

I occupy. The night before last, a thief was caught moving off with his effects. He kept him, bound hands and feet, all next day; people, as they passed, beat and pelted the robber till he died in the evening. The fakír was taken up, and accused my people of ill-using the robber. It appeared, on full enquiry, to be untrue. The officers of justice released the fakír, who, it seems, is reputed a saint, and is privileged accordingly.

"23rd.—To-day is kept as *Śiva-rátri*, because the 14th lunar day will commence on the night of this day. The strict fast was observed as usual, and the whole Court went to visit several of the temples of Mahádéva. The temples of Śiva are very numerous here. He is more worshipped than any of the deities.

"The harvest is almost entirely gathered; only a few fields of wheat remain uncut, and some of chiches, in the valley. The harvest of wheat began more than a fortnight ago. It is all brought in carts.

"The scenery from the single hill, four cos south of Nágpur, is beautiful. Not far from it stands a hill, covered with low wood, and frequented by wild hogs. They quit this haunt at night, to feed in the fields, near the village of Nícar, and that of Shiwengāon, etc.

"February 26th.—The number of distillers' shops is incredible. Mahrattas of all ranks drink immoderately; and so do the women. Even ladies of rank use spirituous liquors; but the women who fetch wood and grass from the forest are, most of all, addicted to intoxication. It is curious to see, of an evening, crowds of well-dressed women getting drunk at a distiller's door. There are 1,100 registered-stills, and 1,300 registered courtesans, in Nágpur.

"March 15th.—The Cherek pújá is here celebrated on the day of the Dóla-Yátrá, nearly in the same manner that it is in Bengal on the last day of the solar year. The resort of spectators was great. The crowds of carts, carrying women

and children from villages far and near, were a striking and unusual sight to one used to see the middle classes travel solely on foot. The Hólí has been celebrated here with no remarkable ceremonies different from Bengal or Hindustan.

"The Vasantí Déví Pújá is opened by raising a flag (some put a brass pot on a bamboo), in commemoration of Ráma having here, or near this, hoisted his standard with the army of apes, preparatory to his invasion of Lanka.

"Some keep a very strict fast during all the nine days preceding the Ráma Navamí; the Raja, for example, who is a very strict and regular Hindu, punctually observing and practising all the superstitions of the religion. The fast is so strict that nothing is eaten; only water or sherbet is drunk during nine successive days.<sup>1</sup>

\* \* \* \* \*

"May 11th.—Having mislaid this note-book for a month past, I have omitted to mark some occurrences I intended to set down. I must endeavour to recall them, and note them as recollection enables me.

"About a month ago, a leopard made his appearance in a betel vineyard, two or three miles from the town near Vincajee's garden. He was immediately surrounded by nets. The Court went out, saw him driven into a cage, and brought away the prisoner in triumph. The cage was put on a cart, which was conducted immediately before the Amári elephant, on which sat Raghoo and his brother, coming home in great state. As the procession passed, a Jasoos's report to Raghoo, that I had been enquiring about the success of his sport, made him send the leopard to my bungalow. Four camels brought home the nets.

"This day Bagajee Pandit, Jenardher Pandit, and Jeswant Ráo, came, on the part of Śrídhar Pandit, to invite

<sup>1</sup> I have omitted a short memorandum relating to an eclipse of the moon, which took place on the ninth of April. The times and altitudes are given, but the cloudiness of the weather prevented an exact observation.

Mr. T., Capt. L., and myself to his wedding. The ceremony of invitation consists in putting rice (*acshata*), coloured with turmeric, etc., into the hand of the invited guest.

“The Góndwána Raja, as the chief Musalmán of the place, waited on Raghoo the other day, in form, to receive a Khelat upon his going to the Edgáh<sup>1</sup> to have the usual prayers recited upon that festival.

“The Raja, laying the foundation of a shed he ordered to be built for war-rockets, near the artillery-park, by way of a freak, proposed to his attendant to assist in beginning the building. He and his courtiers immediately began collecting stones and laying them; each brought and laid a few, and the foundation of a very humble building was thus laid by the auspicious hands of the princes and of his courtiers.

“He has now gone out on a short excursion, which has no other ostensible object but to eat melons on the spot where they are grown. The other day he went to view a Páegáh (city stable, but meaning a body of cavalry, the horses of which belong to the State). Here, from the cavalry being mounted on mares, they are establishments for breeding, also. He has not been tiger-hunting so often this year as last.

“January, 1801.—My notes have long remained neglected. Wanting leisure and inclination to keep them regularly, I must mark a few words, to remind me, at need, of topics deserving recollection.

“Last month a young man, an oilman by profession, was going to be buried alive, on account of the leprosy. Mr. T. persuaded him to remain above ground, and to take medicines. (Mr. T. will relate the adventure at large). On this and on another occasion, while I was at Purnea, where a Fakír caused himself to be buried alive, salt was the chief article of preparatives. The man had grown desperate by being sepa-

<sup>1</sup> Edgáh, or Eed-gáh, a place of festival or prayer. The term is applied to buildings erected for the celebration of the Eeds or festivals, of which there are several in the Muhammedan Calendar.

rated from his family on account of the leprosy he is afflicted with. It is, besides, a notion, that, when one of a family dies of a leprosy, his disease seizes some one of his surviving relations; but this is obviated, if he cause himself to be buried alive. Another motive for this voluntary death is to obtain obsequies, which are not legal for one who dies a leper;—not, at least, without ceremonies to remove the spiritual taint, and which ceremonies do not appear to be practised on such occasions.

“A few months ago, Candharáo’s Coottas<sup>1</sup> exhibited to us the breaking of a chain. They fastened one end of a strong iron chain to a peg sunk in the ground. A log of wood was laid over the chain, close to the peg; some yellow dust was put on the apparatus, and distributed to bystanders. A little frankincense was burnt on the peg. The people played, and sang, and made contortions; and then one seized the loose end of the chain, and, after a trial or two, snapped the chain by a hard shake. They broke it with ease several times; the last time it seemed to be a more difficult task. The sleight seems to consist in giving a long shake instead of short jerks. These people form a singular body, dependent on a temple not far from Púna.”

\* \* \* \* \*

The journal concludes with a slight reference to the origin of these devotees, and to the practise of suicide under religious vows, which prevailed in the country south of Nágpúr. Both subjects are treated more fully in the following paper.

Many of the particulars which are given by Mr. Colebrooke concerning Muhammadan and Hindu ascetics, especially the latter, have been more fully described in later publications. The Kánúni Islám, a popular account of the customs of the Muhammedans of India, translated by Herklots, a medical officer in the Madras establishment, gives a short account of the different orders of fakírs, the method of initiation, and the arts and tricks resorted to by many of the fraternities. Some notice of the char-

<sup>1</sup> Dogs of Candharáo, as explained in the paper on ascetics, which follows this.

acteristic differences of the various sects of Hindus is added by Mr. Colebrooke to his second essay on the religious ceremonies of the Hindus (Mis. Essays, i. p. 196). He there points out the different branches of these orders as representing the votaries of Śiva, Viṣṇu, and Śakti or divine energy. Other orders exist devoted to other deities of the Hindu Pantheon; but the three here named vastly preponderate in numbers. For an enlarged account of these various sects, the reader is referred to Professor H. H. Wilson's well-known Essay (Collected Works, vol. I.).

#### ON INDIAN ASCETICS.

“Ascetics of various orders, both Hindu and Musalmán, are more numerous in Nágpúr than in any other town or city that has been visited by me; and here, as in other large towns, the Muhammadan fakírs form a community which is governed by its own laws, administered by its own officers. The *Sirgiróh*, or head of the community, exercises jurisdiction over all fakírs within the precincts of the town, whether inhabitants of it, or sojourners, or travellers. He is assisted by a *Cotwál* and other officers, nominated by himself, and is attended by *Chobdárs*, who, as well as the officers of the community, are all fakírs. The fourteen orders of Muhammadan ascetics are all obedient to the same *Sirgiróh*, whatever be the order to which he belongs. However, the *Azáds*,<sup>1</sup> who are deemed superior to the rest, because they have devoted themselves to celibacy, yield unwilling obedience to a chief selected from a different order; and the enthusiasts of every description, affecting mental alienation and supernatural power, do not seem to be held amenable even to spiritual jurisdiction. They are far more numerous in the Dekhin than in Hindustan.

<sup>1</sup> *Azád*, solitary. The following short description of this class of ascetics is taken from the Kánúni Islám. “They shave their beards, whiskers, mustachios, eyebrows, and eyelashes, in short, the hair in every part of the body, and lead lives of celibacy. They have no inclination for reading prayers daily. If they get anything to eat and drink, be it good or bad, they partake of it. They have no fixed abode; the generality of them travel, and subsist on alms.”



“The jurisdiction of the *Sirgíróh* extends to the maintenance of religious discipline. He presides at all general meetings of *fakirs* within his limits, whether assembled for the cognizance of offences, or for the consideration of any matters of common concern, or for an entertainment given to them by devout persons. This is not unfrequent. The *fakirs* are assembled by previous notice; food is distributed amongst them; and sometimes money and tobacco, green hemp, opium, and various preparations of intoxicating drugs are profusely supplied during the sitting of the assembly. The use of such drugs is so far from being censured, that it is universal among *fakirs*; and they boast of the enormous quantity which some are able to consume with impunity, as a test of the holiness they have attained.

“The *fakirs*, especially the enthusiasts denominated *Mejzúb*<sup>1</sup> or *Meslán*, do not appear to be strict observers of the Muhammedan Law; but, on the contrary, they hold themselves dispensed from the rigid observance of it. Some are known to indulge freely in the use of spirituous liquors; and I have been credibly informed that certain enthusiasts, while roaming the forests, which they affect to prefer to inhabited places, have eaten dead bodies. The enthusiasts, or, at least, the admirers of their austerities, pretend that supernatural power is acquired by mortification and religious meditations. They sit for whole days and nights without change of posture, profoundly meditating their holy visions. They acknowledge that, to have such visions it is necessary to observe rigid abstemiousness; and the effects of this, together with solitude, aided, too, by intoxicating drugs, are sufficiently obvious. The legends which they preserve, by tradition, concerning their most celebrated saints, tend, also, to exalt a fervid imagination; and this is further assisted by the tenets which they maintain concerning the universal diffusion of the divine essence, and the identity of the universe and the deity.

