

PREFACE.

The bulk of the MSS. described in this Catalogue belong to the Whish Collection of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland. These MSS. had been acquired by C. M. Whish of the Madras Civil Service, and were presented to the Society by his brother J. L. Whish Esq^r in July 1836. In most of these MSS. entries with the signature of C. M. Whish are found, and many of them show traces of having been read and studied by a European scholar. The entries are generally dated, the earliest date being 1822¹, and the latest 1831. Some of the MSS. may have been copied for Mr. Whish at that time. A certain date can be assigned only to those few MSS.² which are dated by the Kollam era and were written between A. D. 1787 and 1827. Most of the others, dated by years of the Jupiter cycle, or bearing no dates at all, were probably written about the same time, that is to say, at the end of the 18th or the beginning of the 19th century. Only a few MSS. seem to be a good deal older and may belong to the earlier part of the 17th century. Generally speaking, the MSS. in Malayalam characters are older than those written in Grantha. In some of the Malayalam MSS.,³ especially in those of apparent greater antiquity, the peculiar paging by Akṣaras is found to which Professor C. Bendall has drawn attention in the JRAS, October 1896, pp. 790 sq. According to this

¹ In No. 138 (see p. 194) the date 1817 is probably only indistinctly written and meant for 1827.

² Nos. 103, 113, 122, 138, 139, 141, 142, 145, 146, 150.

³ See Nos. 19, 108, 118, 128, 129, 138, 151, 157, 158.

system, the Akṣaras *na*¹, *nna*, *nya*, *ṣkra*, *jhra*, *hā*, *gra*, *pra*, *dre*, *ma* are used for the numbers 1—10, *tha*, *la*, *pta*, *ba*, *tra*, *trū* or *tru*, *cā*, *ṇa* for 20, 30, 40, 50, 60, 70, 80, 90. For 100 and 200 the signs  and  (= *ṇa* and *ṇṇa*?) are used.²

Besides the Whish MSS. there are also a number of other South Indian MSS. (Sansk. Nos. 1—28) described in this Catalogue, about which I could not get any satisfactory information. I found them mixed up with a large number of Tamil MSS. Prof. Rhys Davids tells me that they were always kept together with the Whish MSS., and he is inclined to think that they, too, belong to the same collection though "it is not quite certain that they really formed part of the Whish donation." They are nearly all written in Grantha, and seem, for the greater part, to have been written at the end of the 18th and the beginning of the 19th century.

But though the MSS. here described are not distinguished by great age, there are many rare and valuable MSS. among them. Perhaps the most important of all are the Mahābhārata MSS. which represent a distinct recension of the great Epic. Some years ago — at the International Congress of Orientalists in Paris, 1897 — I first drew attention to these MSS., and pointing out the great differences between the text offered by these South-Indian MSS. and that of the Calcutta and Bombay editions — the so-called Vulgata —, I showed the insufficiency of the latter, and made an appeal for a critical edition of the Mahābhārata which I declared to be the *sine quâ non* of any critical study of the great Epic. This appeal met with much sympathy among Sanskrit scholars, and there is now every reason to hope that such a critical edition will be begun in no distant future. The Whish MSS. of the Mahābhārata to which we thus owe the plan of a

¹ Sometimes the first leaf is marked with '*hariḥ śrī*', and the paging by *na*, *nna*, *nya* etc. begins with the second leaf, e. g. in No. 157.

² For other ways of numbering the pages by Akṣaras, see pp. 21, 27, 93, 166, 178, 221.

critical edition of the great epic, will prove invaluable whenever this plan is to be carried out.

Among the Vedic MSS., I may point out a MS. of the *Taittiriya-Āraṇyaka* (No. 178) which should prove useful for a critical edition of that text — a great desideratum, as *Rājendralāla Mitra's* edition is anything but satisfactory.

