

the literature or to the modern authorities on which I have depended for guidance. In this I had better ground for abstention than my predecessor, seeing that the great work of Professors Böhrtlingk and Roth, the completion of which may be looked for in a few years, will provide advanced scholars with abundant examples and references to every department of the literature. I should add that as my main object has been to facilitate and generalize the study of a difficult language, I have of course abstained from complicating the typography of this volume by placing accents on Vedic words\*. For a knowledge of these the scholar must again apply to the great German Wörterbuch.

I come in the next place to a feature in the present publication which, as the four Governments of India have liberally patronized this work, demands an ample explanation.

#### SECTION 4.

##### *Alphabet and System of Transliteration employed.*

I fear the great Indian Paṇḍits, if they deem this Dictionary worthy of their notice, will be somewhat surprised that a work intended as an aid to the study of their literature should exhibit their venerable Sanskrit clothed in a modern European dress†. Let me then crave leave to remind them that the Romanized character employed in these pages will be found, if its history be investigated, to be neither modern nor European, and may possibly turn out to be even more ancient than their sacred Nāgarī, and even more suited to the expression of their sacred Sanskrit.

After all, we English are not only Eastern in our origin, but in many of our most important surroundings. First, we have received our religion and our Bible through an Eastern people; next, our language is certainly Asiatic in its affinities; thirdly, we are known to have derived our invaluable decimal notation, commonly called the ten Arabic numerals, from India through the Arabs; lastly, the written symbols which I am now employing, and by which this useful vernacular of ours is, as it were, materialized and sent to the ends of the earth, are certainly Asiatic too.

The East is, we must candidly own, the first source of all our light. We cannot, indeed, localize in Asia the precise spot whence issued the springs of that grand flow of speech which spread in successive waves—commencing with the Keltic—over the whole area of Europe; but the local source of the first alphabet, without which each of these waves of speech must have been in the end swallowed up and lost in its successor, is well known to have been Phœnicia. The great centre of the commerce of antiquity naturally gave birth to what was felt to be indispensable to the intercommunion of national as well as individual life. By the very necessities of trade Phœnicia invented the first, so to speak, locomotive power which enabled language, embodied in a kind of material form, to be in a manner exported to distant countries and bartered, like any other commodity, for language imported in return.

Probably the first Phœnician graphic signs were, like the Chinese, of an ideographic character, but of this there is said to be no certain evidence. However that may be, it is tolerably clear that the first Phœnician graphic system, about which we know anything, had not advanced beyond

\* See the note on Vedic accents, p. xix of this Preface.

† Though some Sanskrit books—such as Professor Aufrecht's R̥g-veda—printed in the Roman character are much used by European scholars, it is doubtful whether these have obtained even a limited circulation in India. I trust, therefore, that when this volume falls into the hands of any great Paṇḍit, to whom one of our Indian Governments may present it, he will not consider that I am degrading Sanskrit like the man who pollutes cow's milk by putting it into a dog's skin. *Nahi pūtaṃ syād go-kshiraṃ śva-dṛitaṃ dhṛitam*; cf. Muir's Sanskrit Texts, vol. ii. p. 53, note 97. Of course I know that many native books are printed in

which Sanskrit words are transliterated by Roman letters, but my desire is to see some standard texts accurately printed in this character and circulated throughout India. At present the loose and careless way in which the Roman alphabet is applied tends to bring the whole system into disrepute. This is exemplified in writing the names of places and persons as well as in books. A little work called the Durga-puja [sic] by Pratāpachandra Ghosha has just been received by me from Calcutta. It contains much useful information, but here we have Sanskrit words transliterated without any attempt at exactness, e.g. *Devi, Durga, puja, Purana, ashtami, Krshna, Savitri*, and numberless others.