“No wonder that many are seen in all the gradations of

<sup>1</sup> *Mejzúb*, abstracted.

mental aberration, from formal bigotry to mystical enthusiasm, and even absolute insanity. "God is everywhere, even in this dog," said an enthusiast, when asked why he made a cur his companion. "Do you ascribe divinity to a dog?" answered one<sup>1</sup> who affected not to apprehend his allusion to a mystical doctrine. "You do not understand this matter," replied the *fakir*. The same man, when reprehended for visiting my camp, after being warned to avoid it, made answer: "We are curs that hunt for offal, and resort wherever morsels are thrown to us."

"It is, certainly, a maxim with these ascetics, to abandon worldly concerns, and subsist on alms, practising mortification and austerity. Many, no doubt, are sincere and exact in observing the rules of their institution. Others are, as indubitably, impostors, adopting the religious profession for a livelihood, and practising the usual arts of hypocrisy, to render their profession lucrative.

"In the course of the inquiries, from the results of which these brief observations are drawn, I had reason to know that every order of *fakirs* has its pass-words, by which they are enabled to detect any pretender who might assume the dress and designation of the order without having been duly initiated. The initiation, which may be performed by any *fakir*, is said to consist in girding the pupil with a leather thong, administering to him the cup, making known to him the pass-words, and communicating a few maxims for his guidance. Such among these maxims as enjoin contentment with whatever alms are given, and humility towards all men, are as ill-observed by these as by ascetics of other religions.<sup>2</sup>

"Before I speak of Hindu ascetics, I must remark that *fakirs*

<sup>1</sup> Captain Lennox.

<sup>2</sup> The ceremonies are shortly described in the *Kānūni Islām*. The *fakirs* of Hindustan are ranged under fourteen households, which are supposed to have originated with four *Pirs* or saints. The votary applies to a *fakir* of one of these households, and declares his faith in the *Pir* to which it belongs. The ceremony consists in an entertainment, and presents, according to the means of the disciple, the recitation of prayers, and instruction in the names of all the *Pirs* in the household,

are required, by the institutes of the profession, to retire to their bed, as to a cell, at the dusk of the evening. One order, however, solicits alms by the light of lamps. *Fakirs* of this order are often seen walking the streets with lamps in their hands. Another practice, which is frequent among all *fakirs* (that of naming the specific sum or thing which they require), is abused by some, especially by one order among them, to the length of extorting what they demand, by assuming a painful posture, which they will not quit until their demand has been granted. The instance of one who remained for several years, near Cánhpur, buried up to the chest in the ground, until the sum which he required was contributed by a battalion of native Infantry in the British service, is notorious, and renders it unnecessary for me to cite less conspicuous instances.<sup>1</sup>

from the foundation of the order. The list of these saints, which is handed over to the disciple, is regarded with superstitious reverence. The ceremony is concluded by handing a cup of sherbet, over which some prayers have been uttered. The instructor blows on the cup, and drinks a few mouthfuls; it is then finished by the disciple, with every appearance of reverence. The instructor proceeds to reveal, in a whisper, "all the secret mysteries of godliness."

<sup>1</sup> A paper by Sir John Shore, "On some extraordinary Facts, Customs, and Practices of the Hindus," which appeared in an early volume of the Asiatic Researches, gives a short account of the practice called *Dherna*. To this Mr. Colebrooke added some manuscript notes on the margin, in illustration of facts mentioned above. The practice of *Dherna*, it is well known, is resorted to as a means of recovering a debt, and is recognized by Hindu lawyers as a legitimate mode of enforcing a just demand. The Brahmin who resorts to it sits at the man's door and fasts; and the party against whom the claim is made, is bound by etiquette to fast also. This is the orthodox mode of procedure; but it is needless to add that it is often employed as a mode of enforcing irregular demands; and Sir J. Shore proceeds to describe a practice followed by some Brahmins in Calcutta, of extorting charity or subsistence by posting themselves before the doors of Hindus, threatening to remain till their demands were complied with. Mr. Colebrooke subjoins the following remarks:—"Musalmán fakirs also practise the same method of extorting alms; and these demands are, frequently, exorbitant. It is most prevalent among the sect named [ ]. The religious of this sect, I am told, will die sooner than recede from a demand which they have formally made. In one instance, which occurred at my own door, at Mirzapur, in 1797, the man belonged to another sect. He has several wives whom he maintains by this practice. His demand was a horse and 1000 rupees. He fixed the colour and breed of the horse he required. He stood a fortnight on one leg, resting his arms on a cross bamboo. Finding no prospect of succeeding, he departed, when tired of his posture."

"The severe discipline to which Hindu ascetics submit, and the excruciating torments which they voluntarily inflict on themselves, have been repeatedly noticed by every traveller.

"I shall here confine myself to a brief account of the different orders. The first is that of *Brahmachāris*, who bind themselves for life to the strict observance of the very austere discipline which the law imposes on students of theology and sacred literature. In their practice they seem to hold the austerities as more essential than the studies with which this discipline is connected. Many of them appear to be wholly illiterate.

"The second is that of hermits, who make their abodes in forests and deserts. This order appears to have been numerous in ancient times. But few belonging to it are now found. The third is that of *Sannyāsīs* or *Yātis*.<sup>1</sup> The maxims of discipline and of doctrine, intended for this and the last-mentioned order of ascetics, form no small part of the religious institutes of the Hindus, but do not seem to be much studied, or very strictly observed, by modern *Sannyāsīs*. These are, mostly, perhaps universally, mere mendicants, illiterate and dissolute. Many of them follow the profession of arms; other practise robbery for their subsistence.

"It appears that the regular system of the Hindu religion established many gradations, through which the ascetic passed, in the progress of his initiation, to the highest order of devotion. From some of these, probably,<sup>2</sup> have been borrowed

<sup>1</sup> The distinction between ascetic and hermit is pointed out in a note to Mr. Colebrooke's translation to the *Mitācsharā* (Chap. II. sect. 6): "The term ascetic is, in this translation, used for the *yāti*, or *sannyāsi*; and "hermit," or "anchoret," for *vānaprast'ha*. In former translations, as in the version of Menu by Sir W. Jones, the two last terms were applied severally to the two orders of devotion." The following passage from Menu explains the sense attached to the term *sannyāsi* in old times. I quote from Jones's translation. "Having thus performed religious acts in a forest during the third portion of his life, let him become a *Sannyāsi* for the fourth portion of it, abandoning all sensual affections, and wholly reposing on the Supreme Being" (Manu, vi. 33).

<sup>2</sup> Reference is here made to the division of the life of a twice-born man into four periods—that of study, that of householder or active liver, that of a hermit,

the orders of *Yógi* and *Bairági*, or contemplative recluse and dispassionate ascetic. But many of the modern *Yógis* are only mendicants; and among the *Bairágis* are included several sects which are deemed heretical by orthodox Hindus. Other sects, also, which are considered heterodox (by the learned, at least,) are common throughout India. The most remarkable among these heretical ascetics are those called *Nágas*; they are naked mendicants, and very commonly follow the profession of arms.

“The *Gósáins* or *Goswámis* more generally engage in commerce. The ten branches of this order, which are distinguished by fanciful names, as *Gir* and *Pervet* (a mountain), and *Puri* (a city), claim for their founder the most learned among the commentators on the philosophy of the *Véds*.<sup>1</sup> Yet these *Gósáins* are, with few exceptions, grossly illiterate, not even possessing the knowledge of accounts, which is requisite for conducting the extensive trade in which they embark. Some of them, like the *Sannyásis* and *Nágas*, adopt the military profession.<sup>2</sup> Himmet Behádur, a conspicuous character

and lastly, a life of abstraction or contemplation. We have here the germ of that monastic system which has spread throughout Asia. It may be superfluous to add that, among modern ascetics, it is not a portion but the whole life that is usually devoted to the rules or practices of the order, and that the membership is not confined to privileged classes. In the great majority of these orders there is a complete obliteration of the distinction of castes. The influence now exercised by the monastic orders is intimately connected with the decline of Brahminism and of the old religious practises. The date of the rise of these sects is uncertain, and probably some of them are very ancient. Their great multiplication belongs to comparatively modern times.

<sup>1</sup> S'ancara Achárya. The few particulars that are known regarding the life of this remarkable man, who exercised such influence on the religious history of India, are collected by Professor Wilson, in his *Essay on the Religious Sects of the Hindus* (Collected Works, Vol. I., p. 197). It is to be regretted that so much obscurity rests as to the time when he flourished, connected as it is with an important epoch which witnessed a vehement struggle against Buddhism and the remodelling of the Hindu system. Dates have been assumed varying from the seventh to the tenth century of our era.

<sup>2</sup> Hordes of armed devotees figured conspicuously in the troublous times which preceded the rise of British power. Professor Wilson, in his account of the *Nágas*, mentions an attack which was made by a band of them, several hundreds in number, on the British force under Goddard, during their passage through

of the present day, and the associate of Ali Behádur's conquests in Bundelcund, is himself a *Gosáin*, though he bear the title of *Rájá*.

