

edition. Not absolutely identical, however; but what appears to me most strange is, that the Madras edition coincides in many instances with what one would consider as misprints in the Calcutta edition. As it is impossible to suppose that the editors of either should have merely transcribed the text of the other (the coincidence being far from complete), it is clear that the evidently faulty readings have in both editions been taken from manuscripts. It becomes therefore exceedingly difficult to decide what is only a misprint in either of the editions. Faulty readings which no one would suppose to be derived from manuscripts are common to all three editions, ex. gr.: I, 49, 27 B., *edam* instead of *ainam*; I, 51, 4, *tathā* instead of *yathā*; Calc., 14, 649, *hitvā karān*; M. 17, 15, *jitvā karān*; B., *jitvā jayyān*, where the reading of the Calcutta edition seems to me decidedly preferable. II, 74, 4, *satrusādagamayad* C., °*sādgamayad* B., °*sādagamad* M. Nevertheless the Madras edition is indispensable, because in not a few places it has readings decidedly preferable to those of the Calcutta and sometimes even of the Bombay edition. So III, 147, 1, *amitra karṣaṇam* instead of °*śana*; 146, 62, *siddhagatim* instead of *siddhigatim*; I, 804, *jaghanyajas Takśakasya* instead of *j° Takśakaṣcha*. Some errors may be more easily explained by the Telugu than by the Devanāgarī writing; so the frequent interchange of *v* and *p*, *t* and *l*; with others this is not the case."

R. SEWELL.

#### 10. GAṆĒŚA IN THE MAHĀBHĀRATA.

SIR,—I mentioned above, p. 147, that the legend of Gaṇēśa acting as a scribe for Vyāsa is omitted both in the Grantha MS. of the Mahābhārata and in Kṣēmendra's Bhārata-mañjarī. Dr. Bühler kindly draws my attention to the fact that the legend must have been known to *Rājasēkhara*, a poet who wrote a drama on the story of the Pāṇḍavas—the *Bālabhārata* or *Pracaṇḍapāṇḍava Nāṭaka*—ca. 900 A.D. In an introductory scene of this drama, Vālmiki and Vyāsa are introduced, complimenting each other on their works.

The renowned author of the Rāmāyaṇa, after saying some flattering words about the Mahābhārata, enquires about the progress of Vyāsa's work. And Vyāsa relates to him how he had entered on his difficult task with the help of Gaṇeśa as his scribe, and how he had outwitted the god :

vināyakō yaḥ śivayōr apatyam ardhm pumān ardhm ibhaś  
ca dēvaḥ |  
sa vartatē bhāratasaṃhitāyāṃ vṛtas tapōbhir mama lēkhakō  
'tra ||

tēna ca chalayitum aham upakrāntaḥ | yad uta bāḍham  
ahaṃ tē lipikāraḥ kim punar yēna raṃhasā likhēyaṃ tēna  
yadi (na) saṃdr̥bhasē tat tē vighnaḥ syāt | tatō mayāpi  
praticchalitaḥ | ōm ity astu | kim punar bhavatā bhāvayatā  
likhitavyam iti | ataḥ kāvyakaṣṭhē 'bhiniviṣṭō 'smi ||

This is, no doubt, the same legend as that told in the Mahābhārata (I, 1, 75-79), although there is in Rājaśekhara's drama no mention of *Brahman*, who, according to the Mahābhārata, advised Vyāsa to address himself to Gaṇeśa. According to Rājaśekhara, Vyāsa succeeded in securing the services of Gaṇeśa by means of austerities (*tapōbhiḥ*). On the other hand, the words of Vyāsa, *ōm ity astu*, in the Pracaṇḍapāṇḍava, look almost like a reminiscence of the phrase (used, however, of Gaṇeśa) *ōm ity uktvā* in the Mahābhārata, I, 1, 79.

But if Rājaśekhara knew the legend of Gaṇeśa—even if there should be a *slight* verbal agreement between the two narratives—does this prove that he knew it *from* the Mahābhārata? Such a legend must have been current for a long time before it was inserted in the Mahābhārata. It is true, the Pracaṇḍapāṇḍava was intended by Rājaśekhara as a kind of epitome of certain Parvans of the Mahābhārata. But this epitome begins only with the next scene, when the five Pāṇḍavas appear on the stage. The interview between Vālmiki and Vyāsa is Rājaśekhara's invention, and in this introductory scene he might well have inserted the story of Gaṇeśa, even if it did not occur in his text of the Mahābhārata itself.

For the present, I should therefore prefer to say that the legend of Gaṇeśa was *known* already about 900 A.D. (and may have been known long before that date), but that even in Kṣēmēndra's time, about 150 years later, it was probably not yet a part of the Mahābhārata. It seems to me highly improbable that Kṣēmēndra should have omitted such a characteristic story, if he had found it in *his* Mahābhārata, especially as he could easily have condensed the whole story into one or two verses. Professor Kirste<sup>1</sup> is no doubt right in warning us against attaching too much importance to omissions occurring in Kṣēmēndra's Bhāratamañjarī. But if one and the same passage is omitted by Kṣēmēndra *and in the South Indian recension*, we are, I believe, more than justified in suspecting it of being an interpolation, especially as the same agreement between Kṣēmēndra and the South Indian text occurs again. The story of Rāhu also (see above, p. 148) is omitted, *both* by Kṣēmēndra<sup>2</sup> *and in the Grantha MS.*

Yet, I think, we ought to reserve our final judgment until we know more about the South Indian recension, and until the *whole* of the Bhāratamañjarī has been carefully collated with the text or texts of the Mahābhārata.

