

Henry T. Colebrooke an August Wilhelm von Schlegel London, 16.07.1821

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[1] Argyll Street London

16th July 1821.

My dear Sir

An excursion to the North of England, whence I last week returned, must be my excuse to you in conjunction with other circumstances, for the delay in acknowledging and answering your last favour , which reached me some time since.

I made inquiry, immediately on the receipt of it, respecting copies of the Hitopadesa in the East India Company's library; & was somewhat surprised to find the library very ill furnished with so common a book. It is perhaps because the book is no rarity, that copies of it have not been collected & presented to the Library. In private collections, Copies are forthcoming; & those, which were collated, for the printed edition by D^r Wilkins, remain in private hands. Should the task of collation be here recommenced, several might be again brought together for the purpose. There is but one in the Company's library.

[2] Of the Pancha-tantra, though a scarcer book, more copies are forthcoming in the Library of the India-house: three in Sanscrit; one Hindi translation; & one in Silanese or Pali (I forget which).

I question whether a work such as the Hitopadesa would reward the labour of a careful collation. Copies differ very much; because transcribers take great liberties with a work of this nature; substituting for moral quotations which they find, others which they deem equally apposite & happen to prefer.

For this reason too, the verifying of a quotation, or the tracing of stanzas introduced in the text, to their apparent source in poems sacred or prophane, would afford no very satisfactory or decisive results.

A doubt would always remain whether the quotation had been originally introduced by the author of the Apologues himself, or subsequently by other hands: or enough of uncertainty would hang over the subject, to prevent any conclusion being drawn, beyond a bare presumption, as the relative antiquity of the books. I did upon one occasion use that presumption as applied to the chronology of astronomical writings, but without laying much stress on it.

Major Stewart, a Professor at the [3] India College, had undertaken a polyglot edition of the fables of Pilpay: or at least of some small part. He completed a specimen of it: but which has not gone to the press: & he has relinquished the work under the conviction that there is no call for it by the public.

I have no doubt that interesting results might be obtained from investigating the traces of literary intercourse between India & Persia previous to the introduction of Muhammedanism into either of those countries. The materials are indeed not ample: and what is to be found is to be gathered from multifarious reading: But if oriental literature is cultivated with the zeal which you are disposed to give to it, more progress may be made in that & in other branches of inquiry, that can be expected from us English.

Mr Wilson, who is known to you by his translation of the Meghadhuta, has been recently employing his leisure; at the metropolis of Indian Literature, Benares, in collecting and examining the Indian Dramas . He has prepared for publication a work on the subject, which I hope will be put into the press shortly. It will contain transla[4]tions of several dramas; & among the rest the Málatí-mádhava, from which I quoted some sc

enes in my essay on Sanscrit & Pracrit poetry.

I am in daily expectation of a 13th volume of Asiatic Researches Indeed I am unable to account for its not-having been yet received.

I beg you will accept my thanks for copies of a specimen of your typographic experiment. M^r Montague was so good as to transmit them: and I have forwarded those which were particularly directed The performance does much credit to your exertions.

I am likewise beholden to you for a copy of your publication intended for the Asiatic Society : Which has been forwarded. You need have no scruple in expressing your sentiments freely; & communicating them without reserve. Science & literature always benefit by free discussion

I remain

Dear Sir

with great esteem

Your faithful servant

H T Colebrooke

Namen

Bidpai

Montague, Herr

Stewart, Charles

Wilkins, Charles

Körperschaften

Asiatic Society (Kalkutta)

East India Company (London)

East India Company (London). Library

East India Company College (Hailey, Hertfordshire; Haileybury and Imperial Service College)

Orte

London

Varanasi (Benares)

Werke

Bhavabhūti: Mālatīmādhava

Bidpai: Fabeln

Colebrooke, Henry T.: On Sanscrit and Pracrit Poetry

Hitopadesa

Kālidāsa: Meghadūta

Pañcatantra

Schlegel, August Wilhelm von: Specimen novum typographiae indicae

Stewart, Charles; An Introduction to the Anvari Soohyly of Hussein Vāiz Kāshify

Wilkins, Charles: The Heetopades of Veeshnoo-Sarma, in a Series of Connected Fables, Interspersed with Moral, Prudential and Political Maxims

Wilson, Horace H. (Hg.): Malatimadhava

Wilson, Horace H. (Hg.): The Mégha Dūta

Wilson, Horace H.: Select Specimens of the Theatre of the Hindus

Periodika

Asiatic Researches

Bemerkungen

Paginierung des Editors

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Unsichere Lesung