"The obligation of celibacy, in this and other orders, which may be termed monastic, is not absolute and irrevocable. A *Gosáin*, willing to relinquish the honours which superstition attaches, very unmeritedly, to his celibacy, may espouse a wife; and the practice is so far common as to have introduced an established distinction between the orders of married and unmarried *Gosáins*. The children of married *Gosáins* inherit their property; but the heirs of the unmarried are the pupils whom they bought in their infancy and initiate into the order. Women, too, are admitted in other religious orders, as well *Hindu* as *Muslemán*. *Yogins*, *Bairágins*, and *Fakirnis* are daily seen in every part of India; some, the wives of men belonging to such orders; others, impelled by superstition to

Bundelcund, in 1778. He refers to Pennant's *Hindustan*. According to this writer, Bundelcund swarmed with them. He says that they assembled in numbers of ten and twelve thousand, under the pretence of pilgrimages, laid whole countries under contribution, and were guilty of every enormity. Bands of *Gosáins* gave some employment to our troops, at an early period, on the Assam frontier. In Central India they sold their services to native princes, and, on one occasion, rendered important service to Scindia in suppressing an insurrection. More frequently, rival sects waged war with each other, when they met at a place of pilgrimage. The author of the *Dabistán* mentions two occasions in which these conflicts took place, and adds that the *Sannyásis* were frequently seen engaged in war (Shea's translation, Vol. ii., pp. 197 and 231). Hurdwar was a frequent scene of these conflicts. One of those related in the *Dabistán* occurred at Hurdwar in the year 1640 of our era. The facts connected with a more formidable conflict are related by Raper, in his account of the survey of the Ganges, in 1807 (*Asiatic Researches*, vol. xi.) It commenced with a private quarrel between two leaders, and ended in a struggle in which the *Gosáins* are said to have destroyed 18,000 of their adversaries, and established a superiority at these periodical assemblages, which lasted till the end of the century. A curious account is given by Captain Hardwicke of the insolent bearing of this order, during his visit to the fair in 1796. They assumed an authority over the vast multitude (exceeding two millions, according to Captain Hardwicke's estimate), regulated the police, and collected dues in the name of the Mahratta government; their Mahants determining cases of complaint. The *Gosáins* swaggered through the *Mela*, allowing no other sect to carry arms, until the arrival of some *Seik* chiefs, who brought with them twelve or fourteen thousand horsemen, established an independent authority, and, in the end, attacked and chased away the *Gosáins* (*Asiatic Researches*, vol. vi.).

adopt religious austerity. At the tomb of a Muhammedan Saint, about thirty miles from Nágpúr (that of Sháh Feríd), resides a lady of noble birth, who has assumed the dress and manners of a *Fakirni*, and has employed the residue of her fortune in embellishing the buildings that belong to the tomb. She thus atones, as I was informed, for the dissoluteness of her past conduct.

“Ascetics of every order, and of both religions, are much respected by the superstitious Hindus and Muslems. It is everywhere common, and in the *Dekhin* especially, to see alms given, or endowments granted, by Hindus to Muhammedan *Fakirs*, or by Muslems to Indian *Yógis*. The veneration in which they are held, and the respect with which they are treated, has produced no small degree of spiritual pride.

“Charity was often solicited from us by children who exhibited no appearances of poverty. We remarked that their foreheads were coloured with powder of turmeric, and that each bore a pouch made of leopard’s hide, in which he deposited the alms he received, and in which he carried a provision of yellow powder. Grown persons, bearing similar pouches, were frequently seen; and, upon inquiry, the account given of their origin, the designation by which they are known, and the mode of their livelihood, were found to be equally strange.

“It appears, that, in the Mahratta dominions, childless persons frequently vow to consecrate the firstborn, should they obtain the blessing of progeny, to the service of a temple of Candharáo, near Púna. Such vows are so often made with success, that more children have been devoted to that temple, and educated for its service, than suffices for attendance on the idol, or than its endowment is adequate to maintain. Many, therefore, among the dogs of Candharáo (for so they are called), roam about the country, gaining a livelihood by the exhibition of a feat of strength, in the breaking of a strong iron chain.

“We had the curiosity to see this exhibition. After some

mummary, and much antic gesture, with rude music and singing, in the course of which they seemed to animate themselves, by violent motion, to an enthusiastic pitch, one seized the loose end of the chain, which was made fast to the ground at the other extremity, and with a single jerk he broke a middle link. We thought that a weak link had been purposely placed there, and we, for this reason, carefully examined the chain with which the exhibition was several times repeated: but could perceive no flaw; and the last time, the link—that was broken with rather more difficulty, however, than before,—appeared to be really strong. Meantime, several of my own servants repeatedly tried to break the chain, but without success. As the men who exhibited this feat seemed by no means athletic, nor so strong as the bystanders, who were unable to perform the same task, it doubtless requires dexterity in the manner of exerting force to break the chain. But the exhibition is not so striking as to have become a means of livelihood without superstition on the part of spectators, who consider these people as religious mendicants.

“In the provinces contiguous to Nágpúr, mountaineers and others belonging to very low tribes, have recourse to a much less innocent vow, namely that of suicide, to obtain boons from their gods. The successful votary fulfils his vow by casting himself down a precipice, which is named, from the deity to whom it is sacred, Cálbhairó. It is situated in the mountains south of the Nerbadá, towards Deogerh. At this place a vast concourse of people assemble, every year, on the appointed day,<sup>1</sup> to view the fulfilment of such vows; and we were confidently assured that each year brings five or six suicides to Cálbhairó.

“We conversed with one of them, a few days before he departed from Nágpúr upon this errand. He was a native of Amerávetí, but came to Nágpúr to proceed thence with the annual caravan of suicides and of spectators. Each day, during his stay in that capital, he walked the streets of the

<sup>1</sup> The new moon of Phálgun.

town, dressed in a fantastic manner, and preceded by drums. His object was to collect alms, wherewith to pay his musicians, and to make an oblation to the idol (a rude stone, as we were told), near the edge of the precipice. The vow which he was now about to fulfil had been made, by him, ten years before, when anxious for the safety of a beloved sister, who was missing. She was found by him within a few hours; and the recollection of his vow was lost, until a fit of sickness refreshed his memory. He then thought himself haunted for the breach of his vow, and resolved on fulfilling it in the present season. The man seemed, while he talked with us, in full possession of his natural faculties, impressed, however, with the awe of impending dissolution. He had in his hand a cocoa-nut, which he kept in continual motion; and he cheerfully explained to us the purpose of dashing it against the sacred stone or idol, the moment before he should plunge off the rock. After leaving my house he sat for a while, listening to the songs of his attendants; when, suddenly starting up, he made violent contortions for a few minutes, and then sank into a trance, overcome by the fatigue of his exertions, or, as the bystanders were willing to believe, by the offended goddess who haunted him.

“I could not learn that Hindu priests have any share in promoting this superstition. The persons who conduct the ceremonies performed at Cálbhairó, and take the spoils of the suicides, after viewing the bodies at the foot of the precipice, are said to be mountaineers. All the Brahmins whom I consulted agreed in affirming that no trace of this practice can be found in their books; nor has it been ever adopted by people belonging to the higher tribes of Hindus.

“A practice, even more repugnant to humanity, prevails at the island of Ságara, at the mouth of the Ganges; and that, too, is, in like manner, discountenanced by the Brahmins, and confined to the lower tribes of the people. In consequence of superstitious vows, children are there thrown into the sea,

to be devoured by sharks ; and grown persons cast themselves into the water, to perish by the same means.<sup>1</sup>

“If the Brahmins have refrained from taking part in the superstitions of Cálbhairo and Ságar, they have not shewn equal forbearance in other instances. That they countenance widows burning with their husbands’ corpse, and men drowning themselves at the confluence of the Ganges and Jamuná is sufficiently known. Instances are not rare of persons cutting their own throats before the image of Bhawání, at the temples of Vindhyavásiní, near Mirzapur.<sup>2</sup>

“Various other modes of suicide are also countenanced, especially when used by professed devotees, who pretend to have secured the reunion of their souls with the divine essence, and accelerate their beatitude by a voluntary death. This is denominated *Samádí’ h* ; and the term is often, but improperly, applied to any religious suicide ; even to that of a diseased person causing himself to be buried alive. Leprosy is the disease which most frequently impels the wretched sufferer to seek relief of his misery in the grave.

“During my stay at Nágpúr, an unhappy leper was rescued from an untimely death by the gentlemen of the Residency. In consequence of their expressing a wish to see the ceremonies of a widow burning herself on her husband’s funeral pile, one

<sup>1</sup> The practice was suppressed by the Government in 1802. The preamble to the Act states that it was found, on enquiry, not to have the sanction of the Hindu law, nor to be countenanced by the religious orders, nor by the people at large ; but to be simply a prevalent custom arising from superstitious vows ; and that it continued to prevail at other places on the Ganges, which are specified, at stated periods, viz., the full moons of November and January. The order of the Government was enforced with the greatest ease by the presence of a military guard.

<sup>2</sup> Vindhyavásiní, dweller in the Vindhya. This place, since Mr. Colebrooke wrote, acquired a horrible notoriety as the favourite resort of the Thugs, who placed unbounded confidence in the presiding goddess, until the apprehension and punishment of many of their gangs led them to suppose that they had fallen under her displeasure. See a short account of these miscreants by Professor H. H. Wilson in his *History of British India*, Vol. III. p. 297. He visited the temple in 1820, then frequented by the ruffians of the western provinces. It presented, so the author writes, an extraordinary assemblage of most atrocious-looking vagabonds.

of our servants, who had been ordered to watch the recurrence of such an event, brought notice that a man was to be buried alive. Capt. Lennox and Mr. Turnbull immediately repaired to the spot."

\* \* \* \* \*

This narration, which breaks off thus abruptly, is, evidently, the same incident as that related above in Mr. Colebrooke's journal, when Dr. Turnbull prevailed on the unfortunate leper to refrain from self-murder, and try the effect of medicine. Mr. Colebrooke, in relating this incident to his sons, added that the doctor's advice met with the full approbation of the crowd who had assembled to witness the act of suicide, with one exception,—and that was the leper's wife.



## CHAPTER VI. 1801-1807.

ESTABLISHMENT OF THE SUDDER DEWANY AND NIZAMUT ADAWLUT—PROFESSORSHIP OF SANSKRIT AND HINDU LAW—SANSKRIT GRAMMAR—CORRESPONDENCE—INSCRIPTIONS.

MR. COLEBROOKE, on his return to Mirzapore, was not kept long in suspense as to the intentions of the Government regarding him. He was shortly summoned to Calcutta, to fill the high office which rumour had already assigned to him. At this period of Indian administration the appellate jurisdiction in Bengal and Behar rested with provincial courts, scattered through these provinces. A further appeal lay to the Supreme Council, consisting of the Governor-General, the Commander-in-Chief, and two members of the Civil Service, not required to be selected on account of their judicial reputation. It followed that the executive and legislative functions of the Government occupied their attention, to the neglect of this branch; and the registrar of the court, a member of the service very inferior in position to the presiding members, became charged with the duty of preparing the decrees, and, in many cases, of guiding the Court. The accumulation of arrears which ensued was the least of the evils which resulted from such a system, and the greatest credit is due to Lord Wellesley for the very necessary reform which was introduced by the establishment of a Superior Court of Appeal, well known by the title which it long bore, of the Sudder Dewany and Nizamut Adawlut. Mr. Colebrooke became one of its first members, and, four years later, was placed at its head. His long labours on the bench formed a contribution to legal



science as important, at the time, as his compilations and translations from Sanscrit authors; as the decisions of the Court were, from this date, embodied in reports on all important cases. He now became a diligent and enthusiastic student of the civil law; and this will be found to have influenced him materially in his subsequent legal labours.

