

Pali Text Society

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REPORT OF THE PALI TEXT SOCIETY FOR THE YEAR 1909

THE work of the Society has gone steadily on during the past year. We have brought out the remainder of vol i. of the Dhammapada Commentary by Professor Norman, including his introduction to that interesting work. I am glad to see that he practically endorses the opinion I expressed long ago that it is not by Buddhaghosa. An absolutely final decision can only be given when we are able to answer the question: 'Is the vocabulary of its author different, and if so, how far different from that of Buddhaghosa?' And to answer that question we want more texts and a better dictionary.

The greater part of this Journal, the other issue for the year, is occupied, it will be seen, with work preparatory to the Society's dictionary. Next year's issues will be the third volume of the Dīgha, and an index to the five volumes of the Anguttara. Similar indices to the Dīgha and Majjhima are already being arranged for, and it is hoped to publish, in succession, indices of a similar kind to all the canonical texts. Such indices are really indispensable as preliminary work for the complete dictionary we hope eventually to have, and they will be a constant help to the much needed critical study of the texts themselves.

Of course we want other indices. We ought to have, not only indices to all important words in each text, but to each important subject in all the texts. But we cannot keep the dictionary waiting for all or any of these valuable

indices. That would mean postponing it to the Greek Kalends. NOW A DICTIONARY IS URGENTLY WANTED AT ONCE. We have sufficient funds in hand to pay for one twice the length (and probably about ten times as good) as Childers's. The only sensible thing to do is to face the facts of this particular case, and to set to work to do what we can.

And the position we have to face, so far from being beset with difficulties, is really full of hope, and affords no excuse at all for delay. The St. Petersburg dictionary was started in 1850. With no trouble at all about money, with two distinguished scholars able to devote their lives to the work, and others ready and able to help, it was 1875 before the last of its stately folios saw the light. We have reasonable expectation of being able to do not only as well, but better than that—that is to say, that in less than twenty-five years we shall have published not only a working dictionary at once, but also, after that, a second enlarged dictionary, as good in every respect for canonical and later Pali as Böhlingk-Roth is for Vedic and Sanskrit.

The first steps are conditioned by the finance. There are not sufficient funds to pay anyone to devote his whole time to the work, and each of the Pali scholars in Europe has to give the main part of his time to other work. It is impossible therefore to follow the method of the St. Petersburg lexicon, which we should otherwise have wished to do. This difficulty has, however, been overcome by a sufficient number of competent scholars having undertaken to write the dictionary articles for all words beginning with a certain letter or letters. The names of these co-workers are ample guarantee for the scholarship of the work, and sufficient uniformity for all practical purposes is insured by the co-workers having agreed to the observance of certain simple rules.

The size of the work is again determined by the finance. We have enough to pay for twice as much matter as is contained in Childers's. And in this connection I have the pleasure of announcing that the Bavarian Academy has set

aside this year, from the Hardy fund, the sum of £37 10s. for the dictionary, in which the donor of the fund took so much interest. Professor Hardy had undertaken, when he died, to do the vowels and to act as sub-editor. I am very glad to say that Professor Ernst Kuhn has stepped into the breach created by the lamented death of Hardy. Had Hardy lived, the first instalment of the dictionary would have been out by now; and we may hope that Professor Kuhn will soon put an end to the delay that has resulted from the unexpected and irreparable loss that we sustained.

The dictionary will appear in four volumes of about 250 pages each, the authorship of each being as follows:

Vol. I.: Vowels. Professor Kuhn.

Vol. II.: K—N. Professor Windisch with Professor Duroiselle (K—GH) and Dr. Rouse (C—JH) as co-workers.

Vol. III.: P—M. Professor Geiger with Dr. Bode. (B—M) as co-worker.

Vol. IV.: Y—H. Professor Andersen with Dr. Sten Konow (S and H) as co-worker.

The produce of the sales will be placed on deposit in the bank. The necessary *vorarbeiten* for a Second Edition, at least twice as large as the working dictionary, to be published at once, will be pushed forward as fast as the funds of the Society allow. By the time that these preliminary studies are sufficiently advanced to render the preparation of this Second Edition advisable, there will be enough funds in hand, if not to pay the whole cost, still enough to make it comparatively easy to raise the rest of the amount required. By that time we shall have the *Visuddhi Magga* and other works of Buddhaghosa before us, and probably the rest of *Dhammapāla*; we shall have learnt to distinguish somewhat between the gradual changes in the connotation of words; and shall perhaps have got to know something about the history of the language and of the ideas expressed in it.

Meanwhile we shall have had, for ten years or so, a good working dictionary to use. Nine-tenths of the texts now accessible to scholars have been published since Childers's,

and it is quite unnecessary to discuss the probability of the particular degree of improvement that we reasonably hope to show, even in this First Edition. The plan, therefore, imposed upon us by the necessities of finance has, in point of fact, great advantages. To attempt a perfect dictionary would, in any case, be quite foolish in the present state of our studies. The plan adopted is not only the only feasible one, but it will at the same time provide us with the help we want for the next ten years, and also the funds for a better and more complete dictionary just at the time when it would be wise to undertake it. The important point is to get the First Edition out quickly, so that those funds may begin to accumulate as soon as possible.

Finally—besides this new edition of Childers's, which is to be preparatory to a really satisfactory Pali dictionary—it is contemplated also, before very long, to publish a short dictionary, without references, for the use of students. The Society hopes in this undertaking to have the assistance of Professor Duroiselle of Rangoon.

T. W. RHYS DAVIDS.