Henry T. Colebrooke an August Wilhelm von Schlegel
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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 Dr 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. Mr 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 Sanscrĭt and Prácrĭt Poetry

Hitopadeśa

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 Dúta

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

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