On his arrival in Calcutta his Vedic studies were interrupted by the honorary appointment which he received at the hands of Lord Wellesley, as professor of Sanscrit at the College, recently established at Fort William. The aim of this institution was to remedy the serious deficiencies in the education of the members of the Civil Service at this period. The Governor-General's minute recommending the establishment states that writers were usually sent out between sixteen and eighteen years of age, that their education was imperfect, and in many cases limited to commercial training, as if they were intended for this branch of the service only, or that their relations were in a hurry to get rid of them. The charge was certainly well founded, and though this institution, which was ushered in with great pomp, was not long maintained on its original scale, the necessity of maintaining some standards of qualification, and of subjecting the young writers to a special training, was at once recognised by the Government at home. Whatever opinion may be formed of the value of the College as a place of instruction, the impulse which it gave to Oriental studies at the time is unquestioned; but more, perhaps, on the part of the professors than of the students.<sup>1</sup> To add dignity to the new institution the most eminent scholars were invited to co-operate, by accepting honorary appointments. Mr. Colebrooke was appointed to the Professorships of Hindu Law and Sanscrit.

<sup>1</sup> The influence of the College on Oriental philology is well shown in the list of works which were published under its patronage, and which will be found in the Appendix to Roebuck's Annals of the College of Fort William. It extends over twenty pages, and embraces nearly every important work bearing on the languages of the East, which were published in Calcutta from 1800 to 1819.



He delivered no oral instruction ; but he acted, for some, time as examiner in the Persian, Hindustani, Bengali, and Sanscrit languages.

His acceptance of the latter appointment led to his resuming the intention announced in a letter, written so far back as 1797, of publishing a grammar of the language. He then proposed to devote the leisure of a year to this work. I find no trace of his having commenced the undertaking. But the essay on the Sanscrit and Pracrit languages, which appeared in 1801, shows how complete had been his survey, at this date, of this branch of Indian literature. To this he was impelled by his love of philology, and by his admiration of the structure of Sanscrit. Its power and flexibility was a frequent subject of conversation in after life ; and it may be observed that in the above-named essay, which gave a general review of the ancient language and its connection with the modern dialects of India, he concludes with the promise of a more elaborate comparison. He remarks, "To these cursory observations might be fitly added a specimen of each language, and of the character in which it is written, together with a list of the most common terms in the various dialects of India, compared with words of similar sound and import in the ancient languages of Europe. I have, indeed, made collections for this purpose ; but the insertion of a copious list would exceed the limits of a desultory essay. For this reason, and because the collection is yet incomplete, I suppress it."

Some of the collections referred to are still extant. The subject seems to have been taken up at intervals. One of the lists of words probably belongs to his earliest studies, and bears the water mark of 1796. The range of his comparison was wide ; as it embraced not merely Sanscrit, Greek, and Latin with their derivatives, but the Germanic and Slavonic dialects. In one case (the word brother) it is carried through eighteen variations. There are about 120 words altogether in the list. His examination of variations of inflexions is confined to some

of the most obvious analogies of verbs in Sanscrit, and in the classic languages of Europe, and does not extend beyond twenty instances.

These desultory studies were thrown aside when he undertook his Sanscrit Grammar. It is difficult for one who pretends to no critical knowledge of the language to convey to the reader a due conception of the nature and importance of this elaborate undertaking; but it constitutes too important a portion of Mr. Colebrooke's labours to be passed over in this sketch of his life; and it commands a special interest, owing to the influence which the ancient grammatical system of India has had on the science of comparative philology. The work is founded on the rules of Páṇini, the most ancient Hindu grammarian whose works have come down to us entire, and who was the exponent, if not the actual founder, of a system which has left traces on the literature of India, and is not without its influence on the linguistic studies of the present day.

Mr. Colebrooke's predecessors and fellow labourers, under the guidance of the pundits of Calcutta, had depended, in their early studies, on the popular treatises of Bengal, of which a brief notice is given in Mr. Colebrooke's Essay, and which formed the basis of Carey's Grammar. It is curious to observe that Sir W. Jones, in a short review of Sanscrit literature, in the first volume of the "Asiatic Researches," dismisses the work of Páṇini with the slighting remark that it is "so abstruse as to require the lucubration of many years before it can be perfectly understood." Again, after quoting the remark, which a pundit addressed to Wilkins, that the work of Páṇini was a forest, Sir William adds: "Since grammar is only an instrument, not the end, of true knowledge, there can be little occasion to travel over so rough and gloomy a path." "The best grammar," he adds, "is the Mugdhabodha, comprehending in two hundred short pages all that a learner of the language can have occasion to know." This is one of the popular grammars in repute in Bengal.



Sir William had reason afterwards to change his opinion; for among the list of desiderata found in his papers after his death, "A grammar of the Sanscrit language from Pāṇini, etc.," occupies a conspicuous place.<sup>1</sup>

It has been already mentioned, in referring to Mr. Colebrooke's early studies, how much he too was repelled by the forbidding character of Indian grammars. That he soon learnt to appreciate the importance of the ancient portion of this literature is apparent from the terms in which he referred to the work of the founder of the science, in his Essay in 1801. He describes it as founded on a profound investigation of the analogies in both the regular and the anomalous inflections of the language, combined in a very artificial manner, and compressing a very copious etymology into a very narrow compass. But the ingenuity which is employed in giving conciseness to the 3996 precepts of the work constitutes one of its most serious defects; for Mr. Colebrooke continues: "The studied brevity of the *Pāṇiniya Sūtras* renders them in the highest degree obscure. Even with the knowledge of the key to their interpretation, the student finds them ambiguous. In the application of them, when understood, he discovers many seeming contradictions; and with every exertion of practised memory, he must experience the utmost difficulty in combining rules dispersed in apparent confusion through different portions of Pāṇini's eight lectures. A commentary was, therefore, indispensably requisite." This is supplied by a voluminous work of standard authority, in which "almost every rule is examined at great length. All possible interpretations are proposed; and the true sense and import of the rule are deduced through a tedious train of argu-

<sup>1</sup> Among the manuscripts presented by Sir W. Jones to the Royal Society, is a copy of the *Siddhānta Caumudī*, a comparatively modern recension of the works of Pāṇini and his immediate successors. It contains the following note in Sir William's handwriting, "I finished the attentive reading of this grammar by Pāṇini, Chatyana, and Patanjali, 18 Aug., 1792." To this study we may attribute his later appreciation of the ancient grammar.

ment, in which all foreseen objections are considered and refuted, and the wrong interpretations of the text, with all the arguments which can be invented to support them, are obviated or exploded."

Voluminous as this work was, it was far from exhausting the subject on which it treated. Its deficiencies were supplied by modern annotators, one of them—and the most celebrated—being nearly as copious as the commentary itself; and after this we are told that "the difficulty of combining the dispersed rules of grammar, to inflect any one verb or noun through all its variations, renders further aid necessary." These are supplied by vocabularies, and these again are followed by elaborate commentaries, which enter largely into scholastic refinements. Well might Mr. Colebrooke exclaim, "Such vast works as the *Mahābhāshya* and its scholia, with the voluminous annotations on the catalogue of verbs, are not adapted for general instruction. A concise commentary must have been always requisite." That to which Mr. Colebrooke gives the palm, though described to be as succinct as was consistent with perspicuity, is still a voluminous work, and the commentary and annotations on the commentaries are still more so. But enough has been said to point out some of the characteristics of the literature which is embraced in his review. There are others and, in Mr. Colebrooke's opinion, excellent works, by Sanscrit grammarians; but the inherent tendency of the Indian mind to scholastic disputation affects, in his opinion, the writings of these grammarians, as much as those of their lawyers and sophists; and even the best works are far too vast and intricate for young students. The popular abridgements and treatises which have been composed to meet the wants of students, labour under defects of another kind, and throw the student back on the more elaborate works, against whose pedantry Mr. Colebrooke so feelingly protests.

It will appear strange that one who has described so forcibly the obscurity of the ancient oracles should have adopted their



system as his standard, when he prepared a grammar for future students. He does, indeed, point out the importance of this system, when he refers to the imperfection of modern works; but the terms employed scarcely prepare the reader for the high terms in which he refers to the old standards, in the Preface to his Grammar which appeared four years later.<sup>1</sup> It is a singular testimony to the accuracy as well as the completeness of this school of grammarians, that their labours have been valued in proportion as they have been studied by European students. Something, too, in Mr. Colebrooke's case may be attributed to the progress of his Vedic studies, which were proceeding *pari passu* with the preparation of his Grammar; since the knowledge of the technical rules of the early grammarians is essential, in Mr. Colebrooke's view, to one who relies on commentaries or scholia on works of poetry or science.<sup>2</sup>

Some of the peculiarities of this system are described in the following passage from the Essay of 1801 :—"The outline of Pāṇini's arrangement is simple; but numerous exceptions and frequent digressions have involved it in much seeming confusion. The first two lectures (the first section, especially, which is in a manner the key of the whole grammar) contain definitions; in the three next are collected the affixes, by which verbs and nouns are inflected. Those which appertain to verbs occupy the third lecture; the fourth and fifth contain such as are affixed to nouns. The remaining three lectures treat of the changes which roots and affixes undergo in special cases, or by general rules of orthography, and which are all effected by the addition or by the substitution of one or more elements. The apparent simplicity of the design vanishes in the perplexity of the structure. The endless pursuit of ex-

<sup>1</sup> "The sacred grammar has been more cultivated, its agreement with ancient writings and classical authors has been more carefully verified than any other grammar of the language: it is more usually cited, and more generally understood; and, finally corrected by a long train of commentators, it is more accurate and complete."

<sup>2</sup> Misc. Essays, II. p. 15.

ceptions and of limitations so disjoins the general precepts, that the reader cannot keep in view their intended connexion and mutual relation. He wanders in an intricate maze, and the clew of the labyrinth is continually slipping from his hands."

