

## CORRESPONDENCE.

1. WATER (*Vatura*) IN SINHALESE.

Croydon.

November 2, 1900.

DEAR PROFESSOR RHYS DAVIDS,—In the Journal for April, 1898, pp. 367–369, I showed that the Sinhalese word *vatura*, though now universally used in Ceylon for ‘water,’ did not originally possess that meaning; and also that it is entirely unconnected linguistically with the English word ‘water.’ I further defended my opinion, previously expressed, that *vatura* had ousted the genuine word *diya* in Ceylon through the influence of the Dutch *water*.

This latter opinion I still adhere to. But with respect to the derivation of *vatura*, I find that I too readily adopted that proposed by the late Dr. Paul Goldschmidt, viz., Sanskrit *vātula*, meaning, first, ‘windy,’ ‘inflated,’ then ‘rain-cloud,’ and then ‘shower of rain,’ ‘flood.’ Professor Wilhelm Geiger, in his valuable “Litteratur und Sprache der Singhalesen” (forming part of the *Grundriss der Indo-Arischen Philologie und Altertumskunde*), has a note on this subject (p. 32 of the *Separat-Abdruck*), in which he points out that the *t* in *vaturu* (the older form of *vatura*) presupposes a double consonant. He has not the least doubt that *vaturu* = Pāli *vitthāra* (Skt. *viṣṭāra*), having passed (as he says on p. 36) through the forms \**vitara*, \**vatara*; and he refers to Sinh. *vāṭaḷa*, ‘extended’ = Pāli *vitthata*. Professor Geiger had given this etymology previously, in his “Etymologie des Singhalesischen” (Munich, 1898), p. 78, at the suggestion of Mr. B. Gunasekara.


When used in compounds, such as *gai-vatura*, 'flood,' the meaning of *vatura* would easily be liable to become misunderstood.—Yours very truly,

DONALD FERGUSON.

2. SIGNATURE MARKS AND NĀGĀRJUNA'S KAKSHAPUTA.

79, Warwick Road, Earl's Court, S.W.

October 23, 1900.

MY DEAR PROFESSOR RHYS DAVIDS,—The practice noticed by Mr. J. E. Webster on pp. 548–9 of the Journal for July, 1900, is common, at any rate, in the Marāṭhī-speaking districts of the Bombay Presidency, where the sign-signature is called *nishānī*. A woman of any caste signs with a bangle (*bāṅgaḍī*). A Marāṭha draws a dagger (*kaṭār* ) , a Kuṅbi a plough (*rāṅgar*), a Gābhī an oar (*valhe*), etc., etc.

I take this opportunity of adding a note on the Kaksha-puta ascribed to Nāgārjuna. I have lately obtained a copy of it printed at Belgaum. It is there called Kaksha-putī, and is described in its colophons as composed by Siddho Nāgārjuna. In a Marāṭhī introduction the publisher speaks vaguely of having obtained the MS. with great difficulty, but does not say whence. He also knows nothing of the history or date of Nāgārjuna. The work is, therefore, certainly not a *modern* forgery. The language in which it is written also seems to me to be above the level of the ordinary Purānic Sanskrit in correctness and ease. The work is, however, so far as I have examined it, a purely Śaiva one, and contains no clear reference to Buddhism. It is a handbook of Black magic, and professes to be based on a number of Tantras and on the Atharvaveda, but all of the so-called *mantras* which it quotes are of the ordinary Tantric or Śākta type, and none of them seem to be really Atharvanic.<sup>1</sup>—Yours sincerely,

A. M. T. JACKSON.

<sup>1</sup> [Aufrecht mentions twelve MSS. of the book as referred to in various catalogues. There is also a MS. of it at Florence.—Ed.]