language brought by the Indian branch of the great Āryan race into India, the ancient spoken language of the Hindūs being more suitably styled Hindū-ī, just as its principal later development is called Hindī*. For in fact that happened in India which has come to pass in all civilized countries. The spoken vernacular of the people has separated into two lines, the one elaborated by the learned, the other popularized and variously provincialized by the unlearned†. In India, however, from the greater exclusiveness of the educated few, the greater ignorance of the masses and the desire of a bigoted priesthood to keep the key of knowledge in their own possession, this separation became more marked, more diversified, and progressively intensified. Hence, the very grammar which with other nations was regarded only as a means to an end, came to be treated by Indian Paṇḍits as the end itself, and was subtilized into an intricate science, fenced round by a bristling barrier of technicalities. The language, too, elaborated *pari passu* with the grammar, rejected the natural name of Hindū-ī, or 'the speech of the Hindūs,' and adopted an artificial designation, viz. Sanskṛita, or 'the perfectly constructed speech,' to denote its complete severance from the common tongue (called by contrast Prākṛita), and its exclusive dedication to literary and religious purposes. This of itself is a remarkable circumstance; for although something similar has happened in Europe, yet we do not find that Latin and Greek ceased to be called Latin and Greek when they became the language of the learned, any more than we have at present two names for the common and literary languages of modern nations. These remarks will perhaps conduce to a right appreciation of the nature of a literature which, although elaborated by a learned caste, is still the only real literature of the Hindū race, the vernaculars having hitherto produced little worthy of consideration.

Sanskṛit literature, it should be remembered, embraces two distinct periods, Vedic and post-Vedic. The former, beginning with the Ṛig-veda, and extending through the other three Vedas (viz. the Yajur-veda, Sāma-veda, and Atharva-veda), with their Brāhmaṇas, Upanishads, and Sūtras, is most valuable to philologists as presenting them with the nearest approach to the original Āryan language, its earlier works being composed in an ancient form of Sanskṛit, which is to the later what Chaucer's writings are to modern English. The latter commencing with the Code of Manu, with its train of subsequent important law-books, and extending through the six systems of philosophy‡, the vast grammatical literature, the immense epics‖, the lyric, erotic, and didactic poems, the Nīti-śāstras, moral tales and apothegms, the dramas, the various treatises on mathematics, rhetoric, prosody, music, medicine, &c., brings us at last to the eighteen Purāṇas with their succeeding Upa-Purāṇas, and the more recent Tantras, all of which are worthy of study as the great repositories of the modern mythologies and popular creeds of India. No one person, indeed, with limited powers of mind and body, can hope to master more than one or two departments of so vast a range, in which scarcely a subject can be named, with the single exception of Historiography, not furnishing a greater number of treatises than any other language of the ancient world. In some

* I use the word Hindū-ī as a convenient term for the ancient Bhāshā of the Āryan settlers in the neighbourhood of the Sindhu or rather of the Hapta Hendu = *sapta sindhavas*. It may be thought that this Bhāshā was identical with the language of the Vedic hymns. But even Vedic Sanskṛit represents a considerable amount of elaboration scarcely compatible with the notion of a vernacular dialect (as, for example, in the use of complicated grammatical forms like Intensives). Pāṇini, in distinguishing between the common language and the Vedic, uses the terms Bhāshā and Loka.

† Of course the provincialized Prākṛits, though not, as I conceive, derived directly from the learned language, borrowed largely from the Sanskṛit after it was thus elaborated.

‡ The systems of philosophy are properly only three: 1. the Nyāya by Gautama, which is the most practical, and contains the Hindū system of logic; 2. the Sāṅkhya by Kapila, which is dualistic, asserting the separate existence of soul and matter; 3. the Vedānta by Vyāsa or Bādarāyaṇa, which asserts the unity of all being: but of each of these respectively there are branches, viz. (*a*) the Vaiśeshika by Kaṇāda; (*b*) the Yoga by Patañjali; (*c*) the Pūrva-mīmāṃsā by Jaimini.

‖ Some idea of the extent of Sanskṛit literature may be gained by comparing the two great epic or heroic poems called the Mahā-bhārata and Rāmāyaṇa with the Iliad and Odyssey, as I have attempted to do in the small volume called 'Indian Epic Poetry,' published by Messrs. Williams and Norgate. The Mahā-bhārata, printed at Calcutta, contains 107,389 verses, each verse being supposed to consist of two lines. See also my edition of the 'Story of Nala,' published at the Clarendon Press.