The reader will perceive that the grammatical system here described deals only with one portion of the science, viz., the etymology of language, including, in that term, not merely the origin and derivation of words and their resolution into primitive roots, but the various modifications which the roots undergo in the structure of words. The relation of words to each other is only touched upon in illustration of the primary or secondary meaning of the words themselves. The syntax of language and its relation to logic and reasoning occupies a secondary place in this study. That the former branch of grammar should be so elaborate, while the other should be almost wholly neglected, is intelligible when we are informed that grammar itself received its impulse in India, as an adjunct to theology. The superstitious importance which was attached to a correct recitation of the Védas led to a minute analysis of language, of pronunciation, and of prosody.<sup>1</sup> Hence, among the six Vedangas, or treatises necessary for a

<sup>1</sup> "Language had become with the Hindus an object of wonder and meditation at a very early period. In the hymns of the Veda we meet with poetical and philosophical speculations on speech, and Sarasvati, the goddess of speech, is invoked as one of the most powerful deities. The scientific interest in language, however, dates from a later period. It was called forth, no doubt, by the careful study of a sacred literature, which, in India, as elsewhere, called into life many an ancient science. In India the sacred strains of the Rishis were handed down with the greatest care, the knowledge of these songs constituted the only claim and hope of man for a higher life, and from a very early time they were looked upon with such a superstitious awe, that a mere error of pronunciation was supposed to mar their miraculous power. We need not wonder, therefore, that the minutest rules were laid down as to the pronunciation of these hymns, and that the thoughts of the early teachers were led to dwell on the nature of language and its grammatical organisation."—*Müller's Ancient Sanskrit Literature*, p. 159. The close relation between grammar and theology was fully established in the time of Patanjali, the supposed author of one of the most ancient and the greatest of the commentators on the work of Pāṇini. "Throughout a great portion of his admirable introduction to Pāṇini, Patanjali endeavours to

Védic student, pronunciation, metre, grammar, and explanation of words occupy the first place. Astronomy and ceremonial complete the list. It is to be observed that the fourth, explanation of words (*Niructa*), is closely allied to grammar, as it deals largely with etymology.

It will be readily understood that, when such importance was attached to minute and literal accuracy, the study of the structure of words might become an elaborate science, and absorb the almost undivided attention of grammarians. Verbs and nouns were traced to their crude forms or roots, and the modifications of these roots are traced in every minutest part. One set of rules describe the affixes or augments, others point out the changes which the roots themselves undergo, either by the change of the final letter, or of the vowel sound, or by the interposition of other letters between the root and the affix. The modification of letters, also, in the juxtaposition of words in a sentence, becomes, in addition, an elaborate science.

If the object of grammar be to reduce, as far as language will admit of it, to general rules the changes which forms of speech undergo, this first object is not kept in view in such a system: the variation of letters, instead of being a secondary, acquires the first place, and we have examples of single rules which apply to different parts of speech, and half a dozen rules which are necessary to exhibit the inflection of a single word. Other difficulties belong to the Indian system, which need not be dwelt upon here, though they formed at one time most formidable obstacles to the study of the language, and are, even now, very imperfectly overcome in recent compilations; such as a peculiar nomenclature, requiring a considerable exercise of memory to master, but rendered unnecessary on the reader the great importance of grammatical study for promoting the objects of religion and holiness. He shows that a knowledge of language is necessary to a proper understanding of the sacred texts; that no priest is safe in the practice of rites without a thorough comprehension of the grammatical laws which define the nature of sounds and words,—in short, that nothing less than eternal bliss depends very much on the proper and correct use of words, and, as a consequence, on the study of *Pāṇini*."—*Goldstücker's Pāṇini*, p. 197.

sarily difficult and forbidding to the student by the use of a highly technical system of symbols, by which certain series of syllables in some cases, and in others single letters, guide the student to rules and inflections. Mr. Colebrooke did not attempt to relieve the student from the necessity of mastering these latter difficulties, beyond converting the obscure rules of the original into intelligible English. He evidently considered that a knowledge of the nomenclature of Sanscrit grammarians, which is very complete for its purpose, and of its technical devices, must be as essential to one who devotes himself to Indian literature, as a knowledge of the language and principles of European grammar is to a western student.

With these preliminary remarks as to the system, the character of the grammar which Mr. Colebrooke compiled from these materials will become intelligible. His aim was to bring together "the dispersed rules" applying to nouns, verbs, etc., and to arrange them in a scientific method suited to the natural course of intellectual study.<sup>1</sup> Thus the general rules which apply to the system, and constitute the key of the grammar, are placed in the commencement. Those relating to nouns and verbs follow in succession. The general rules relating to

<sup>1</sup> The reader will be able to judge of the nature of this task by an example. I quote an amusing illustration from the preface to Müller's Sanscrit Grammar. "The grammatical system of Hindu grammarians is so peculiar, that rules which we should group together, are scattered about in different parts of their manuals. We may have the general rule in the last, and the exceptions in the first book, and even then we are by no means certain that exceptions to these exceptions may not occur somewhere else. I shall give but one instance. There is a rule *jāgrī*, which forms its Aorist by adding *isham*, *ih*, *it*. Here the simplest root would be that final *ri* before *isham* becomes *r* (Pan. vi. 1, 77). This, however, is prevented by another rule, which requires that final *ri* should take Guṇa before *isham* (Pan. vii. 3, 84). This would give us *ajāgar-isham*. But now comes another general rule (Pan. vii. 2, 1), which prescribes Vṛiddhi of final vowels before *isham*, that is *ajāgarisham*. Against this change, however, a new rule is cited (Pan. vii. 3, 85), and this secures for *jāgrī* a special exception from Vṛiddhi, and leaves its base again as *jāgur*. As soon as the base has been changed to *jāgar*, it falls under a new rule (Pan. vii. 2, 3), and is forced to take Vṛiddhi until this rule is again nullified by Pan. vii. 2, 4, which does not allow Vṛiddhi in an Aorist that takes intermediate *i* like *ajāgarisham*. There is an exception, however to this rule also, for bases with short *a*, beginning and ending with a consonant, may optionally take Vṛiddhi (Pan. vii. 2, 7). This option is afterwards

verbs occupy about fifty pages, and must be traversed before we can apply them to a single conjugation. But even to reduce this cumbrous system to this amount of regularity it was necessary to draw from all parts of the ancient work.<sup>1</sup>

The following concise summary of the grammatical system of ancient India is taken from an early chapter in Mr. Colebrooke's grammar, and will serve to illustrate the preceding remarks :

“ The roots of the Sanscrit language are crude verbs (*d'hātu*), and perhaps particles (*nipāta*). All nouns, without exception, say some grammarians, or with few, according to others, may be deduced by rules of etymology from some crude verb, although the acceptation frequently deviate from the etymology. The *d'hātus*, or crude verbs, are contained in a catalogue, at the head of which is placed *b'hū*, ‘to be.’ These and their derivatives, (or any significant sound, however derived,) being inflected with the signs of persons and cases, are denominated words (*pada*).

“ Prepositions are enumerated in a list, at the head of which stands *pra*. They are employed, like prepositions in other languages, to form compound verbs by prefixing them to *d'hātus*, and also in composition with nouns. Other particles, which might be called interjections, conjunctions, and adverbs, are placed in a separate list *avyāya*, wherein the first term is *cha*, ‘and.’ These are indeclinable, and so are certain nouns contained in a catalogue, wherein *swar*, ‘heaven,’ is the first term. restricted, and roots with short *a*, beginning with a consonant and ending in *r*, like *jāgar*, have no option left, but are restricted afresh to Vriddhi (Pan. vii. 2, 2). However, even this is not yet the final result. Our base *jāgar* is after all not to take Vriddhi, and hence a new special rule (Pan. vii. 2, 5), settles the point by granting to *jāgrī* a special exception from Vriddhi, and thereby establishing its Guṇa. No wonder that these manifold changes and chances in the formation of the First Aorist of *jāgrī* should have inspired a grammarian, who celebrates them in the following couplet: Guṇa, Vriddhi, Guṇa, Vriddhi, prohibition, option, again Vriddhi and then exception—these with the change of *ri* into a semivowel in the first instance are the nine results.”

<sup>1</sup> A copy of the grammar in my possession, with Mr. Colebrooke's manuscript notes, gives, in the important chapters, the marginal references to the Sections of Pāṇini.

The indeclinables are nevertheless 'words' within the terms of definition; for the affixes are understood, a blank having been substituted for them, without affecting the radical term.

"Crude nouns are denominated *prátipadica*; for this is defined 'a significant sound not yet inflected, but other than a crude verb.' Pronouns, being subject to special rules, are distinguished by the appellation of *sarvanáma*, or universal names.<sup>1</sup> Adjectives need not be distinguished otherwise than as nouns signifying qualities and inflected in three genders. These nouns, whether substantives, adjectives, or pronouns, are declined through three numbers with seven cases.

"Verbs, whether simple or compound, radical or derivative, are conjugated through the active and passive voices, and some through a middle voice also, in ten moods and tenses, with three persons and three numbers. The derivative verbs are causals, desideratives, frequentatives, or intensives, etc.,<sup>2</sup> derived immediately from verbs, besides denominatives, or nouns conjugated for certain significations.

"From the verbs are derived nouns, which correspond to the infinitives, participles, gerunds and supines, of other languages; besides nouns of action, etc. The terminations that distinguish such derivatives are called *krit*, and the derivatives themselves *kṛidantah*. A few are indeclinable, but most are inflected."<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> This appellation, according to Max Müller (Grammar, p. 132), means merely a class of names beginning with *sarva*. The list, it is to be observed, includes not pronouns only, but other words which share in similar peculiarities of inflection.

<sup>2</sup> I have followed here some marginal alterations by Mr. Colebrooke.

<sup>3</sup> Bopp, in his Comparative Grammar (Eastwick's Translation, p. 1166), complains that Mr. Colebrooke follows too strictly the rules of Páṇini in classing the infinitives and gerunds with the "aptotes" or indeclinables, and that he overlooks their relation to case-terminations. Bopp's remark serves as an introduction to one of the most curious passages in his book, on the formation of the infinitive mood; the termination of which, in Sanscrit, corresponds with the Latin supine, and is regarded by him as the instrumental case of nouns; this he endeavours to trace to the Vedic dialect. This theory, if confirmed, will throw light on the history of language; but we cannot wonder that these refined views should have been overlooked by Indian grammarians, whose aim was so much more limited.

