly intelligent Pathan he may come across, even if he is unable to procure the services of a trained Munshi.

There have been up to date three Pushtu Grammars published, viz., TRUMPF'S (1873), RAVERTY'S (1860), and BELLEW'S (1867). They are expensive, not easily obtained, and are far above the heads of beginners. Besides, they are grammars pure and simple, and in no sense "Guides" or "Manuals."

Before writing the short grammar which forms Part I. of this book I studied these grammars very carefully, and take this opportunity of expressing my indebtedness to their authors.

Major Raverty, the author of the grammar, has also produced a "Pushto Manual," but it is written throughout in the Roman character, which detracts very much from its value, as no two people agree as to the transliteration of Pushtu.

In addition to the above, many Munshis in India have published Pushtu "Guides," "Vocabularies," "Phrase-books," and "Sentences."

Those which I have examined have appeared to me to be valueless. They consist of masses of words, sentences and phrases strung together indiscriminately.

Twenty, and even ten years ago, Pushtu was looked upon as an exceedingly difficult language. Few Europeans attempted to learn it, and the teaching was in the hands of three or four Munshis in Peshawar. Within the last ten years, however, there has been a great rush to learn Pushtu, and to meet the demand the number of Munshis has increased out of all proportion. The number of really good Pushtu teachers in the Punjab could almost be counted on the fingers of one hand, but every fairly educated man who has a smattering of English and Pushtu considers himself qualified to set up in business as a Munshi. Very few of these last have any knowledge of grammar or of teaching, and they are only capable of giving the meanings of words and phrases in the text-books, and of correcting, after a fashion, the student's compositions. They are useful enough for these purposes, but learning under such tuition is a slow business.



I hope this Manual will, by supplying a system, enable the student to get better results than before.

The student should be particular to learn his pronunciation from a genuine Pathan. If his Munshi is a Pathan by birth, so much the better; but to many of the Munshis I have met Pushtu is a foreign language, and although they can in most cases talk fluently enough, their pronunciation is sometimes vile. Unless his Munshi is a Pathan, the student is advised to read the short phrases in the examples and exercises of Part II., Chapter I., and the "colloquial sentences" of Part III. over to his orderly, his chokidar, or to any other Pathan he may have in his service, and to make him repeat the phrases after him, carefully noting the pronunciation. There are few places in Northern India where a Pathan (a retired Sepoy for choice) cannot be got on a small wage to practise on.

The Manual is divided into three parts:—

PART I. A concise grammar, original as far as it is possible for a grammar to be so, digested from every other work on the subject available.

**PART II.**—Chapter I. A graduated course of thirty lessons (including vocabulary and examples) and exercises, starting with elementary phrases and working up to a more advanced standard. (The first twenty of these lessons will be found sufficient for a beginner, who is a candidate for the Lower Standard Examination.)

Chapter II. Thirty exercises for more advanced pupils, being passages set for translation into Pushtu in the Higher Standard Examinations of the last fifteen years.

**PART III.** Colloquial sentences, being the whole of the papers of colloquial sentences set in the Higher Standard Examinations of the last fifteen years rendered into idiomatic Pushtu.

#### APPENDICES.

- I. Comparative table of types of Pushtu Intransitive Verbs.
- II. Comparative table of types of Pushtu Transitive Verbs.
- III. The Regulations for Examinations in Pushtu. :

The candidate for the Higher Standard Examination is advised to first study the grammar thoroughly and to read part of the text-books to familiarize himself with the character; then to work steadily through the lessons and exercises in Part II., Chapter I., at the same time translating into English the Pushtu sentences in Part III., and correcting them by means of the English version. If he does one lesson and one paper of sentences a day, this will take him a month. He should then go through the exercises in Part II., Chapter II., and at the same time translate into Pushtu the English sentences in Part III., correcting his translation by means of the Pushtu version.

Each of the thirty papers of colloquial sentences in Part III. contains an average of fifty sentences. The total, therefore, is some 1,500 sentences. If the candidate takes the trouble to master these, he will have acquired a very varied and extensive vocabulary.

There is a certain amount of repetition in the various papers which form Part III., but I have thought it better to leave them as they are.