

CORRESPONDENCE.

1. THE MAHĀBHĀRATA AND THE DRAMA.

DEAR PROFESSOR RHYS DAVIDS,—In his excellent book “The Great Epic of India,” Professor Hopkins has shown (pp. 54–57) that in the whole of the Mahābhārata there is no mention of the drama, except in one single line, Mahābh. II, 11, 36, where Drama is personified:—

nāṭakā vividhāḥ kāvyāḥ
kathākhyāyikakārikāḥ |

Professor Hopkins remarks that this line “belongs clearly to an interpolated scene, and the fact that real drama, *nāṭaka*, is mentioned only here in the whole epic till the Harivaṃśa, should show its age.” Now I quite agree with Professor Hopkins’ view as to the lateness of the whole scene. Still the mention of the Nāṭaka proves nothing for the date of the *lokapālāsa-bhākhyāna*, as the line in question has been interpolated even later than the whole scene itself, and would not be allowed to stand in a critical edition of the Mahābhārata, if we had one. For in the Malayalam MS. of the Sabhāparvan (R.A.S., Whish, No. 18) *this line is missing*. I give the whole passage (II, 11, 31–36) from the Malayalam MS., without correcting any mistakes:—

ṛgvedas sāmavedas ca yajurvedas ca pāṇḍava |
atharvavedas ca tathā parvāṇi ca viśāmpate |
ītihāsopavedas ca vedāṅgāni ca sarvasaḥ |
sāvitrī durggatārī vāṇi saptavidhā tathā |

medhā dhrtiś śuciś caiva prajñā kṣāntismṛtir yaśaḥ |
 samāni stutigītāni gāthās ca vīdhā api |
 bhāṣyāṇi tarkayuktāni dehāyanti viśāmpate |
 kṣaṇo lavo mubūrttaś ca divā rātriś ca bhārata |

The Telugu MS. of the India Office agrees here with our editions, but there can be no doubt that the line in which the drama is mentioned is the work of a very recent interpolator. For the Rev. J. Dahlmann ("Mahābhārata als Epos und Rechtsbuch," p. 298) the passage in question was a very welcome proof of the existence of a dramatic literature in the fifth century B.C. (his date of the Mahābhārata-Smṛti). There was in his opinion no reason why this passage should be, as Professor Sylvain Lévi ("Le théâtre Indien," App., p. 58) said, "plus que suspect." From the point of view of textual criticism, the Rev. J. Dahlmann said there could be no objection to describing that verse or that passage as 'old.' Now we see that it is real 'textual criticism' which proves the very line in which *Nāṭaka* occurs to be anything but 'old.' This shows again how important the South Indian MSS. of the Mahābhārata are, and it is one more proof of the great need of a *critical edition* of the great Hindu epic.

M. WINTERNITZ.

Prague, April 19, 1903.

2. TIBETAN MSS. IN THE STEIN COLLECTION.

Washington, D.C.

April 6th, 1903.

DEAR PROFESSOR RHYS DAVIDS,—I have read with great interest Mr. Barnett's article, which appeared in the January number of the Society's Journal, on the Tibetan MSS. in the Stein Collection.

I have only had Dr. Stein's Preliminary Report and the accompanying plate (xvi) for the purpose of studying this valuable Tibetan document. Dr. Stein (p. 57) is inclined to believe that the Endere site, where the find was made,