This sketch concludes with the description of the derivatives of nouns, such as patronymics, ect., and compound terms.

Objections will readily occur to this arrangement. The forced assumption by which nouns are derived from verbal roots, the definitions of words, the classification of pronouns with certain adjectives and even numerals, on account of their being subject to similar rules of inflection, and the reference of infinitives to the list of nouns are opposed to European views, but were of secondary importance in a science, the principal aim of which was to reduce to rule all syllabic and literal changes.

The remaining sections of this chapter are devoted to some essential rules which are necessary to unlock the meaning of concise and obscure aphorisms; but they would be quite unintelligible without a commentary or examples. The note with which the chapter concludes describes so pointedly the peculiarities of the system, that it deserves attention in illustration of Mr. Colebrooke's metaphor of the labyrinth in which unfortunate students were liable to be entangled.

"It is necessary to observe, in regard to the original rules of grammar as arranged in Pāṇini's eight lectures, that the order in which they are placed is essential to the understanding of them; for terms contained in preceding rules are often understood in those which follow (as in the rule cited by way of example in the last paragraph); and a subsequent rule, inconsistent with a former one of equal scope, is in general an exception to it; though sometimes the preference must be given to that rule which best answers the purpose.

"Another instance of the use of this arrangement must be also noticed. A precept, contained in the three last sections of Pāṇini's eighth lecture, is, as it were, null, so far as regards a preceding one; and, consequently, does not prevent the operation of a preceding rule, which would have been otherwise applicable; nor give it effect, if it were not applicable previously to the operation of such subsequent precept.

"In the application of rules of grammar, various difficulties

occur, for which no provision has been made by Pāṇini, Cātyāyana, and Patanjali, whose works, the *Sūtras*, *Vārticas*, and *Bhāṣya*, constitute the grammar of the language. Here recourse must be had to the maxims, *paribhāṣā*, of other authorities. These maxims must be, therefore, considered as a fourth portion of the grammar; and the most important of them will be cited as occasion may occur.

“Some difficulties still remain; and the commentators meet them by various expedients: among others, by that of rendering many rules vague and indefinite in their application. As the rules and maxims are very obscure, the glosses of the numerous commentators are, for this reason likewise, necessarily consulted; they also serve for the correction of each other. The approved practice of good authors is, in fact, the test of grammar: and the rules, emendations, expositions, maxims, and glosses are employed merely to teach what established usage sanctions.”

In spite of the intricacy of this singular system, the reader cannot fail to be struck by the comprehensiveness of the treatment of the subject, the more so when it is considered at how early a period the science was fully developed.<sup>1</sup> The

<sup>1</sup> In these remarks I have assumed that the grammar of India is of independent origin, and that the science was studied at a remote age, preceding, perhaps, by several centuries the Christian era. The direct evidence which can be adduced in support of this opinion is imperfect, and partakes of the obscurity which hangs over so much of the literary history of India. The traces of this early cultivation, which are given in Max Müller's Sanscrit Literature, leave no doubt that it belongs to an early stage of the classic Indian literature. Any attempt to fix a precise date for the writings of either Pāṇini or his immediate successors opens a wide field of controversy. Dr. Goldstücker, in discarding the direct and legendary evidence, founds an elaborate and somewhat obscure argument on the internal evidence afforded by the writings themselves. The facts adduced by him serve chiefly to determine the age of Pāṇini *relatively* to other ancient writings. But they heighten the presumption, founded on other grounds, as to the antiquity of this author, and tend to show that the old grammatical literature extends over a considerable period. Indian tradition should not, however, be overlooked. Even the legend which is narrated by the Buddhist pilgrim Hiouen-Tsang, who visited India in the seventh century, and who had studied the ancient grammar, has its value, as showing that in his day Pāṇini was regarded as the father of grammar, and his existence was referred to a fabulous age. I think, too, that weight should be allowed to the Brahminical tradition, contained in a work of the twelfth century of our era, which describes Kātyāyana, the annotator on Pāṇini, as living in the

completeness of the analysis of the language has, indeed, maintained the authority of the ancient authors, and prevented their being superseded by improved methods. Other merits, too, belong to it, which European students are not slow to recognize; conspicuous among which is the resolution of all words into primitive forms, and the founding the whole system of grammar upon such analysis.

It is to be observed, however, that the root is not arrived at by rules of etymology, by which a word is resolved into one or more simple forms, each having a definite meaning. It is a crude form, to which the composite form is adapted to suit the rules of inflection. As the grammar is based on this system, so also are the dictionaries or vocabularies. The lists of verbs being classified according to their conjugations, with their indicatory letters attached or interwoven, affording a key to the subsequent modifications they may undergo; the grammar and dictionary thus forming part of an harmonious system.

reign of a sovereign who preceded Chandragupta, the contemporary of Seleucus. But the work in which the notice occurs is a collection of popular stories, and of no historical value. The glimmering of light we derive from this connecting link with Greek chronology bears on a question of higher moment—whether India derived any portion of its grammatical science from Greece. Reinaud (*Mémoire sur l'Inde*, p. 88) considers that the date of Pāṇini cannot be carried further back than the first century of our era, when the influence of Greek literature in India was shown in the dramatic pieces composed at that time. This theory of Greek influence is strengthened, in his opinion, by the reference to the writing of the Yavanas (Yavanānīlīpi) in Pāṇini's grammar. Another and more important reference to the Yavanas is to be found in Patanjali's commentary on Pāṇini, quoted by Dr. Goldstücker in his essay on the age of Pāṇini. The expression that *the Yavana besieged the Mādhyamikas*, a sect of Buddhists, gives an approximative date for the work in which the reference is found, and is assigned by him to the second century B.C. This reference to contemporary or preceding events, in which the Bactrian Greeks figure, certainly favours the views of those who contend that the early Indian grammarians lived at a time when they might have been open to Greek influence, and it is barely possible that this may have been the case with regard to grammar. On the other hand, the internal proofs of originality afforded by the works of Indian writers are so strong that they should outweigh any presumption which can be raised from a possible communication with the west. The distinctive character of the two systems is forcibly described by Max Müller, in his *Sanskrit Literature* (p. 158). In this passage, which is too long to quote, he traces the origin of the grammar of the Greeks to their philosophy and to the study of the categories of thought and speech. In contrast with this stands the science of the Hindus, a singular monument of minute and skilful analysis.

In presenting his work to the public he accompanied it with a modest expression of hope that he had done something to render the ancient grammarians intelligible to modern students.

“The arrangement of the sacred grammar,” he says, “is ill-adapted to facilitate study; both in the original work, and in the numerous illustrations of it. But I thought it practicable to frame a grammar upon the same system, which should be easily intelligible to the English student of Sanscrit. Without believing that I have succeeded, I still think it to be practicable; and the difficulties which may be experienced in the following pages will, in general, be found owing merely to the want of examples, which have been omitted, under the apprehension of rendering the work too voluminous.”

It must be added that the work failed to accomplish its aim—that of rendering the approach to literature easy to the student. Mr. Colebrooke seems to have measured the zeal and abilities of students by his own high standard. Having reduced, as he hoped, to some method, the obscure, dispersed, and, what appeared in some cases, contradictory rules, which caused him to wander in an intricate labyrinth, he regarded all other labour as light in comparison. The absence of examples constituted the most serious objection to the work, as an elementary one; and there was something in the system which could not admit of the simplicity of arrangement at which he aimed.

It must be admitted that he did not receive much encouragement, even from Sanscrit scholars, to resume his labours. The grammar of Wilkins, which appeared in 1808, is better adapted for the use of beginners; as the rules follow, as far as the subject will admit of it, the method in use by European grammarians. It therefore superseded, in a great measure, the works of his predecessors, in popular estimation. If I may judge from a review of the progress of oriental literature by A. Von Schlegel, which appeared some years later, and a summary of which was laid before the Asiatic Society in 1821, from the pen of Mr. H. H. Wilson, the popular judgment was confirmed by later

students. The grammars, which then amounted to four, were passed in review. Referring to that of Mr. Colebrooke as unfinished, he adds that it might be allowed to remain so, as it could be of very little value to the student, owing to its defective typography, the superabundance of rules, and the absence of examples and illustrations. To Wilkins he justly assigns the palm of "having succeeded in converting the algebra of Sanscrit grammar into plainer arithmetic." But when he turns to the works of native grammarians, with Pāṇini at their head, we find him commenting upon them in the same disparaging tone which has been noted in the case of Mr. Colebrooke's work. "Their books," he says, "are utterly useless to the European student; the methods they follow are very singular and peculiar, and the style in which they are written is exceedingly difficult. No means have been employed to remedy their defects." Like Sir William Jones, Schlegel lived to modify these disparaging remarks. When Bopp, in the first edition of his Sanscrit grammar, hazarded the remark that the student might arrive at a critical knowledge of Sanscrit by an attentive study of the grammars of Forster and Wilkins, without referring to native authorities, A. Von Schlegel was one of the first to challenge these views.<sup>1</sup> It is needless to add how deeply Bopp drew from the fountain head of Indian grammar in his subsequent labours. Indeed, the value of these writings is now fully recognized by European

<sup>1</sup> "M. Bopp, dans la préface de l'édition allemande de sa grammaire, congédie formellement les grammairiens nationaux du sanscrit; il soutient qu'après ce qui en a été extrait déjà, ils ne peuvent plus rien nous apprendre. C'est une grande erreur, je n'hésite pas à le dire. Je pense, au contraire, que pour marcher d'un pas assuré dans la critique des textes, il faut être suffisamment initié dans le système des principaux grammairiens indiens, pour savoir les consulter au besoin. M. Colebrooke l'a pensé de même: c'est après ses ordres que deux ouvrages importants, les *Aphorismes* de Pāṇini, avec un extrait des commentaires, et la *Siddhanta Caumudī*, ont été imprimés à Calcutta."—*Reflexions sur l'étude des langues asiatiques*, 1832, p. 34. The passage from which this quotation is given adds some just remarks on the precision, accuracy, and scientific spirit which distinguishes these writings, and gives a value to them in spite of their obscure and enigmatical style.

philologists. Mr. Colebrooke may be said to have been the first to appreciate their full importance,<sup>1</sup> and to attempt to render their works intelligible. After the publication of the first volume, he made some progress in the second; but two other grammars, by Carey and Forster, shortly appeared, and the students of the language were still so few as to discourage him from the completion of the work. He expressed his regret, in after life, at the incomplete state in which it appeared; for, in his opinion, it ought to be completed, and he confidently said that it would be ultimately finished. The prophecy has not been fulfilled literally, but it may be said to have been so in substance; for the authorities on whom Mr. Colebrooke relied, and whom he introduced to English students, are now fully recognized as the standards of this branch of Indian literature, and the importance of Mr. Colebrooke's contribution to this result are appreciated by later students.

