

Financial (1898) Department.

ORDINARY MS.

G.O., No. 1192

DATED 8-12-88

14/14

[Despatch Abstract.]

Informing Mr R. C. Dutta
that the Govt will take six copies
of his Metrical Translation
of the Mahā-Bhārata (Edition deluxe)

BACK PAPERS.

G.O.	No.	Department.	Date.	G.O.	No.	Department.	Date.

FURTHER PAPERS.

G.O.	No.	Department.	Date.	G.O.	No.	Department.	Date.
1300/99.							

F. 23
1,000-20-4-95.

Financial (1898) Department.

CURRENT No. 3083

From R. C. Dutt Esq. C.I.E.
J.C.S (retired),
Lower Street,
London.

No.

CS.
For Orders

Submitted that a copy of
the work might be taken for the
Secretariat Library and another
copy for the Commemorative Library.
Educational might be consulted
u.o. as the number of copies
it would ~~procure~~ procure for
Colleges etc.

Dated 14th
Received 31st } ret: 1898.
Registered
Enclosures 2.
Spare copies.

SUBJECT.

Requesting sub-
scription towards his
book - "The Iliad of Ancient
India."

No 2433 of 8-11-98.

Encl. No 32, d/16.11.98.

Referred to the D.P.O. for report as to

the no of copies he may require for distribution
to Educl institutions.

R.O. in papers re
Mahabharata
transl. by Pratap
Chandra Roy

7/11/98

list of sub. 4-2433 of 1898
put up. Orig. not available
in R.O. dtd 2/11/98

7/11
14-11-98

80

G.O.	No.	Department.	Date.
R1195	21-12-95		
43	9-1-85		

G.O.	No.	Department.	Date.

[$\frac{\text{Edl.}}{5}$]
1,000-20-4-98.

Educational (189 *8*) Department.

CURRENT No.

From

R. C. Dutt Esq. C. I. E.
R. C. Dutt Esq. C. I. E.
Lower Street, S. C. P. (Ratna)
Lower Street,
London.

No.

Order

Endt: No. 32, of 16. 11. 98.

Referred to the Director
of Public Instruction for
report as to the number
of copies he may require
for distribution to Educational
institutions.

Dated 14/8

Received

Registered

Enclosures 2.

Spare copies.

SUBJECT.

Abingdon
for Secretary to Govt.

Requesting subscription
towards his book - "The
Iliad of an ancient
India"

Ск. 19. 11. 20. М. 17/100

BACK PAPERS.

G.O.	No.	Department.	Date.

[COPY].



FURTHER PAPERS.

G.O.	No.	Department.	Date.

INDIA OFFICE,

WHITEHALL,

LONDON, S.W.

5th October, 1898.

SIR,

I am directed by the Secretary of State for India in Council to acknowledge the receipt of your letter, dated the 8th September, 1898, and in reply to acquaint you that his Lordship will be pleased to subscribe for 50 copies of the édition de luxe of your metrical translation of the Mahâbhârata, for the use of this Office.

It is understood that the published price of this edition will not exceed 21/- per copy.

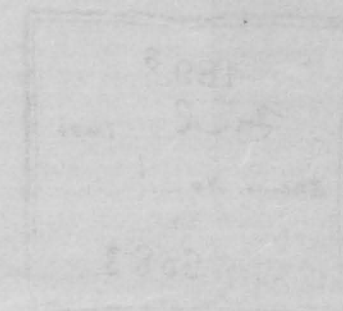
I am, Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

HORACE WALPOLE.

Shillings?

Carl



MR. R. C. DUTT'S TRANSLATION OF THE
MAHÂ-BHÂRATA.

"THE ILIAD OF ANCIENT INDIA."

It is with great pleasure that we find ourselves already able to announce the early publication, as one of the "Temple Classics," of Mr. Dutt's translation of the Mahâ-Bhârata. The work, which is intended to interest not only Oriental scholars, but every cultivated Englishman, will be well printed, illustrated, elegant, and cheap. In his lucid and exhaustive preface, our author points out the almost insuperable difficulties in the way of placing the Iliad of ancient India before the British public. Not only is the subject-matter of India's epics similar to that of the Iliad and the Odyssey, but there is the same kind of controversy as to their date and authorship.

