

A LITERATURE FOUR THOUSAND YEARS OLD

THE OREGONIAN'S HOME STUDY CIRCLE. DIRECTED BY PROF. SEYMOUR EATON

GOLDEN AGES OF LITERATURE

II.—LITERATURE OF INDIA.

BY A. H. EDGREN, PH. D. (University of Nebraska.)

India, rich and sunny India, has for ages been the battle-ground of races and the home of deep religious meditation and literary activity.

It was once occupied entirely by that dark-skinned race which yet makes up the bulk of its population, especially in the south, where this race has even preserved its language. But about 800 or 1000 years ago—some claim much earlier—a light-skinned race, the Aryans, invaded the peninsula from the north, gradually subduing and forcing its language upon the ancient inhabitants. That language is yet preserved in the early hymns sung by the invaders of the sacred mountains of the Hindu and in many later monuments of a growing literature. Its early name, possibly, was Aryan, although this is not certain. But when one of the dialects, coming to be the recognized idiom of the higher classes and the vehicle of literary composition, was brought under definite rules, that idiom was called Sanskrit (sam-skrit, perfect, holy) or distinguished by the suffix -krit, and Prakrit dialects (pra-krit, common). It continued to be the living language for many centuries, until finally it was superseded by popular dialects. But it has never ceased to be a living language, and learned intercourse in India, being yet used as such.

Sanskrit is of especial interest to us for three reasons. In the first place, it belongs to a peculiarly picturesque and ordinarily called the Aryan or Indo-European, which is spoken from India through almost entire Persia, Armenia, Europe and America, being thus akin to our own. In the second place, it is being sent by far the earliest phase of any Aryan dialect, it reveals, on the whole, more faithfully than any of them that early growth of the Aryan language by comparing its picturesqueness to its present form. In the third place, Sanskrit has later been gradually obscured and obliterated, not indeed, by a process of decay, as some prefer to call it, but by a process of fusion ever tending to centralization and simplification. As a linguistic interest, the transparency of Sanskrit, by revealing to a large extent the metaphors hidden within the composite forms of the language, also has a peculiar interest to us, as it is a source of a new and original source of poetic expressions. In the third place, Sanskrit contains an abundant literature of varied historical, philosophical and aesthetic interest.

The "Veda" ("Hymn-Veda," "Sacred Book of Hymns") is the oldest literary monument of Sanskrit and of the Aryan-speaking nations. It is a collection of about 1000 hymns and lyrics composed during the period of the Vedic age, the faithful tradition from the time the Aryans stood on the threshold of India to the time they were now possessed. These hymns, invoking the gods, are full of a sense of awe and contemplation of the mysteries of existence, though rarely of a higher order, are in part full of life and charm by their naive and objective simplicity, but also in part they are full of a mystic and a mystic's mystic.

One of the most beautiful of these is the "Rig-Veda," which is the oldest of the Vedas. It is a collection of about 1000 hymns and lyrics composed during the period of the Vedic age, the faithful tradition from the time the Aryans stood on the threshold of India to the time they were now possessed. These hymns, invoking the gods, are full of a sense of awe and contemplation of the mysteries of existence, though rarely of a higher order, are in part full of life and charm by their naive and objective simplicity, but also in part they are full of a mystic and a mystic's mystic.

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WAR OF CORRESPONDENTS

THE ANGLICAN STRUGGLE IS NOT MORE FIERCE.

Norman-French Irishmen, With Ancient Standing In Liberty's Cause, His Several Heads.

SALEM, Feb. 19.—(To the Editor.)—The discussion of the Anglo-Boer war has assumed many and varied phases, and all that has been written on the subject is am sure, has been productive of much good. It has caused the people to reflect upon and consider fully the rights of the English and the Boers in South Africa.

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THE ALASKA BOUNDARY.

Present Troubles Due to Past Carelessness.

NEW YORK, Feb. 20.—President T. C. Mendenhall, of the Worcester, Mass., polytechnic institute, formerly head of the United States geological survey, delivered a lecture last night in Chickering hall before the Army Geographical Society on "The Alaska Boundary." In 1882, Dr. Mendenhall was a member of the commission that surveyed the whole of the country, and he divides its northern possessions from the Canadian Northwest territory.

He said: "The exceedingly lax in accurately fixing our boundaries, and in our disputes over them—naturally with England—the whole we have lost. The trouble has been lack of diplomatic training and the difference of the people. In 1887, when we bought Alaska from Russia, the same language was used in the treaty as in that between Great Britain and Russia in 1825, and it is ambiguous. The boundary of Lower Alaska was run from the summit of mountain ranges parallel with the coast, never more than 10 marine leagues, or about 35 statute miles, from the coast. There is no range of parallel lines, so the line must have been by league."

"Great Britain has contended that the coast means the coast of the islands. In that case she would have all the coast line. It is the most difficult part of the case, but she has not been able to prove it. She has sought to fix her harbor, most probably Pyramid harbor. There, I personally believe, she wishes to secure a naval base. Already she has in Esquimaux Bay, Vancouver, British Columbia, the strongest station in the world; far ahead of anything we have. Should she control Southwestern Alaska through another naval key, she would have chief command of the Pacific."