I proceed to give some extracts from letters of this date such as throw light on Mr. Colebrooke's pursuits during

<sup>1</sup> The Jesuit Missionary, P. Pons, was certainly the first to appreciate the scientific excellence of the Indian grammar. The account which he gives of it in his letter on the literature of India, written in 1740, is very striking: "La grammaire des Brahmanes peut être mise au rang des plus belles sciences; jamais l'analyse et la synthèse ne furent plus heureusement employées que dans leurs ouvrages grammaticaux." . . . "Il est étonnant que l'esprit humain ait pu atteindre à la perfection de l'art, qui éclate dans ces grammaires; les auteurs y ont réduit par l'analyse la plus riche langue du monde, à un petit nombre d'éléments primitifs, qu'on peut regarder comme le caput mortuum de la langue. Ces éléments ne sont pas eux-mêmes d'aucun usage, ils ne signifient proprement rien, ils ont seulement rapport à une idée, par exemple Kru à l'idée d'action. Les éléments secondaires qui affectent le primitif, sont les terminaisons qui le fixent à être nom ou verbe, celles selon lesquelles il doit se décliner ou conjuguer un certain nombre de syllabes à placer entre l'élément primitif et les terminaisons, quelques propositions, etc. A l'approche des éléments secondaires le primitif change souvent de figure; Kru, par exemple, devient, selon ce qui lui est ajouté, Kar, Kar, Kri, Kir, Kir, etc. La synthèse réunit et combine tous ces éléments et en forme une variété infinie de termes d'usage." Father Pons compiled a grammar from original sources. It would be very interesting could this work be recovered, as it appears to have been founded on an abridgement of Pāṇini. "Pāṇi," he says, "composé un ouvrage immense des règles du Sanskrit. Le roi Jamour le fit abrégé par Kramadishvar; et c'est cette grammaire, dont j'ai fait l'abrégé, que j'envoyai, il y a deux ans, et qui vous aura sans doute été communiquée."



the first years of his residence in Calcutta. It may be here observed, with regard to Mr. Colebrooke's letters generally, that the passages quoted give all or nearly all that illustrates his thoughts or pursuits. Although he kept up a regular correspondence with his family, the allusions to matters of domestic interest are scanty, and so also are his references to public events. It is not to be supposed that he was a mere recluse, and indifferent to everything that did not bear on his favourite pursuits. He was a person of strong feelings and deep and lasting attachments; but the character of his mind was severe, and at no time of his life would he readily unbend to discuss matters of light or passing interest. This is more especially shown in his correspondence. They are like letters of business, and he rarely warms with his subject, except when discussing the works on which he was engaged.

*"Calcutta, 16th October, 1801.*

"MY DEAR FATHER,

"I have not had the pleasure of hearing from you since I last wrote; but have grounds (from a letter of Mr. Prinsep's) for thanking you with heartfelt gratitude for the exertions you are making in my favour. Without detracting from my grateful sense of your goodness, I must, however, entreat you to observe that a seat in Council, as a permanent one, is not now attainable for years to come; and, upon any other footing, it is not even desirable. In my present station, I am next under Council; were I advanced to it, the office I vacated would be filled up, and I should descend from my short-lived honours to a lower station than I now hold.

"By one of the ships of this season you will receive the 7th volume of the Asiatic Researches, which will not be the less acceptable to you for containing several essays of mine. I have continued the subject of religious ceremonies in two essays; but, from what I have seen in reviews on the subject of my first, I do not feel disposed to prosecute the subject



further at present. My chief literary occupation now is a Sanscrit Grammar, which is in the press. I undertook it because I accepted the Professorship of Sanscrit in the College, but do not choose to deliver oral instruction to the students; and I am expediting the publication, that this may be one of the valuable legacies of the College, if it do die the death to which the Court of Directors have condemned it.

“From the sarcasm which Lord Grenville threw out in a debate, I infer that the Directors are so much blamed for their conduct in this instance, that they will probably reconsider the matter. My compilation of Law is well advanced. I hope to publish it a couple of years hence, and shall be then able to turn my thoughts seriously towards Europe.

“I observe from the third report which the Court of Directors have published, that their minds are very greatly irritated. I have never seen anything so intemperate, so injudicious, so undignified, and unbecoming a great public body. It confirms me, however, in the opinion, that it would be very unsafe for me to publish the work on Husbandry and Commerce. I am, therefore, glad that I wrote so earnestly last season, requesting you to withhold it from the press.

“Though I have before mentioned the College, I must return to the subject, to mention that the institution has already given occasion to many valuable publications on the Oriental languages and literature; and the proficiency of many of the students is truly astonishing. It has been well remarked that it has called forth greater exertion of intellect in a short period than was ever before witnessed in a similar walk of science.

“In comparing this with other plans for instruction for the Company’s servants, it should be always observed that if the College be attended with some expense, yet the gratuitous assistance also of eminent men is obtained under this institution; assistance which cannot be purchased, nor could be obtained in an institution of less dignity.”



*"Calcutta, May 30th.*

"MY DEAR FATHER,

"I wrote by an overland despatch some weeks ago, under a pressing alarm, lest the favourable opinion you entertain of my works should induce your permitting the remarks on Agriculture and Commerce to be published. I hope you will forgive my writing at the same time to Mr. Prinsep, to prevent the publication, even if your scruples against publishing it should be removed. I am now, upon further consideration, still more strongly convinced that the publication could not be hazarded without involving me in great risk, from the resentment of a powerful faction. The question of Indian shipping is become a party question; and it is more than ever important to me not to be exposed to the shafts of malice. In my present situation, a very few years will suffice to permit my revisiting you; and I shall then be able to publish boldly whatever I can prepare that is fit for the public eye. Many considerations, besides the most forcible of all my wishes, that of seeing you and my dear mother, make me extremely anxious to return soon to England. I dread everything that might dash my hopes, at the moment when objects so great to me are almost within my grasp.

"To give you some notion of my present habits, after saying so much of distant views, I should mention, that the official duties of the station in which I am placed take up my time so completely, that my studies are almost entirely interrupted. I hope, however, that after a few months I shall be able to resume them. The interruption of them sits, I must confess, very uncomfortably upon me."

*"Decr. 9th, 1802.*

"MY DEAR FATHER,

"I have had the pleasure of receiving yours of the 1st May. I had already heard from Prinsep that you were exerting yourself in my favour, and I noticed the subject



when I wrote by the last packet. I cannot too strongly express my gratitude for your exertions; but I hope not to be nominated to a temporary seat in Council. There is not, indeed, much probability that I should be appointed at all; for I suppose my name not to be very popular with the Court of Directors in their present temper on the question of Indian shipping and private trade. Should this, however, not be a bar, still I fear there can be no vacancy for a permanent seat in Council, since it is not likely that Mr. Barlow should be confirmed in the post of Governor-General. If I were brought into Council for a few months, I should vacate my present office; and, on coming out of Council, be most probably thrust down into an office inferior to that which I now hold.

“My present income, including the allowances for the second Digest, enables me to save as much money as I could do out of the pay of a Member of Council. The greater increase would only counterbalance greater expense; and the higher station would make it necessary to have a larger fortune to retire upon; and, consequently, make it necessary to remain longer in India. If nothing untoward intervene, I shall be able to retire, four or five years hence, upon a fortune of about two thousand a year. I should not retire so soon from Council. All this is founded on the supposition of the Sudder Dewany Adawlut remaining on its present footing. But I should not be at all surprised at objections being made by the Directors to its present establishment. Should that be the case, my present sanguine expectations may be disappointed.

“The arrangements which have been made for the Indian shipping and private trade have been published here; they are not at all satisfactory. The points, which are essential, and which the Directors have so uniformly resisted, must be obtained, and others of no less importance must be also carried against the Directors. British India, a greater empire than any Emperor of Delhi reigned over, must not be governed on the narrow principles of commercial monopoly. It is in the

commerce of India that England must find the increasing opulence which may enable it to sustain another war against the gigantic power of the French Empire, and it should be only governed in the mode that will most strengthen Great Britain. I feel much inclination to prepare a small tract on the topics that this view of the subject has suggested to me; but I apprehend that the inclination must not be indulged at present."

*"October 5, 1803.*

"MY DEAR FATHER,

"I have just had the pleasure of receiving a letter from you, dated 10th April. The *Flora Indica*, which I had mentioned, and concerning which you inquire, is at a stand, so far as my share of the undertaking goes. The botanical part, which falls to Dr. Roxburgh's share, is in great forwardness. No engravings are intended, as these, with fuller descriptions, are in course of publication at home. My share of the design is the insertion of *Oriental Synonyma*, with criticisms on them. But I have not had time to work upon that subject for more than a twelvemonth past. For the same reason my narrative of the journey to Nagpoor remains unfinished, and no essays have been completed for the next volume of the *Asiatic Researches*. The *Sanscrit Grammar*, and the compilation of *Law*, both of which are matter of duty, advance but slowly. In short, continued labour, from morning until sunset, is insufficient for official duties; yet I am forced by circumstances, which I shall shortly advert to, by and by, to take upon myself the immediate task of editing the work which I have so long kept back. . . .

"To your enquiry concerning Professorships, I answer that neither I nor any of the Professors who hold high offices under Government have any salaries, nor were ever intended to have any attached to their duties in the College. Those only who have no other offices, and who devote their whole time to the

College, are paid for their labours. Should the College be abolished, or reduced in its extent, I shall gain exemption from much labour, and lose no emolument.