None can say with certainty when the immigration of the Âryas into India took place; it may have been 3,000 or even 4,000 years before our era, and was most likely along the course of the river Kabul. At all events, we can distinguish three periods of Âryan settlement and culture in Hindûstân, corresponding to the three great divisions of the peninsula, namely, the valley of the Indus, the plain of the Ganges, and the Dekhan. In literature these periods are respectively represented by the hymns of the Vêda and the two colossal epics. Though, as Prof. Deussen truly says, there is no clear historic consciousness of this progress, we are nevertheless justified in assuming that, of the two great national epics, the Mahâ-Bhârata is a reminiscence of the peregrinations and struggles of the Âryans amongst themselves consequent on the acquisition of the valley of the Ganges, whilst the Râmâyana is a symbolic individualization of Brahmanic culture pressing forward through the Dekhan to the South and even to Ceylon.

"The great war which is the subject of the Epic," says our author, "is believed to have been fought in the thirteenth or fourteenth century before Christ. For generations and centuries after the war, its main episodes must have been sung by bards and minstrels in the Courts of Northern India. The war thus became the centre of a cycle of legends, songs, and poems in ancient India, even as Charlemagne and Arthur became the centres of legends in mediæval Europe. And then probably under the direction of some enlightened King, the vast mass of legends and poetry, accumulated during centuries, were cast in a narrative form, and formed the epic of the Great Bhârata nation, and therefore called the Mahâ-Bhârata.

"We should have been thankful if this Epic, as it was originally put together some centuries before the Christian era, had been preserved to us. But this was not to be. The Epic became so popular that it went on growing with the growth of centuries. Every generation of poets had something to add; every distant nation in Northern India was anxious to interpolate some account of its deeds in the old record of the international

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HORACE WALPOLE.

1898
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To
C. No. 3083

war; every preacher of a new creed desired to have in the old Epic some sanction for the truths he inculcated. . . . The modern reader will now understand the reason why this great Epic, the greatest work of imagination that Asia has produced, has never yet been placed before the European reader in a readable form. A poem of 90,000 couplets, about seven times the size of the Iliad and the Odyssey put together, is more than the average reader can stand; and the heterogeneous nature of its contents does not add to the interest of the work. If the religious works of Hooker and Jeremy Taylor, the philosophy of Hobbes and Locke, the Commentaries of Blackstone and the ballads of Percy, together with the tractarian writings of Newman, Keble, and Pusey, were all thrown into blank verse and incorporated with the *Paradise Lost*, the reader would scarcely be much to blame if he failed to appreciate that delectable compound. A complete translation of the Mahâ-Bhârata therefore into English verse is neither possible nor desirable."

Under the circumstances what was Mr. Dutt to do? Upon mature reflection it seemed to him, that the main incidents of the epic would bear a full and unabridged translation into English verse, and that these translations, "linked together by short connecting notes, would virtually present the entire story of the epic to the modern reader, in a form and within limits which might be acceptable."

In dealing with this immense mass of oral tradition, we cannot but think that the learned translator has done wisely, for in this way we hear the voice not of the translator, but of the poet himself. It is, in fact, a metrical translation of nearly all the important passages of the Iliad of the East. The real difficulty is to preserve in English the musical movement of the sonorous Sanskrit. Perhaps the best representative of the original *Shloka* is the fifteen-syllable trochaic metre of *Locksley Hall*. At all events, this is the metre which our author has chosen, and the result, on the whole, is most satisfactory. As characteristic alike of matter and style, we may cite the following speeches and replies:

BOOK VII.—UDYOGA.

(The Preparation.)

The term of banishment having expired, Yudhishtir demanded that the kingdom of Indra-prastha should be restored to him. The old Dhriti-rashtra and his queen and the aged and virtuous councillors advised the restoration, but the jealous Duryodhan hated his cousins with a genuine hatred, and would not consent. All negotiations were therefore futile, and preparations were made on both sides for the most sanguinary and disastrous battle that had ever been witnessed in Northern India.

The portions translated in this book are from Sections I., II., III., XCIV., CXXIV., and CXXVI. of Book V. of the original text.

I. KRISHNA'S SPEECH.

Mirth and song and nuptial music waked the echoes of the night,
Youthful bosoms throbbed with pleasure, love-lit glances sparkled bright:
But when young and white-robed USHAS oped the golden gates of day,
To Virata's Council Chamber chieftains thoughtful held their way.
Stones inlaid in arch and pillar glinted in the glittering dawn,
Gay festoons and graceful garlands o'er the golden cushions shone!

Matsya's King, Panchala's monarch, foremost seats of honour claim,
Krishna too and Valadeva, Dwarka's chiefs of righteous fame.

