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Records of Ancient Sanskrit Literature. 15

works; not even the Mahā attached to the great temple of Tāraśekhara in the Hooply district is noted for its literary treasures. The case is, however, different in Kājāhā, Mānāring, Pāna, Vāhā, and Orāna, where some of the Matha own large collections of great age and considerable value.

4. *Substance of MSS. ; Paper*—The manuscripts examined are mostly written on country paper, sized with yellow arsenic and an emulsion of tamarind seeds, and then pelleted by rubbing with a conch-shell. A few are on white 'Kāntāni' paper, and some on palm-leaf. White arsenic is rarely used for the size, but I have seen a few codices sized with it, the maulage employed in such cases being acacia gum. The surface of ordinary country paper being rough, a thick coating of size is necessary for easy writing, and the tamarind-seed emulsion affords this admirably. The paper used for ordinary writing is sized with rice-ground, but such paper attracts damp and vermin of all kinds, and that great pest of literature the "silver-fish" thrives luxuriantly on it. The object of the arsenic is to keep off this insect, and it serves the purpose most effectually. No insect or worm of any kind will attack arsenicized paper, and so far the MSS. are perfectly secure against its ravages. The superior appearance and cheapness of European paper has of late induced many persons to use it, instead of the country arsenicized paper, in writing *pothi's*; but this is a great mistake, as the latter is not nearly so durable as the former, and is liable to be rapidly destroyed by insects. I cannot better illustrate this than by referring to some of the MSS. in the library of the Asiatic Society. There are among them several volumes written on foolcap paper which date from 1820 to 1830, and they already look decayed, mouldering, and touched in several places by silver fish. Others on John-lester paper, which is thicker, larger, and stouter, are already so far injured, that the ink has quite faded and become in many places illegible; whereas the MSS. which were originally copied on arsenicized paper for the College of Fort William in the first decade of this century, are now quite as fresh as they were when first written. I have seen many MSS. in private collections which are much older and still quite as fresh. This fact would suggest the propriety of Government records in Madras Courts being written on arsenicized paper, instead of the ordinary English foolcap, which is so rapidly destroyed both by the climate and also by white-ants. To guard against mistakes, I should add here that the ordinary yellow paper sold in the bazars is dyed with turmeric, and is not at all proof against the attack of insects.

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