

of salvation; on the part played by the nobles (rather than the priests) in working out the most vital portions of the Upanishad theory; on the distinction between the ascetic and the recluse; on the origin and growth of the transmigration idea; on the relation of the older Upanishads to the younger ones, and of both to the later Vedānta—we have discussions of the greatest interest; and it is quite safe to say that we have new light on each. It would be obviously impossible within the limits of this short notice to set out, in detail, exactly in how far the author's views on such points go beyond those of his predecessors. And it would be so far undesirable, as everyone should himself read this fascinating volume, of which we hope soon to see a translation into English.

The previous part dealt with the philosophy of the Vedas and Brāhmaṇas. The succeeding part will deal with Buddhism. It would add greatly to the usefulness of each part if indices, at least of the Sanskrit words elucidated, had been added. We much hope that this want may be made good in the next part.

T. W. RHYS DAVIDS.

MAHĀBHARATA. *The Epic of Ancient India*, condensed into English Verse by ROMESH C. DUTT, C.I.E. 12mo; pp. 190. (London: Dent.)

This is an attempt to give in English verse, and in a small compass, such an epitome of the national poem of India as would be likely to convey to English readers a fair idea of the character of the poem. The author says (in the Epilogue, p. 175) of the Mahā Bharata:—

“The work went on growing for a thousand years after it was first compiled and put together in the form of an epic; until the crystal rill of the epic itself was all but lost in an unending morass of religious and didactic episodes, legends, tales, and traditions Nevertheless the leading incidents and characters of the old epic are still

discernible uninjured by the mass of foreign substance in which they are now imbedded—like those immortal figures, recovered from the ruins of an ancient world, which now beautify the museums of Europe.”

The author has accordingly rendered, in a free translation, not an abstract of certain passages, but the whole of such passages as seemed to him to contain the very gist of the original epic. There is only one exception. The eighteen days' battle undoubtedly belonged to the original story. But it is too long in the Sanskrit for the purpose of this little book. That episode has accordingly been greatly condensed. All the rest of the story is told in consecutive lines, just as they stand in the original.

The metre selected is the metre of “Locksley Hall.” The choice is a very happy one. The swing of the trochaic verse more fitly reproduces the *sloka* than any iambics can do; and the length of the metre chosen corresponds more nearly than the ordinary English blank verse would do to the length of the original verses. An example will show the style.

Yudhishtira laments the destruction of his warriors by Bhīshma:—

As a lordly tusker tramples on a marsh of feeble reeds,
As a forest conflagration on the parched woodland feeds,
Bhīshma rides down on my warriors in his mighty battle car.
God nor mortal chief can face him in the gory field of war.
Vain our toil, and vain the valour of our kinsmen loved and
lost;
Vainly fight my faithful brothers by a luckless fortune crost !

It may be a question whether it was wise to introduce the element of rhyme which divides off each couplet from others in a way not found in the original, and must frequently have hampered the translator. It is certainly most unfortunate that where Sanskrit names are mentioned they are in some cases so placed in the verse that the stress comes upon the wrong syllable. We hear throughout not

of Draupadi, but of Draupādi; not of Hastina, or Hastinapura, but of Hastina; not of Uttara, but of Uttāra; not of Sāvitrī, but of Savītri; not of Satyavān, but of Satyāvan; and so on with some other familiar names. It was no doubt difficult to fit the Indian names into the English metre, and whatever one does, the English reader will probably mangle them. But the aid of the metre would have afforded a great opportunity for teaching the English where rightly to put the stress. So slight a change would be required that we even hope that at least Draupādi and Hastina will disappear from the next edition.

It is particularly interesting to notice what are the passages which the learned translator has considered to contain the gist of the original epic. He has chosen the following verses—the Roman figures referring to the Book, and the Arabic to the section, of the Calcutta edition.

- I. 134–137, 184–189.
- II. 33–36, 44, 65, 69, 76, 77.
- III. 292–296.
- IV. 35, 36, 40–43, 44, 53, 62.
- V. 1–3, 94, 124–126.
- VI–X. In abstract.
- XI. 10, 11, 16, 17, 26, 28.
- XIV. 85, 88, 89.

The author hopes elsewhere to put forward his views on the historical growth of the epic. In this little volume they would be out of place. It should be judged as a literary effort, not as historical criticism. And as literary effort it is certainly a very great success. A generous admiration for the original, and a warm sympathy with its tone, a striking command of vigorous and flowing and idiomatic English, a fine sense of rhythm, and a real power of poetic imagination have combined to render this selection just what it is intended to be—a most interesting and attractive way of introducing to English readers what the author considers to be the essence of the grand old Indian poem.

The smaller edition quoted at the head of this notice is the popular one at a popular price. There is an *édition de luxe* on finer paper, with a number of exquisite illustrations of which one only is inserted in the popular edition. We hope both the enterprising publisher and the successful author will be amply rewarded by the sale of this timely and instructive little book.

RH. D.

LIEDER DER MÖNCHE UND NONNEN GOTAMO BUDDHO'S;
VON KARL EUGEN NEUMANN. 8vo; pp. 383. (Berlin:
Hofmann, 1899.)

This is a translation into German verse of the two collections of poems by the men and women respectively, members of the Buddhist Order during, or immediately after, the Buddha's time. These two anthologies, called the Thera- and Therī-gāthā, consist in great part of verses not found elsewhere in the canon, but also contain the verses only taken from episodes in mixed prose and verse in other books. These latter cases—in which the verses are really only rightly intelligible by means of the light thrown upon them by the prose setting in which they are found—make it highly probable that all the verses must originally have been handed down in a similar prose setting. The commentator, Dhammapāla of Kāñcipura, who wrote a thousand years later, embodies in his work the tradition as to what this ancient prose setting was. But even with this assistance it is often not easy to gather the exact force of the ecstatic outbursts of feeling which these old verses record.

The task undertaken by the translator is therefore no easy one; though, of course, a successful solution of it would afford most valuable evidence of a characteristic phase, not only of Buddhist, but of Indian thought. The difficulty is increased by the frequent use in these lyrics of Pali words and phrases so pregnant with meaning and association that they cannot possibly be rendered by a single European word without thereby ignoring much of their