By them sat the bold Satyaki hailing from the Western shore,
And the god-like sons of Pandu,—days of dark concealment o'er!

Youthful princes in their splendour graced Virata's royal hall,
Valiant sons of valiant fathers, brave in war and fair and tall!

In their gem-bespangled garments came the warriors proud and high,
Till the Council Chamber glittered like the star-bespangled sky.

Kind the greetings! sweet the converse! soft the winged moments fly,
Till intent on graver questions all on Krishna turn their eye.

Krishna with his inner vision then the state of things surveyed,
And his thoughts before the monarchs thus in weighty accents laid:

"Known to all, ye mighty monarchs! May your glory ever last!
True to plighted word Yudhishtir hath his weary exile passed.

"Twelve long years in pathless jungle with his wife and brothers strayed,
And a year in menial service in Virata's palace stayed.

"He hath kept his plighted promise through the years of woe and shame,
And he begs, assembled monarchs! ye shall now his duty name!

"For he swerveth not from duty kingdom of the sky to win,
Prizeth hamlet more than empire, so his course be free from sin!

"Loss of realm and wealth and glory higher virtues in him prove
Thoughts of peace and not of anger, still the good Yudhishtir move!

"Mark again the sleepless anger and the unrelenting hate,
Harboured by the proud Duryodhan driven by his luckless fate!

"From a child, by fire or poison impious, guile and trick of dice,
He hath compassed dark destruction, by deceit and low device!

"Ponder well, ye gracious monarchs! with a just and righteous mind,
Help Yudhishtir with your counsel, with your grace and blessings kind.

"Should the noble son of Pandu seek his right by open war,
Seek the aid of righteous monarchs and of chieftains near and far?

"Should he smite his ancient foemen skilled in all deceitful art,
Unforgiving is their vengeance, unrelenting is their heart?

"Should he rather send a message to the proud unbending foe,
And Duryodhan's haughty purpose seek by messenger to know?

"Should he send a noble envoy, trained in virtue, true and wise,
And his greetings to Duryodhan in a meek and friendly guise?

"Ask him to restore the kingdom on the sacred Jumna's shore?
Each may rule in peace his empire as in happy days of yore!"

Krishna spake these words of wisdom pregnant with his peaceful thought,
For in peace and not by bloodshed, good Yudhishtir's right he sought.

II. VALADEVA'S SPEECH.

Krishna's older Valadeva, stalwart chief who bore the plough,
Rose and spake, the blood of Vrishnis mantled o'er his lofty brow:

"Ye have listened, righteous monarchs! to my brother's thoughtful word!
Love he bears to good Yudhishtir and to proud Hastina's lord!

"For his realm by dark blue Jumna good Yudhishtir held of yore,
Brave Duryodhan ruled his kingdom on fair Ganga's sacred shore!

"And once more in love and friendship either prince may rule his share,
For the lands are broad and fertile, and each realm is rich and fair.

"Speed the envoy to Hastina with our love and greetings kind,
Let him speak Yudhishtir's wishes, know the prince Duryodhan's mind.

"Make obeisance unto Bhîma and to Drona true and bold,
Unto Kripa, archer Karna, unto chieftains young and old.
"To the sons of Dhritâ-rashtra, rulers of the Kuru land,
Righteous in their kingly duties, stout of heart and strong of hand,
"To these princes and to burghers gathered in the council hall,
Let him speak Yudhishtir's wishes, plead his righteous cause to all.
"Speak he not in futile anger, for Duryodhan holds the power
And Yudhishtir's wrath were folly, in this sad and luckless hour!
"By his dearest friends dissuaded, but by rage or madness driven,
Indra-prastha's spacious empire now Duryodhan thinks his own,
By his tears and soft entreaty let Yudhishtir seek the throne.
"Open war I do not counsel, humbly seek Duryodhan's grace,
War will not restore the empire, nor the gambler's loss replace!"
Wrathful rose the brave Satyaki, fiercely thus to him replied.