“I am much mortified by my mother’s determination not to write to me. While grieving at my disappointment, I must remark that the reason assigned, whatever may be its propriety in the way of reproach, is not conclusive as an argument. For it does not follow, from want of time for writing frequent letters, that leisure for reading them must be equally wanting. What could not be written in many hours may be read in a few minutes. I perceive also that you complain of an interval of five months, from May to October. Now, May is the latest period of one season, and October the earliest of the next. A letter could not have been despatched in the interval by any usual channel of conveyance. While on this subject I must add that, since I have been in Calcutta, I have forwarded many letters from Edward and from Charles. If they have not reached their destination, the fault is in the conveyance.

“I have as good ground of hope, as before, that I shall have the means of revisiting Europe in 1806. Whether the renewal of war in Europe ought to make me change my intention will be more easily judged of when the time draws nearer than at present. I shall consult Mr. Prinsep on the expediency of investing money in a purchase of land during the war. Should you and Mr. P. advise, I mean to remit money towards the end of next year, and in the following one, with the view to the purchase of some *terra firma*. My project is either to invest in the English funds as much as will buy £25,000, 3 per cents., or to purchase an estate affording an equal income, and to leave the rest of my property in this country at Indian interest; so that the whole of my income may be between £2,000 and £2,500 a-year. I suppose that £2,000 a-year will always be sufficient for one who is merely careless in pecuniary matters, but has no expensive propensities.



"You must have seen, in the Asiatic Annual Register for 1802, extracts from the private edition of the work on Husbandry, etc., of Bengal. I shall write to Mr. Prinsep, requesting him to resort to any legal means of preventing further extracts being published in that or any other place. In the meantime I find it necessary to take steps to show that the publication of those extracts was unauthorised; which I cannot do by any so effectual means as printing here an edition in which the statistical part, and the whole of the information in the work, will be retained, and all the offensive portion of it be either softened or altogether omitted. I find myself under the necessity of immediately taking this step; though uncertain whether yourself or Mr. Prinsep may not have taken some different steps in consequence of the publication in the Register for 1802. His letters and yours have not touched upon the subject; and I cannot defer longer the measures necessary to protect myself from the piracies of periodical publications."

"If you see Mr. Wilkins, will you mention to him that I have succeeded in deciphering (with the help of Pundits) the inscription which Mr. W. examined and partly deciphered from a copy made by Mr. Murphy. I mean an inscription carried to Portugal, and there copied by Mr. Murphy. I have thoughts of publishing a translation of it. I am not surprised that Mr. Wilkins could not decipher the whole of it. I should not have succeeded better without help.

"Be so good as also mention to him that an inscription was found last year at Benares, which Wilford thinks to be more than 1800 years old. By degrees the History of India will be partly retrieved from such monuments."

The translation of the inscription referred to in the preceding letter was never published. The monument itself is mentioned in Mr. Colebrooke's paper on ancient inscriptions, published in 1807, and credit is assigned to Mr. Wilkins for having ascertained its date, scope, and the names which

it contained. The work of deciphering such monuments, though only casually alluded to in one of his letters, engaged much of his attention at different periods. He had given to the Asiatic Society, in 1801, the translation of the inscription on the pillar, at Delhi, called the *Lât* of Fîrûz Shah, and in the ninth volume of their Transactions will be found the results of further labour in Calcutta. Inscriptions on copper-plates and stones had been sent to the Asiatic Society from different parts of India (some at Mr. Colebrooke's instance). He set at work a staff of pundits to aid in deciphering them. The work of translation was undertaken by himself. The remarks with which they were submitted to the Society are deserving of attention, even in the present day, when so much has been effected to determine the reigns of sovereigns or dynasties in the East. Nothing is more remarkable, in the ancient literature of India, than the pictures it gives of a race full of intellectual life and activity, ingenious in speculation, and fond of abstract science, but so destitute of any historical record as to their origin, government, and the revolutions they have undergone. The importance of any materials, however scanty, by which a system of chronology might be established, was so obvious, that any ancient monuments or inscriptions attracted the earliest attention of the learned. It will be observed that, with Mr. Colebrooke, their value consisted less in the aid they might afford in tracing the political history than the intellectual life of the people. It was as subservient to literary history, and as affording the means of determining the date of works of authors from casual allusions to princes or patrons, that he urged on the Society the study of such records.

“That the dynasties of princes who have reigned paramount in India, or the line of chieftains who have ruled over particular tracts, will be verified; or that the events of war, or the effects of policy, during a series of ages, will be developed; is an expectation which I neither entertain or wish to

excite. But the state of manners, and the prevalence of particular doctrines, at different periods, may be deduced from a diligent perusal of the writings of authors whose age is ascertained; and the contrast of different results, for various and distant periods, may furnish a distinct outline of the progress of opinions. A brief history of the nation itself, rather than of its government, will be thus sketched; but if unable to revive the memory of great political events, we may, at least, be content to know what has been the state of arts, of sciences, of manners, in remote ages among this very ancient and early civilized people; and to learn what has been the succession of doctrines, religious and philosophical, which have prevailed in a nation ingenious yet prone to superstition."

*"2nd March, 1804.*

"MY DEAR FATHER,

"Under separate covers I have sent the journals which bring down to the end of January the published details of recent transactions in this country. The enclosed continues the series to the end of last month. Unless it should become necessary to protect the territories of the Allies from the depredations of Holkar, there is now a prospect of peace in India, by land at least; and there is little to apprehend by sea but French privateers. These we must be content to expect, since no navy could be sufficient to protect an extensive commerce on seas so wide as those of India.

"I wish we could receive as satisfactory intelligence from your quarter of the globe as that which we now send you. Our latest accounts are of the 30th September. The next month seemed to be the one destined by Bonaparte for a desperate attempt, which has, I hope, ended in his utter discomfiture and disgrace. This topic, being uppermost in one's mind, naturally presents itself in speaking and in writing. My last letter to you (despatched overland) hardly touched on any other. I will detain you no longer on it."



2nd March, 1804.

" . . . . I have nearly completed for the Asiatic Researches a treatise on the *Védas*. It had been my intention to let the eighth volume be published without any contribution of mine; but particular circumstances have induced me to finish a paper or two for the present volume, though compelled to suspend the progress of other works which I was anxious to bring to a close. Among others, the corrected edition of the Treatise on Husbandry suffers by the interruption.

"I have lately obtained a considerable addition of authentic and important information on the religion and mythology of the Buddhists. Everything relative to a religion, which has spread even more widely than the Christian or the Mahomedan faiths, is particularly interesting. I shall employ the first moment of leisure I can spare to publish this curious information, which will elucidate the accounts before obtained in China, Japan, Siam, Pegu, Ceylon, and Tibet. Captain Wilford, whose writings in the Asiatic Researches are known to you, has also prosecuted the same subject with considerable success, and will soon publish his Incubrations on that and on the long-expected theme of the British Isles as known to the Hindus. You will find in his treatises on those subjects very curious matter, but very little conviction."

"March 24, 1805.

"Appreciating so justly as you do Lord Wellesley's merits as a statesman, you will regret, on that account, as well as for the common and obvious reasons, the turn the war with Holkar took, and the disappointments (attended with such dreadful loss) recently experienced in the siege of his infatuated ally's capitol, Bhurtpur). A concurrence of circumstances which could not well be apprehended, has converted into an arduous warfare a contest which should have been expected to be early concluded. I do not yet see a near prospect of an early close to it.



"Our friend Garstin set off last week to join the army, and assist in the siege, if required. There are at present rumours of a negociation with the Raja of Bhurtpur, and, if terms can be adjusted, the further effusion of blood may be happily spared.

"You will see, in Lord Wellesley's continuation of his remarks on the Mahratta war, or rather in an appendix to the former work, which goes home in the Belle packet, the detail of circumstances which led to hostilities with Holkar. His demands were as insolent as extravagant. Lord Wellesley is, of course, detained with us by this war. I should sincerely wish, as you do, that he might remain indefinitely; but you have rightly judged the reason which renders it improbable he should do so. The unfriendly disposition of the Court of Directors renders it irksome, and, without the strongest support from the Administration, unsafe.

"I am grateful for the steps you have taken, in consequence of what I wrote on the subject of a seat in Council. I remain precisely in the same sentiments; not ambitious of a further rise, but content, if it be offered, to accept it. To speak truly, I have had a sufficient peep behind the curtain, within a few years past, to know the hollow ground I should tread on if raised to the highest station in this service. I would not desire it, were it accessible to me, which I certainly think it will never be; and a seat in the Council, with no ulterior views, is not to be coveted by one holding already the highest station under Council.

"I hoped to have sent you, by the present ship, the eighth volume of Asiatic Researches, with the volume wanted to complete your set; but the press has been so slow, it is yet unfinished. You will find in it a long essay on the Védas written by me, besides one or two minor ones on other subjects. I imagine that relating to the Védas will be thought curious; but, like the rest of my publications, little interesting to the general reader."

*"Calcutta, 3rd August, 1805.*

"MY DEAR FATHER,

"I at one time thought that I was arrived at the highest post I could look for or desire in this service; but a change in the constitution of the Court, to which I belong, having been determined upon more than a twelvemonth ago, has been recently carried into effect; and places me in name, as I was before in fact, at the head of the Court.

"I am glad to owe to Lord Wellesley this further obligation. I have taken the occasion (at the moment of receiving a small increase to my salary as Chief Judge) to resign the personal allowance, which I held for my labours on Hindu law, but which, I thought myself, had been received long enough. The diminution of my income by this change is about £1,000 a-year.

"I hope to remain in my present situation for two years more, and at the end of that time to revisit Europe, not, indeed, with quite so much as you hint to be desirable, but with what I hope will enable me to live contented at home. I have no expectation, I feel no desire, to be appointed to Council. I can say, that, if at any time there has been a spark of ambition within me, it is totally extinguished. While so much ignorance and such strong prejudices prevail at home, on all matters relative to India, no reflecting person can desire to occupy a conspicuous situation; or, being placed in one of responsibility, could act with confidence, conformably with just views of policy and good government.

"I cannot but sincerely regret, independently of personal attachment and respect towards Lord Wellesley, that he has not been suffered to remain one or two months longer, which would have sufficed to complete his important plans; for indeed nothing remained to be done, but to allow former measures to take their full effect. I regret it on my own country's account.

"This whole settlement, with scarcely an individual ex-