"Lately both nations have been too busy with more important immediate troubles, but within a few years the Alaska boundary question will have to be settled. It is the most difficult part of the case, but she has not been able to prove it. She has sought to fix her harbor, most probably Pyramid harbor. There, I personally believe, she wishes to secure a naval base. Already she has in Esquimaux Bay, Vancouver, British Columbia, the strongest station in the world; far ahead of anything we have. Should she control Southwestern Alaska through another naval key, she would have chief command of the Pacific."

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INSIDE THE FILIPINO ARMY

View Given by Letters in a Manila Newspaper Recently.

WASHINGTON, Feb. 14.—As a matter of fact, little is known of the inside workings of the Filipino army, especially as viewed from the insurgent side, but the following article, taken from one of the Manila dailies, contains some very interesting facts that are not generally known.

The "Progresso" is publishing, under the title "Letters from a Prisoner," some interesting information regarding the inner workings of the insurrection, the Manila military organization, the press, Luna's assassination and other matters. The military organization has been reformed to some extent since General Luna's death. Luna endeavored to concentrate in the army all the administrative service, with bad results.

The military staff, which is similar to that of Spain, for Spanish ideas pursue the people as the shadow pursue the body—is composed of a captain-general (Senator Emilio Aguinaldo), two lieutenants (General Antonio Mariano Trias and Baldomero Aguinaldo), four generals of division (Senors Malvar, Ricarte, Garcia and Belarmino), and about 24 general officers.

The territory of Luzon has been divided into two regions, northern and southern, both being directed from the central government. As communication between the north and the southern region is very difficult, the military government of this part is invested with ample power. When the war broke out, General Trias was in command of the southern region, but on the collapse of Mabini's cabinet, Trias was removed from the command of the southern region. General Aguinaldo took command in the south. Baldomero's command lasted only three months, at the end of which General Trias returned.

The military organization consisted of two divisions, one under General Artemio Ricarte, who chief of staff was Ziafalia, and the other, the territorial militia force, occupied Camarines, Albay and Tayabas, under the direction of the Spanish regiments, and they were brigaded under General Calles, Noriel and Malvar. Several arsenals furnished the soldiers with ammunition, those establishments being under the direction of the Spanish regiments, and they were brigaded under General Calles, Noriel and Malvar.

The high contracting parties under the present treaty shall be charged to watch over its execution. In case of any violation of the treaty, they shall inform the high contracting parties of the danger which they may have perceived, in order that that government may take proper steps to insure the protection and the free use of the canal. Under any circumstances they shall meet once a year to take note of the due execution of the treaty. They shall especially endeavor to suppress any work or act which tends to infringe upon the right of navigation of the canal, the object of effect of which might be to interfere with the liberty and the entire security of the navigation.

The high contracting parties, by application of the principle of equality as regards the free use of the canal, a principle which forms one of the bases of the present treaty, agree that neither of them shall endeavor to obtain with respect to the canal territorial or commercial advantages or privileges in any international arrangements which may be concluded by either of them. They shall endeavor to bring the present treaty to the knowledge of the states which have not signed it, inviting them to accede to it.

"Alien" Citizenship Again. PORTLAND, Feb. 13.—(To the Editor.)—To settle a dispute which you kindly answered the following question: "First—is a man necessarily a citizen of the flag under which he is born? Second—is the son of a British subject, born while his parents were in this country, a citizen of this country, after a residence of 21 years, his parents still holding allegiance to Great Britain?"

First—Yes, provided he follows the flag. Second—Yes.

For the Junction City Burglary. TACOMA, Wash., Feb. 20.—Sheriff Withers, of Lane county, Oregon, took the noon train for Portland, with Peter McKeen, wanted at Junction City, Or., for burglary. He drove to Roy station, 37 miles out of the city, to escape being served with a writ of habeas corpus.

SUEZ CANAL REGULATIONS. Agreement by Which Neutrality is Guaranteed by All. The parallel instituted by the terms of the new treaty between the Suez and the proposed Isthmian canal lends interest to the provisions of the Constantinople convention of 1888, on which have been modeled the rules for the government of the new interoceanic waterway. The Constantinople agreement was signed by representatives of the governments of Great Britain, Germany, Austria-Hungary, France, Spain, Italy, Russia, Holland and Turkey. Its essential articles are as follows:

Article 1. The Suez Maritime Canal shall always be open to the commerce of all nations in time of peace, to every vessel of commerce or of war, without distinction of flag. Consequently the high contracting parties agree not to take any measures which might impede the canal, in time of war as in time of peace. The canal shall never be subjected to the exercise of the right of blockade.

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Don't experiment. If you suffer get this medicine and get Mrs. Pinkham's free advice. Her address is Lynn, Mass.

Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound cured them. It always relieves painful periods and no woman who suffers should be without this knowledge.

NEARLY ALL THE ILLS OF WOMEN RESULT FROM SOME DERANGEMENT OF THE FEMALE ORGANISM. Mrs. Pinkham's great medicine makes women healthy; of this there is overwhelming proof.

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Neatly all the ills of women result from some derangement of the female organism. Mrs. Pinkham's great medicine makes women healthy; of this there is overwhelming proof.

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