III. SATYAKI'S SPEECH.

"Shame unto the halting chieftain who thus pleads Duryodhan's part,
Timid counsel, Valadeva speaks a woman's timid heart!
"From a warlike stock ariseth, weakling chief who bends the knee,
As a withered branch and fruitless springeth from a fruitful tree!
"From a heart so faint and craven, faint and craven words must flow,
Monarchs in their pride and glory list not to such counsel low!
"How could'st thou, O Vrîshni chieftain! midst these monarchs known to fame,
On Yudhishtir pious-hearted cast this undeserved blame?
"Challenged by his wily foemen, and by dark misfortune crost,
Trusting to their faith Yudhishtir played a righteous game and lost.
"Challenge from a crowned monarch can a crowned king decline?
Can a Kshatra warrior fathom fraud in sons of royal line?
"Nathless he surrendered empire true to faith and plighted word,
Lived for years in pathless forests, Indra-prastha's mighty lord!
"Past his years of weary exile, now demands his realm of old,
Claims it, not as humble suppliant, but as king and warrior bold!
"Past his year of dark concealment, bold Yudhishtir claims his own,
Proud Duryodhan now must render Indra-prastha's jewelled throne!
"Bhîma counsels, Drona urges, Kripa pleads his cause in vain,
Yields not false and fierce Duryodhan sinful conquest, fraudulent gain!
"Open war I therefore counsel, ruthless and relentless war,
Grace we seek not when we meet them speeding in our battle car!
"And our weapons, not entreaties, shall our foemen force to yield,
Yield Yudhishtir's rightful kingdom or they perish on the field.
"Proud Duryodhan and his forces fall beneath our battles' shock,
As beneath the bolt of thunder falls the crushed and riven rock!
"Who shall meet the helmèd Arjun in the gory field of war,
Krishna with his fiery discus mounted on his battle car?
"Who shall face the twin-born brothers by the mighty Bhîma led,
And the vengeful chief Satyaki with his bow and arrows dread?
"Ancient Drupad wields his weapon peerless in the fields of fight,
And his son brave Dhritâ-dyumna owns a strange, unconquered might.
"Abhimanyu, son of Arjun, whom the fair Subhadra bore,
And whose happy nuptials brought us from far Dwarka's sea-girt shore.

"Men on earth nor bright immortals can the youthful hero face,
When with more than Arjun's prowess leads the prince the battle's race!
"Dhritâ-rashtra's sons we conquer and Gandhara's wily son,
Vanquish Karna though world-honoured for his deeds of valour done.
"Win the fierce-contested battle, and redeem Yudhishtir's own,
Place the exile pious-hearted on his father's ancient throne!
"And no sin Satyaki reckons slaughter of the mortal foe,
But to beg a grace of foemen were a mortal sin and woe!
"Speed we then unto our duty, let our impious foemen yield,
Or the fiery son of Sini meets them in the battle-field!"

IV. DRUPAD'S SPEECH.

Fair Panchala's ancient monarch rose his secret thoughts to tell,
From his lips the words of wisdom with a graceful accent fell:
"Much I fear thou speakest truly,—hard is Kuru's stubborn race,
Vain the hope the effort futile to beseech Duryodhan's grace!
"Dhritâ-rashtra pleadeth vainly, feeble is his fitful star,
Ancient Bhîshma, righteous Drona, may not stop this fatal war!
"Archer Karna thirsts for battle, moved by jealousy and pride,
Deep Sakuni, false and wily, still supports Duryodhan's side!
"Vain is Valadeva's counsel, vainly shall our envoy plead,
Half his empire proud Duryodhan yields not in his boundless greed;
"In his pride he deems our mildness faint and feeble-hearted fear,
And our suit will fan his glory and his arrogance will cheer!
"Therefore let our many heralds travel near and travel far,
Seek alliance of all monarchs in the great impending war.
"Unto great and noble chieftains, unto nations east and west,
North and south to warlike races speed our message and request.
"Meanwhile peace and offered friendship we before Duryodhan place,
And my priest will seek Hastina, strive to win Duryodhan's grace.
"If he renders Indra-prastha, peace will crown the happy land,
Or our troops will shake the empire, from the east to western strand!"
Vainly were Panchala's Brahmans sent with messages of peace,
Vainly urged Hastina's elders that the fatal strife should cease.
Proud Duryodhan to his kinsmen would not yield their kingdom's share,
Pandu's sons would not surrender for they had the will to dare!
Fatal war and dire destruction do the mighty gods ordain,
Till the kings and armed nations strewed the wide and reeking plain!
Krishna in his righteous effort sought for wisdom from above,
Strove to stop the war of nations, and to end the feud in love.
And to far Hastina's palace Krishna went to sue for peace,
Raised his voice against the slaughter, begged that strife and feud should cease.

