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## V.—Notices of Books A *Comprehensive Grammar of the Sinhalese Language.* By Abraham Mendis Gunasekara. M.R.A.S., Ceylon Branch. (Colombo, Skeen.)

C. H. and R. N. C.

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enriched and strengthened by an infusion of Arian words. It is spoken by a population of nearly twelve millions, according to the Census of 1881, in a ring fence, and occupying the northern portion of the Province of Madras. It has a written character of its own; the symbols differ in form from the Nágari alphabet of North India, but the group of the symbols in both alphabets is homogeneous indicating a common origin.

It is a language with a considerable literature, and well supplied with grammars and dictionaries, and the whole Bible has been translated into it; it is a vigorous and important vernacular. Mr. Morris' Grammar is carefully prepared, beautifully printed, and will be of great use to future students. A short text is given with a careful analysis.

*March 25th, 1892.*

R. N. C.

A COMPREHENSIVE GRAMMAR OF THE SINHALESE LANGUAGE.

BY ABRAHAM MENDIS GUNASEKARA, M.R.A.S., Ceylon Branch. (Colombo, Skeen.)

This substantial volume of 516 pages, royal 8vo., is by far the best and most complete grammar of the Sinhalese language which has yet appeared. Adapted primarily for the use of students and writers in the Ceylon Civil Service, it will also be found the most reliable work of reference on the subject by philological students here in Europe. It is a pity, however, that the book has not been constructed on historical principles. The forms given, not only in the paradigms of nouns, verbs, etc., but also in the examples on the rules of syntax, are not always in current use, and obsolete forms of different periods are given indiscriminately side by side. Sinhalese literature having lasted through so many centuries, during which the language was constantly changing, it is not possible to give any grammar that will apply equally to all the books it contains. It would have been better therefore either to omit the Elu forms not now in use or to trace the history of the various grammatical forms now obsolete, the insertion of which has so much increased the bulk of the work.