

of the most pleasant stories, and some of the most amiable characters, are disfigured by disgusting details, which totally destroy the charm of those most charming romances. Many other memoirs and papers came from his busy and accomplished pen : if quaint, still learned : if untenable in the eyes of more cautious critics, still ingenious and scholarly, indicating an amount of wide observation attained by few others, and a store of acquired knowledge which must be envied by all.

Nov. 1890.

R. N. C.

#### IV. NOTES AND NEWS.

Professor Kielhorn, of Göttingen, writes as follows to the *Academy* :

##### SANSKRIT PLAYS PRESERVED AS INSCRIPTIONS.

Göttingen : Jan. 3, 1891.

Sanskrit scholars will be interested to learn that among the papers of General Sir A. Cunningham, sent to me by Mr. Fleet, I have found rubbings of two unique stone inscriptions, the originals of which are at the famous Arhaidin-kâ Jhonpra at Ajmere, Râjputânâ. For these inscriptions contain large portions of two unknown plays, by the King Vigharâjâdeva, of Sâkambharî, whose Delhi Siwâlik pillar inscriptions I re-edited last year in the *Indian Antiquary*. A full account of the inscriptions, together with the texts thus discovered, will be published in the same journal. Here I would only state that one of the inscriptions gives a large part of the fifth act of a play called "Harakelinâtaka," in which the royal author has evidently followed Bhâravi's "Kirâtârjunîya"; and the other, the end of the third act and a large portion of the fourth act of another play, which has reference to Vigharâjâdeva's wars with the Muhammadan invaders of India. It is clear that the king had both plays carefully engraved and put up in public;

and I venture to hope that we shall soon hear from India of the existence of more stones with other portions of the same plays.

*Professor Minayeff.*—Dr. Serge d'Oldenbourg, of St. Petersburg, who is preparing an obituary of the late Professor Minayeff for the pages of this Journal, has found among his papers more than one in so advanced a state that he hopes to be able to prepare them for publication. One especially, the *Sāsana Wansa*, is of much interest, as it gives a detailed historical account of the Buddhist Order from its foundation to recent times. Dr. d'Oldenbourg trusts to be able to publish this text *in extenso* (probably in the *Journal* of the Pali Text Society), and a translation of it is also contemplated for the now re-established Oriental Translation Fund under the patronage of our Society.

*The Stupa of Bharhut.*—Dr. S. J. Warren, the Rector of the Gymnasium at Dordrecht, has succeeded in identifying the Jātaka tales represented on two of the hitherto uninterpreted bas-reliefs of the Stupa at Bharhut. He has announced his discovery in a brochure published in November, 1890, by the firm of E. J. Brill, at Leyden.

*Hofrath Professor Dr. Bühler* has devoted the inscriptions of the fourth and fifth centuries, lately published by Mr. Fleet in vol. iii. of the *Epigraphia Indica*, to a detailed examination with the object of ascertaining the evidence they afford of the existence in that period of a recognized poetical art in India. This is especially important in view of contentions lately put forward that the art poetry of India ought to be assigned to a later date. The essay, which is a most masterly and conclusive one, shows that the court bards who drew up these inscriptions must have been guided by recognized rules for the construction of panegyrics and similar poems, such as are laid down in the existing handbooks of the art of poetry. The brochure is published by Tempsky at Vienna.

Mr. A. H. Keane has sent the following remarks to the *Academy* :

ORIENTAL TRANSLITERATION.

In his notice of Colonel Malleeson's "The Indian Mutiny of 1857" (*Academy*, December 20), Mr. H. G. Keene revives the vexed question of transliteration in those cases where there is antagonism between spelling and pronunciation in the original. Such antagonism, of course, arises in compound Arabic forms wherever the article is followed by a solar letter, which assimilates the preceding *l* as in *Fakhr al-dīn*,<sup>1</sup> as transliterated by Mr. Keene, though pronounced *Fakhr ud-dīn*. Here we have the old battle of phonetic *versus* historical spelling, complicated by laws of Arabic pronunciation and orthography. The Arabs themselves solve the difficulty by always retaining the *l* in writing, but assimilating it in the spoken language, so that no mistakes arise. But how is the problem to be solved in transliterating for English readers ignorant of Arabic orthography? My own practice is always to assimilate, the object being to reproduce the living sound, not the dead form. But Mr. Keene appears to advocate the historic or etymological spelling, which must at times give rise to strange misconceptions and inconsistencies. Thus the famous Caliph is popularly *Harūn al-Rashīd*, while the reigning Shah is usually *Nasr ud-dīn*. Uniformity can be obtained only by a common consensus to one or other method, and I submit that the phonetic is here preferable to the historic spelling.

<sup>1</sup> Here Mr. Keene has *dīn*, presumably a lapsus for *dīn*.