

There is also much still to be done in what may be called Epigraphic or Inscription literature, in which Dr. Fleet, Dr. E. Hultzsch, and Professor F. Kielhorn are labouring so effectively. And I am happy to say that we have occasionally availed ourselves of their labours in the following pages.

The Tantras, too, present a field of research almost wholly untrodden by European scholars, and these books at one time attracted much curiosity as likely to present a hopeful mine for exploitation. I therefore, during my Indian journeys, searched everywhere for good MSS. of the most popular Tantras, with a view to making the best procurable example of them better known in Europe by a good printed edition and translation. Everywhere I was told that the Rudra-yāmala Tantra was held in most esteem<sup>1</sup>. But after a careful examination of its contents I decided that it was neither worth editing nor translating (see my 'Brāhmanism and Hindūism,' pp. 205-208).

As to translations, the long array of 'Sacred Books of the East' might well be supposed to have exhausted the whole reservoir of Sanskrit works worthy of being translated; even admitting that the entire range of Sanskrit literature is held to be more or less sacred. Yet the series is still incomplete<sup>2</sup>.

Assuming then my opinion on this point to be correct, I think I may fairly claim for the present Dictionary as great an amount of comprehensiveness as existing circumstances make either possible or desirable. Of course the earlier part of the work must perforce be less complete than the later. Nor can it be said to deal with every branch of literature with equal thoroughness, but its defects are, I hope, fairly remedied by the ample Additions at the end of the volume.

#### SECTION IV.

##### *Reasons for applying the Roman Alphabet to the expression of Sanskrit, with an account of the Method of Transliteration employed in the Present Dictionary.*

As I cherish the hope that this Dictionary may win its way to acceptance with the learned natives of India, I must ask European scholars to pardon my diffuseness if I state with some amplitude of detail my reasons for having applied the Roman or Latin alphabet to the expression of Sanskrit more freely than any other Sanskrit lexicographer.

For indeed I know full well that all who belong to the straitest sect of Hindū scholars will at once flatly deny that their divine Sanskrit can with any propriety be exhibited to the eye clothed in any other alphabetical dress than their own 'divine Nāgarī.' *Na hi pūtam syād go-kshīram sva-dṛītau dhṛitam*, 'let not cow's milk be polluted by being put into a dog's skin.' How can it possibly be, they will exclaim, that the wonderful structure of our divine language and the subtle distinctions of its sacred sounds can be properly represented by such a thoroughly human and wholly un-Oriental graphic system as a modern European alphabet?

Let me, then, in the first place point out that our so-called European alphabet, as adopted by the Greeks, Romans, and modern nations of Europe, is really Asiatic, and not European in its origin. And secondly, let me try to show that it has certain features which connect it with the so-called divine Nāgarī alphabet of the Brāhmins. Nay more, that it is well suited to the expression of their venerated Sanskrit; while its numerous accessory appliances, its types of various kinds and sizes, its capital and small letters, hyphens, brackets, stops &c., make it better suited than any other graphic system to meet the linguistic requirements of the coming century—a century which will witness such vast physical, moral, and intellectual changes, that a new order of things, and almost a new world and a new race of beings, will come into existence. In that new world some of the most inveterate prejudices and peculiarities now separating nation from nation will be obliterated, and all nationalities—brought into fraternal relationship—will recognize their kinship and solidarity.

Even during the present century the great gulf dividing the West from the East has been partially bridged over. Steam and electricity have almost destroyed the meaning of differences of latitude and longitude; and nations which were once believed to be actually and figuratively the antipodes of each other have been brought to feel that mere considerations of distance are no obstacles to the reciprocal interchange of personal intercourse, and no bar to the adoption of all that is best in each other's customs and habits of thought.

And a still more remarkable event has happened. Europe has learnt to perceive that in imparting

<sup>1</sup> A section of it has been printed in Calcutta.

<sup>2</sup> The use made of some of the series is thankfully acknowledged at p. xxxii; but it is surprising that the long line of 49 thick octavo volumes includes no complete translation of India's most sacred book—the Rīg-veda. Only about 180 out of 1017 hymns are translated in vols. xxxii and xlvi, when a continuous English

version of all the hymns might have been given in one volume. It is regrettable, too, that vol. xlii only gives about a third of the Atharva-veda hymns, and that the Bhāgavata-purāna, which is a bible of modern Hindūism, has no place in the list, while some volumes give translations of far less important works, and some give re-translations of works previously translated by good scholars.