Several MSS. of our Collection have already been used or are still being used for critical editions, e. g. the MSS. of *Sāyaṇa's R̥gveda-Bhāṣya* (Nos. 1a, 2 and 13), of the *Gr̥hyasūtra*, *Mantrapāṭha*, and *Dharmasūtra* of the *Āpastambins* with their Commentaries (Nos. 26, 27, 37), and of *Sāyaṇa's Commentary* on the *Mantrabrāhmaṇa* (No. 86).¹

How valuable the MS. Collections of the Royal Asiatic Society were, has already been known since 1890, when a rough list of the titles of the Sanskrit MSS. in the Todd and Whish Collections of the Society was published (*JRAS*, N. S., Vol. XXII, pp. 801—813). It was intended then already to publish a proper catalogue as soon as the funds of the Society would permit. But it was considered probable that so long a period would necessarily elapse before this could be done, that it was advisable at once to publish such a rough list, however incomplete and incorrect. And it will, indeed, be now seen that the Whish Collection, at any rate, contains many more numbers and above all many more works and fragments of works than those mentioned in the rough list.²

The forecast of delay was also fully justified by the event. The rough list appeared in 1890. We are now in 1902. But when, in May 1894, the preparation of this catalogue

¹ A MS. 'Whish No. 66' mentioned by Prof. Kern as having been used for his edition of the *Āryabhatīya* (Leiden 1874) has not been found among the MSS. which I have catalogued.

² For a complete list of all the numbers of the Whish Collection including also those which contain vernacular (chiefly Malayalam) texts and have therefore not been described in this Catalogue, see below pp. XII—XV.

was entrusted to me by the Council of the Society the funds available were not sufficient to enable me to give my whole time to the work. I have been working at it, while I was living at Oxford, for several years, but the work had often to be interrupted on account of more pressing professional work. In 1898 I left England, and some of the MSS. had to be sent over to Prague, so that the progress of the work became still slower. Finally, to avoid further delays, Mr. Thomas kindly undertook to describe the MSS. which I had not yet seen, and their descriptions will be found in the Appendix as Nos. 191-215.

A Catalogue of Sanskrit MSS. is of not much use, unless extracts from the works they contain are given. For in most cases the mere title of a Sanskrit work tells us nothing about its character or contents. And even in the case of well-known texts, a few short extracts (at least the beginning and the end) seem to me necessary, in order to give some idea of the correctness and value of a MS. With this end in view I have given extracts, however short, from nearly every MS., and I have made a point of copying these extracts as accurately as possible from the MSS. A compiler of a catalogue is not an editor, and I did not think it the duty of the compiler to correct his quotations. Wherever corrections suggested themselves to me, I have given them in parenthesis or banished them to footnotes.¹ The peculiar orthography of South Indian MSS. has also been retained throughout. Thus, as regards the nasals, I have written with the MSS. *annan tu*, *sarasvatīn devīm* etc. (and not *annam tu*, *sarasvatīm deo*), and as regards the Sandhi before sibilants I have followed the MSS. in omitting the Visarga before a sibilant with following consonant (*puna śrutiḥ*, *°vīmśa strijātakam* etc.). I have also written with the MSS. *talpara*, *ulpanna* etc., and even *atpa* for *alpa*, also *tatbuddhis*, *pātma* etc. for

¹ Words or Akṣaras added by conjecture, have been put in parenthesis (), while square brackets [] have been used to mark words and syllables as to be omitted.

tadbu°, pādma etc., śruṇu for śṛṇu, and cerebral 1 between two vowels, e. g. Kālīdāsa, maṅgala, etc. Only in the Index I have used the ordinary orthography.

In preparing a catalogue of South Indian MSS. one has to encounter far greater difficulties than in having to deal with Nāgarī MSS. The reading of palm leaves is always very trying to the eyes, and the Malayalam characters are particularly difficult to read, and often very indistinct. Moreover the leaves are frequently mutilated or rubbed off, especially at the beginning and at the end, and — what is the worst — one MS. generally contains fragments of several different works, without beginning and end.

In overcoming these difficulties, I had, as every compiler of a Sanskrit catalogue now has, the help of Professor AUFRECHT's monumental work, the *Catalogus Catalogorum*. But I had also the good fortune of Prof. AUFRECHT's more immediate help, for he was kind enough to take the trouble of reading the proofs, and I owe to him many most valuable suggestions and corrections, and in more than one case he has helped me to identify some short and very puzzling fragment. I am fulfilling a pleasant duty in expressing to him my sincerest thanks for all the trouble he has taken in making this Catalogue more useful than it would have been without his generous help. My thanks are due, also, to Professor LUDWIG who kindly read a revise, and has suggested to me some valuable emendations in the extracts. Finally I have to thank Professor RHYS DAVIDS to whom the initiation of this undertaking is due, for the kindly interest he has throughout taken in the work.

Prague, August 1902.

M. WINTERNITZ.