

because the text is so well suited for tyros in Sanskrit; and in the Orient, because of the intrinsic value of its contents.

§ 23. The book belongs to the ethico-didactic class of literature, and is what the Hindus call a *nīti-śāstra* or 'conduct-work.' The term *nīti* (see this in the vocabulary) came to have special reference to the conduct of kings in their domestic life and in their foreign relations; a *nīti-śāstra* is, accordingly, a 'Prince's hand-book of political and social ethics,' a kind of 'Mirror for Magistrates.' The *Hitopadeça* consists of mingled verse and prose. The verses are mostly proverbs and maxims — often of the choicest practical wisdom; and their validity is proved, illustrated, and enforced by the fables, which are in prose.

§ 24. The frame in which the work is set is simple and meagre. The sons of King Sudarçana of Pāṭaliputra¹ (Pātnā) are ignorant and vicious. He therefore convokes the wise men and asks if any one is able to reform the princes. Viṣṇuçarman offers to do so, and accordingly takes them in charge, and relates to them the stories which make up the body of the collection.

§ 25. The *Hitopadeça* is not an original work, but, rather, an excellent compilation of ancient material. The time of its composition has not been even approximately determined. The palm-leaf MS. brought by Mr. Cecil Bendall from Nepāl was written in the year 493 of the Nepāl era or A.D. 1373. And Professor Peterson's² old paper MS. from Jeypore is of about the same age. At present we can hardly say more than that the work is at least 500 years old. In the working over of the material, the metrical portions would naturally be changed less, on the whole, than the prose; and in fact, many of the proverbs can be traced back in their identical form to works of antiquity. And travellers report that just such proverbs are current to-day in the talk of the lower classes of India.

The author or editor of this collection of fables, according to the colophon³ of the Jeypore MS., was named Nārāyaṇa, and his patron and publisher was the prince Dhavalacandra.

§ 26. The sources of this compilation are expressly said (end of the preface, 17⁸) to be "the *Pañcatantra* and another work." The first part of this statement is borne out by the fact that, out of forty-three fables in the *Hitopadeça*, twenty-five are found also in the *Pañcatantra*. The latter work, as its name implies, consists of five books; while the *Hitopadeça* is divided into four, whose titles are given in the preface, 17⁷. The correspondence is as follows. The first book of the *Pañcatantra* answers in its frame-work to the second of the *Hitopadeça* and the second of the *Pañcatantra* to the first of the *Hitopadeça*. Five stories from the third book of the *Pañcatantra*, along with seven from the first, are scattered through the last two books of the *Hitopadeça*. From the fourth book of the *Pañcatantra* only one story, "The ass in the tiger-skin," appears in the *Hitopadeça*; and from the fifth book, only three. It thus appears that, in the main, only the first three books of the *Pañcatantra* were drawn upon by the author of the *Hitopadeça*; and Somadeva, in his *Kathā-sarit-sāgara* (chapters 60-64, much of whose substance is from the *Pañcatantra*, i.-iii.), has followed a similar course.

§ 27. What the "other work" is we can hardly say with entire certainty. In it ought to be found together — if the statement of the preface is accurate — at least

¹ From this point the spelling of proper names | will no longer be anglicized.

² See Preface to his *Hitopadeça*, p. i, ii, v.

³ Peterson's ed., p. 161: cf. p. iv, v.