It is, however, worth mentioning that (as far as I am able to see) it is very doubtful whether the elephant-headed god can claim a place in the Epic Pantheon.

Considering the great popularity of Gaṇeśa in Paurāṇic mythology and in modern worship, it is certainly surprising that (apart from the one legend in the Northern recension of the Mahābhārata) we do not meet with this god in either of the two epics. He has no place in the Vēdic pantheon, and his worship is only alluded to in such modern Smṛtis as the Yājñavalkya-smṛti. In the Mānavagṛhyasūtra,<sup>3</sup> indeed, we meet with the worship, or rather propitiation, of the *Vināyakas*, a class of malevolent spirits who are

<sup>1</sup> See "Indian Studies," by G. Bühler and J. Kirste, No. ii, pp. 30, 34.

<sup>2</sup> See Professor Kirste, l.c., p. 30.

<sup>3</sup> II, 14. See also P. v. Bradke in ZDMG., 36, 426-432; Stenzler, Yājñavalkya, p. ix; J. Jolly, Recht und Sitte (Bühler's Grundriss, II, 8), p. 20.

also mentioned in the Mahābhārata<sup>1</sup> by the side of Rākṣasas, Piśācas, and Bhūtas. In Yājñavalkya's Smṛti<sup>2</sup> these Vināyakas have become one Vināyaka who is identified with Gaṇēśa, and who is said to have been appointed as ruler over the Gaṇas and remover of obstacles by Rudra and Brahman. The Vināyakas seem to be originally the causers of evil dreams, and whether they have anything to do with the Gaṇēśa of the Purāṇas is at least doubtful. It is just possible that there may be a similar connection between the modern Gaṇēśa and the old Vināyakas, as there is between the modern Śiva and the ancient Rudra.

In the Purāṇas we meet with numerous legends of Gaṇēśa ; especially the story of his birth is often told. But I have not been able to find the legend of Gaṇēśa acting as a scribe for Vyāsa either in the Gaṇēśa-Upapurāṇa or in the Gaṇēśa-Khaṇḍa of the Brahmavaivartta-Purāṇa. This may be due to the fact that in these works Gaṇēśa is worshipped as a deity of such high importance—in the Gaṇēśa-Upapurāṇa he is actually the highest god, superior to Brahman and all the rest—while in the legend of the Mahābhārata Gaṇēśa plays a somewhat subordinate rôle. There is also a Gaṇēśa-Khaṇḍa of the Skanda-Purāṇa. From an index to this work (in the Bodleian MS. Mill 79) I see that it contains the usual Paurāṇic legends about the birth of Gaṇēśa, his elephant head, his single tusk, his connection with the rat, etc., but there is no mention of the Mahābhārata legend.

The history of the worship of Gaṇēśa has still to be written. But apart from Yājñavalkya's Vināyakaśānti mentioned above, we find allusions to actual worship of the god only in modern Smṛtis, e.g. the Kātyāyanasmṛti (I, 11-14), where Gaṇēśa is worshipped together with the Mothers. It is interesting to find that Gaṇēśa is invoked in certain late Sanskrit Buddhist tracts,<sup>3</sup> but in the Pāli

<sup>1</sup> XII, 284, 131 ; Harivaṃśa, 184 (10,697).

<sup>2</sup> I, 271-294.

<sup>3</sup> See H. H. Wilson, Works, II, pp. 21, 28, 33, 356.

Buddhist literature he seems to be unknown.<sup>1</sup> It would be interesting to know what M. Barth<sup>2</sup> means by 'early' when he says that we meet with Gaṇeśa "early as the god of arts and letters."

However, I should certainly not venture to banish Gaṇeśa from the epic pantheon, if it were not for the omission of the Gaṇeśa legend in the South Indian recension. This shows, at any rate, how closely even questions of mythology and worship are interwoven with the hard and dry facts of textual criticism.

M. WINTERNITZ.

Oxford, March 1, 1898.

#### 11. A NOTE ON THE KINGS OF PRĀGJYOTIṢA.

Göttingen, 4 March, 1898.

DEAR PROFESSOR RHYS DAVIDS,—I have studied with great interest Dr. Hoernle's paper on the Gauhaṭī plates of Indrapālavarman of Prāggyotiṣa (Journ. As. Soc. Bengal, vol. lxvi, pt. 1, p. 113 ff.), and hope that Dr. Hoernle will soon give us the other grants of the same family, of which hitherto we have known so little. In the meantime, I would propose two alterations in the text of the inscription already published by him.

In line 4, instead of *Bhagadatta-vatsa-mātā*, the Earth, "the mother of him (i.e. Naraka), whose son is Bhagadatta," I take the reading of the photo-etching to be *Bhagadattavansa-mātā* (*Bhagadatta-vamśa-mātā*), the Earth, "the mother of Bhagadatta's family." *Vamśa* is spelt *vansa* also in other inscriptions. The circumstance that the family of the kings of Prāggyotiṣa is thus called the *Bhagadatta-vamśa* is of some importance. It shows that

<sup>1</sup> [He is not mentioned in the Piṭakas, nor (so far as is known) in the commentaries on them, by any of his names. He may be in the later Pāli books written in Ceylon after the revival of Sanskrit studies in the twelfth century. But very little is known of them, and he is not in the Abhidāna Padīpikā, 1150 A.D.—R.H. D.]

<sup>2</sup> "The Religions of India," p. 197.