V. KRISHNA'S SPEECH AT HASTINA.

Silent sat the listening chieftains in Hastina's council hall,
With the voice of rolling thunder Krishna spake unto them all:
"Listen mighty Dhritâ-rashtra, Kuru's great and ancient king,
Seek not war and death of kinsmen! word of peace and love I bring!
"Midst the wide earth's many nations Bharats in their worth excel,
Love and kindness, spotless virtue in the Kuru-elders dwell,
"Father of that noble nation! now retired from life's turmoil,
Ill beseems that sin or untruth should thy ancient bosom soil!

"For thy sons, through greed and passion, seek to do their kinsmen wrong,
 And withhold the throne and kingdom which by right to them belong.
 "And a danger thus ariseth like the comet's baleful fire,
 Slaughtered kinsmen, bleeding nations, soon shall feed its fatal ire!
 "Stretch thy hands O Kuru monarch! prove thy truth and righteous grace,
 Man of peace! avert the slaughter, and preserve thy ancient race!
 "Yet restrain thy fiery children, for thy mandates they obey,
 I with sweet and soft persuasion, Pandu's truthful sons will sway.
 "'Tis thy profit, Kuru monarch! that all hostile wars should cease,
 Brave Duryodhan, good Yudhishtir, each should rule his realm in peace!
 "Pandus sons are strong in valour, mighty is their armed hand
 INDRA shall not shake thy empire when they guard the Kuru-land!
 "Bhishma is thy kingdom's bulwark, doughty Drona rules the war,
 Karna matchless with his arrows, Kripa peerless in his car
 "Let Yudhishtir and stout Bhima by these noble warriors stand,
 And let helmet-wearing Arjun guard the sacred Kuru-land.
 "Who shall then contest thy prowess from the sea to farthest sea
 Ruler of a world-wide empire, king of kings and nations free?
 "Sons and grandsons, friends and kinsmen will surround thee in a ring,
 And a race of loving heroes guard their ancient hero-king!
 "Dhrita-rashtra's lofty edicts will proclaim his boundless sway,
 Nations work his righteous mandates and the kings his will obey!
 "If this concord be rejected, and the lust of war prevail,
 Soon within these ancient chambers will resound the sound of wail.
 "Grant thy children be victorious and the sons of Pandu slain,
 Dear to thee are Pandu's children, sure their death must cause thee pain!
 "But the Pandavs, skilled in warfare, are renowned both near and far,
 And thy race and children's slaughter will methinks pollute this war!
 "Sons and grandsons, gracious princes, thou shalt never see again,
 Kinsmen loved and car-borne chieftains will bedeck the gory plain.
 "Ponder yet, O ancient monarch! Rulers of each distant State,
 Nations from the farthest regions gather thick to court their fate!
 "Father of a righteous nation! Save the princes of the land,
 On the armed and fated nations stretch, old man! thy saving hand!
 "Say the word and at thy bidding leaders of each hostile race,
 Not the gory field of battle but the festive board will grace!
 "Robed in jewels, decked in garlands, they will quaff the ruddy wine,
 Greet their foes in love and kindness, bless thy righteous name and thine!
 "Think, O man, of many seasons! when good Pandu left this throne,
 And his helpless loving orphans thou didst nurse e'en as thine own!
 "'Twas thy fond and steady fingers taught the boys their steps to frame,
 'Twas thy loving gentle accents taught their lips to lisp each name!
 "As thine own they grew and blossomed, dear to thee they yet remain,
 Take them back unto thy bosom, be a father once again!
 "Unto thee O! Dhrita-rashtra Pandu's sons in homage bend,
 And this loving peaceful message through a kinsman's lips they send:—
 "Tell our monarch, more than father, at his dear and wise command
 We have lived in wood and jungle and have roamed from land to land,
 "True unto our plighted promise, for we ever felt and knew
 To his troth king Dhrita-rashtra cannot, will not be untrue!
 "Years of anxious toil are over and of woe and bitterness,
 Years of waiting and of watching, years of danger and distress,

