

undue depreciation and from exaggerated praise, it will have served a worthy object.

So cumbrous or so meagre have been hitherto the appliances for acquiring even a moderate knowledge of Sanskrit, that classical students, when seeking such knowledge as an auxiliary to their special work, have found the labor discouragingly great. These students unquestionably have a legitimate and sufficient reason for undertaking Sanskrit, and I venture to hope that the difficulties of the beginning (see p. xv) have been so materially lessened that they will now find even a modicum of Sanskrit well worth the trouble of attainment.

In making my selections¹ from the various Sanskrit writings, I have had two practical aims in view: first, to provide abundant material for thorough drill in the language of the classical period; and, secondly, to furnish a brief introduction to the works of the Vedic period, Mantra, Brāhmaṇa, and Sūtra. Accordingly I have not sought to give any thing new, but rather that which is best suited for beginners. The easy Nala is the Xenophon's Anabasis of Sanskrit students, and quotations from it appear very often in the grammars. And the first five chapters here given form a complete story. For an elementary reader, the Hitopadeṣa is unrivalled, and to leave it out would have been an inexcusable omission, unless, indeed, its place were taken by the Panchatantra. From this latter work I attempted to prepare some selections; but the text is in so unsatisfactory a condition, that I relinquished the plan. And so, although the Hitopadeṣa has been printed very often, I have given a considerable part² of it here, choosing the fables on the ground of their intrinsic excellence and their interest as originals of well-known occidental stories.³ For similar reasons the six tales from the Kathā-sarit-sāgara were selected. On account of their easy style and simple narrative, they furnish admirable matter for exercise in rapid reading. The selections from "Manu" are so made as to illustrate some of the most important and interesting matters of Hindu custom and belief.⁴

Among the Vedic hymns (or Mantra-material) are, first, some of the easiest⁵; then some taken on account of their poetic⁶ or dramatic⁷ merit, or

¹ These include 68 pages of classical Sanskrit and 37 pages of Vedic Sanskrit.

² Nineteen fables: there are forty-three in all.

³ See the introductions to the fables in the Notes.

⁴ Compare the table of contents. The text-selections are intended to be mutually illustrative as far as may be. Thus the passage 64⁸ ff. is given for its interesting bearing on Rīgveda x.18.7 (86¹⁷), the verse

which was appealed to as scriptural authority for the practice of widow-burning. Compare also the notes on 28²³, 57³, and 65⁹ ff., with those on 65⁶, 91¹⁶, and 97² respectively.

⁵ Such are selections xxxi. (Rīgveda i.1), xxxiii., xxxviii., xxxix., xli., xlv., xlv., and lix.

⁶ Selection xxxii. is the best.

⁷ Selections xxxv., xxxvii., and lvi. are in dramatic form (see WHITNEY, page xviii), and are among the most difficult.