

PREFACE.

A WORK of the kind here submitted to the students of Sanskrit must be left to prove its usefulness by actual experiment. Nevertheless the plan of the present Dictionary is so novel that I must crave permission to introduce it with a longer explanation than might otherwise be needed. To conduce to greater clearness I propose distributing my prefatory statements under the following separate heads :

1. Reasons for undertaking a New Sanskrit Dictionary.
2. Plan and Arrangement of the Present Work.
3. Extent of Sanskrit Literature comprehended.
4. Alphabet-and System of Transliteration employed.
5. Principal Sources drawn upon in the Process of Compilation.
6. Aids and Encouragements received.
7. Defects and Inconsistencies acknowledged.

SECTION 1.

Reasons for undertaking a New Sanskrit Dictionary.

In the forefront must be placed the growing importance assigned by philologists to the oldest branch of the great Indo-European speech-stem, of which English is a modern offshoot. An intricate language destined to occupy the foremost rank throughout Europe as an instrument of linguistic training needs greater facilities for its acquisition. Some may smile at the idea of any Oriental language acquiring greater weight as an instrument of training among Occidental peoples whose vigorous mental faculties require a more suitable discipline for their development. Be it remembered, however, that Sanskrit is, in one sense, the property of Europe as well as of India. Its relationship to some of our own languages is as close as to some of the Hindū dialects. It is a better guide than either Greek or Latin to the structure, historical connection, and correlation of the whole Indo-European family. It is a more trustworthy authority in the solution of recondite philological problems. Its study involves a mental discipline not to be surpassed.

Not even the most superficial observer can possibly be blind to the educational movement now spreading everywhere. Perhaps, however, some of us, trained under the old system, are scarcely yet alive to the forces which are at work for infusing new blood (if I may be allowed the phrase) into the whole body of our teaching. Not only must Greek and Latin be taught more thoroughly and scientifically, if they are to hold their own as the best trainers of thought and enforcers of accuracy*, but modern languages and modern literature can no longer be thrust aside or only employed to fill up the gaps in our system of instruction. All the nations of the

* Thoroughness in our teaching of Greek and Latin will never be effected until we lead our pupils to look more into the intimate internal constitution of these languages in their correlation to each other and to the other members of the Aryan family. To this end Sanskrit is indispensable. French again will never be taught as it ought to be till our boys are made to under-

stand its connection with Latin in every part of its grammatical structure. I hail such an excellent work as the 'Historical Grammar of the French Tongue by Auguste Brachet,' translated by the Rev. G. W. Kitchin, as an evidence that we are beginning to realize the defects in our present system of linguistic training.