"Like a dark unending midnight hung on us this age forlorn.
 Streaks of hope and dawning brightness usher now the radiant morn!
 "Be unto us as a father, loving, and not filled with wrath,
 Be unto us as preceptor, pointing us the righteous path,
 "If perchance astray we wander, thy strong arm shall lead aright,
 If our feeble bosom fainteth, help us with a father's might!
 "Show the path of loving duty, and that path we humbly tread.
 These are words the sons of Pandu through me unto thee have said.
 "Take their love, O gracious monarch! Let thy closing days be fair,
 Let Duryodhan keep his kingdom, let the Pandavs have their share.
 "Call to mind their noble suffering, for the tale is dark and long,
 Of the outrage they have suffered, of the insult and the wrong!
 "Exiled unto Varna-vata, destined unto death by flame,—
 For the gods assist the righteous,—how with added strength they came!
 "Exiled unto Indra-prastha, by their toil and by their might,
 Cleared a forest, built a city, and performed a noble rite!
 "Cheated of their realm and empire and of all they called their own,
 With Drupadi they have wandered, homeless, friendless, poor, unknown!
 "Once more quelling all misfortunes, they are stout of heart and hand;—
 Now redeem thy plighted promise, and restore their throne and land!
 "Trust me, mighty Dhrita-rashtra, trust me, lords who grace this hall,
 Krishna pleads for peace and virtue, blessings unto you and all!
 "Slaughter not the armed nations, slaughter not thy kith and kin,
 Mark not, king, thy closing summers with the bloody stain of sin!
 "Pandus sons with thy own children, let them guard thy ancient throne,
 Cherish peace and cherish virtue, for the days are almost done!"

VI. BHISHMA'S SPEECH.

From the monarch's ancient bosom sighs and sobs convulsive broke,
 Bhishma wiped his manly eyelids, and to proud Duryodhan spoke:
 "Listen prince! for righteous Krishna counsels love and holy peace,
 Listen youth! and may thy fortune with thy passing years increase!
 "Yield to Krishna's words of wisdom, for thy weal he nobly strives,
 Yield and save thy friends and kinsmen, save thy cherished subjects' lives!
 "Foremost race in all this wide earth is Hastina's royal line,
 Bring not on this race destruction, by a sinful act of thine!
 "Sons and fathers, friends and brothers, shall in mutual conflict die,
 Kinsmen slain by dearest kinsmen shall upon the red field lie!
 "Hearken unto Krishna's counsel, unto wise Vidura's word,
 Be thy mother's fond entreaty and thy father's mandate heard!
 "Tempt not heavenly wrath and vengeance on thy proud and ancient race,
 Tread not in the path of darkness, seek the path of light and grace!
 "Listen to thy King and father, he hath Kuru's empire graced!
 Listen to thy Queen and mother, she has nursed thee on her breast!"

VII. DRONA'S SPEECH.

Outspoke Drona, priest and warrior, and his words were few and high,
 Clouded was Duryodhan's forehead, wrathful was Duryodhan's eye.
 "Thou hast heard the holy counsel, which the righteous Krishna said,
 Ancient Bhishma's voice of warning thou hast in thy bosom weighed.
 "Peerless in their ancient wisdom are these chiefs in peace or strife,
 Truest friends to thee, Duryodhan, pure and sinless in their life.

"Take their counsel and thy kinsmen fasten in a lasting peace,
May the empire of the Kurus and their warlike fame increase.
"List unto thy old preceptor! Faithless is thy fiftful star,
False they feed with hopes thy bosom, those who urge and counsel war.
"Crowned kings and armed nations, they will strive for thee in vain,
Vainly brothers, sons and kinsmen will for thee their life-blood drain;
"For the victor's crown and glory never, never can be thine,
Krishna conquers and brave Arjun! mark these deathless words of mine!
"I have trained the youthful Arjun, seen him bend the warlike bow,
Marked him charge the hostile forces, marked him smite the scattered foe!
"Fiery son of Jamadagni owned no greater, loftier might,
Breathes on earth no mortal warrior conquers Arjun in the fight!
"Krishna too in war resistless, comes from Dwarka's distant shore,
And the bright-gods quake before him, whom the fair Devaki bore!
"These are foes thou may'st not conquer, take an ancient warrior's word,
Act thou as thy heart decideth, thou art Kuru's king and lord!"

VIII. VIDURA'S SPEECH.

Then in gentler voice Vidura sought his pensive mind to tell,
From his lips serene and softly words of woe and anguish fell:—
"Not for thee I grieve, Duryodhan, slain by vengeance fierce and keen,
For thy father weeps my bosom and the aged Kuru queen!
"Sons and grandsons, friends and kinsmen slaughtered in this fatal war,
Homeless, cheerless, on this wide earth they shall wander long and far!
"Friendless, kinless, in this wide world whither shall they turn and fly!
Like some bird bereft of plumage they shall pine awhile and die!
"Of their race the sad survivors, they shall wander o'er the earth,
Curse the fatal day, Duryodhan saw thy sad and woeful birth!"

IX. DHIRTA-RASHTRA'S SPEECH.

Tear-drops filled his sightless eyeballs, anguish shook his aged frame,
As the monarch soothed Duryodhan by each fond endearing name!
"Listen, dearest son, Duryodhan, shun this dark and fatal strife,
Cast not grief and death's black shadow on thy parents' closing life!
"Krishna's life is pure and spotless, true and wise the words he said,
We may win a world-wide empire with the noble Krishna's aid.
"Seek the friendship of Yudhishtir, loved of righteous gods above,
And unite the scattered Kurus by the lasting tie of love!
"Now at full is tide of fortune, never may it come again,
Strive and win! Or ever after all repentance will be vain!
"Peace is righteous Krishna's counsel, and he offers love of peace,
Take the offered boon, Duryodhan! Let all strife and hatred cease!"

X. DURYODHAN'S SPEECH.

Silent sat the proud Duryodhan wrathful in the council hall,
Spoke to mighty armed Krishna, and to Kuru warriors all:
"Ill becomes thee, Dwarka's chieftain! in the paths of sin to rove,
Bear for me a secret hatred, for the Pandavs, secret love!
"And my father, wise Vidura, Bhishma, Drona, warrior-bold,
Join thee in this bitter hatred, turn on me their glances cold!
"What great crime or darkening sorrow shadows o'er my bitter fate,
That ye chiefs and Kuru's monarch mark Duryodhan for your hate?
"Speak, what nameless guilt or folly, secret sin to me unknown,
Turns from me your sweet affection, father's love, that was my own?"

"If Yudhishtir, fond of gambling, played a heedless reckless game,
Lost his empire and his freedom, was it then Duryodhan's blame?
"And if freed from shame and bondage in his folly played again,
Lost again and went to exile, wherefore doth he now complain?
"Weak are they in friends and forces, feeble is their fiftful star,
Wherefore then in pride and folly seek with us this unjust war?
"Shall we, who to mighty INDRA scarce will do the homage due,
Bow to homeless sons of Pandu and their comrades faint and few?
"Bow to them while warlike Drona leads us as in days of old,
Bhishma greater than the bright-gods, archer Karna true and bold!
"If in dubious game of battle we should forfeit fame and life,
Heaven doth ope its golden portals for all Kshatras slain in strife!
"If unbending to our foemen we should press the gory plain,
Stingless is the bed of arrows, death for us will have no pain.
"For the Kshatra knows no terror of his foemen in the field,
Breaks like hardened forest timber, bends not, knows not how to yield!
"So the ancient sage Matanga of the warlike Kshatras said,
Save to priest and sage preceptor unto none they bend their head!
"Indra-prastha once my father weakly to Yudhishtir gave,
Nevermore shall go unto him while I live and brothers brave.
"Kuru's undivided kingdom Dhritra-rashtra rules alone,
Let us sheathe our swords in friendship and the monarch's empire own!
"If in past, in thoughtless folly, once the realm was broke in twain,
Kuru-land is reunited, never shall be split again!
"Take my message to my kinsmen, for Duryodhan's words are plain,
Portion of the Kuru empire sons of Pandu seek in vain.
"Town nor village, mart nor hamlet, help us righteous gods in heaven!
Spot that needle's point can cover shall not unto them be given!"

It has been the custom in India for centuries to read aloud and recite the Mahâ-Bhârata in temples and at feasts. From Bâna's Kâdambari we learn how Queen Vilâsavati went to a temple in Ujjayini to hear the Mahâ-Bhârata, and with what joy the inhabitants listened to the thrilling story. An inscription of about 600 A.D. found in "Further India" tells us that even in the temples of Kambodia the epic was read. And even to-day in the cities and hamlets of Âryāvarta tears and smiles accompany the fortunes and sorrows of the hero. "The wife of Ramdeolal Dey," says Tabboys Wheeler, "had engaged a number of Brahmans to read the Mahâ-Bhârata, and for ninety days thousands of native women flocked to the house to hear the sacred story." Pratâpa Candra Râya informs us that "generally it takes about three months to complete the recitation of the entire Mahâ-Bhârata"; whilst according to a French scholar: *la légende des Pandavas demande six mois, ni plus ni moins, aux conteurs indigènes.*

We cannot be too grateful to Mr. Dutt for presenting, in so skilful and readable a form, to English readers, a story which is "interwoven with the thoughts and beliefs and moral ideas of a nation numbering two hundred millions."

H. B.

CURRENT No. 3083

To the Secretary to the

Government of Madras



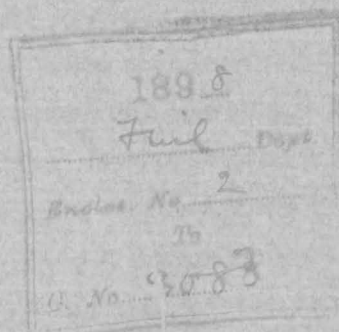
SIR,

I have the honour to enclose a copy of a notice, which has appeared in the October number of the *Asiatic Quarterly Review*, of a work which I have in the press—a condensed metrical translation of the *Mahābhārata*, the great Epic of Ancient India.

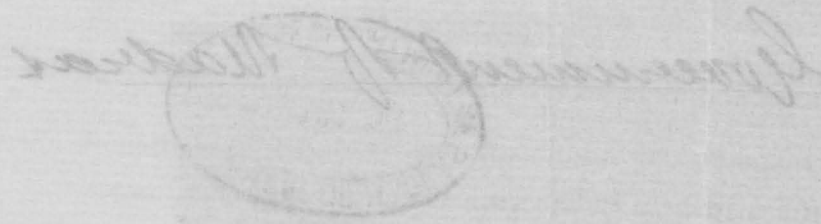
The plan I have adopted in condensing this vast epic, within reasonable limits, in English, has been briefly explained in the *Review*, and the specimens given therein shew the style and metre which I have adopted.

The edition which is now in the press is intended to be a cheap and popular edition. But it is also proposed to bring out a better edition of the work, with illustrations designed from Indian sources, and altogether worthy of the subject of the poem. It is not likely that a work of this nature will have a very large circulation or will cover its cost, and I therefore look up to the Governments and Administrations in India for some help and assistance in the great task I have undertaken.

For my endeavour is to popularize in Europe, and among English-speaking nations, the great Epic of Ancient India, which has hitherto remained a sealed book to them. While the Epics of Ancient Greece and Rome are read and appreciated by every nation of modern Europe, and while the Epics and Sagas of mediæval Europe and of Norway and Iceland are receiving increasing attention from year to year, it seems to me to be a matter for regret that the great Epic of Ancient India, which is an Encyclopædia of ancient thought and life, religion and manners, should remain virtually unknown to modern Europe, and specially to modern Englishmen. An attempt to popularize the great Indian Epic seems to me to be in keeping with the progress of modern researches and learning in Europe; while at the same time it will help Englishmen to enter more fully into ancient Indian thought and religion, which have still so great an influence on modern India. A more



1005/12/90



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extended knowledge of India's past civilization will also extend the ideas and broaden the sympathies of modern readers, and India will have a greater share of attention in Europe when the old Epic of India is better known and more widely appreciated.

The Governments and Administrations in India have done much in recent times to help Indian archaeological researches, and to elucidate the arts, sculpture and paintings of ancient and mediæval India; and I believe I am not unreasonable in hoping for some degree of support and help from Indian Administrators in my present endeavour to place before English readers for the first time the entire story of the great Indian Epic in English verse, and in a readable and popular form.

I have great pleasure in enclosing a copy of a letter which I have received from the India Office. His Lordship, the Secretary of State for India, has been pleased to subscribe for 50 copies of the illustrated edition of my work for the use of the India Office. I venture to hope that the

His Excellency the Governor of Madras

will find it possible to subscribe for a considerably larger number for the use of the many Offices, Government Schools and Libraries in the Province. The published price of the illustrated edition will not exceed 21/- per copy.

I am, Sir,
Your obedient Servant,

Ramesh Chatterjee C. I. E.

Indian Civil Service (Retired).

UNIVERSITY COLLEGE,
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14th October, 1898.

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Robert C. Dutta

(Indian Civil Service, Retired)

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THE HONORABLE MR. D. DUNCAN, M.A., D.SC., LL.D.,

DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION,

Madras,

To

THE SECRETARY TO GOVERNMENT,

Educational DEPARTMENT,

Fort St. George.

SIR,

In returning the papers referred to me under endorsement No 32, Educational, dated 16th instant, I have the honour to state that four copies of Mr. R. C. Dutts' Translation of the Mahabharata may be taken for the use of this Department, one for each of the first grade Colleges and one for the Teachers' College. I presume that the price of the book is Rs 21 per copy.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient servant,

S. Duncan

Director of Public Instruction

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24
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