

the Emodi Montes. The system of barter he describes is, of course, one common to many savage tribes; it is in no way distinctive.

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### THE OLD INDIAN ALPHABET.

Professor Bühler, at p. 27 of his article on the Brāhma alphabet (Indian Studies, No. iii), quotes a passage from the lost Jain Aṅga, the Diṭṭhivāda (about 300 B.C.), which says that the alphabet had then 46 akṣaras or letters. The commentator, Abhayadeva (about the eleventh century), explains this number by saying that it is the same as the number of letters in his time with the vowels *ṛ*, *ṝ*, *ḷ*, and *ḹ*, and the lingual consonant *ḷ*, left out, but with *kṣ* included. Now Professor Bühler says this is a mistake; the alphabet referred to must have left out the four vowels and the akṣara *kṣ*, and have included the Vedic or Pali *ḷ*. That would make the alphabet at the time of the Jain Aṅgas as follows:—

Vowels	<i>a, ā, i, ī, u, ū, e, ai, o, au, am, aḥ</i>	12
Consonants	<i>k, kh, g, gh, ṅ</i>	5
„	<i>c, ch, j, jh, ñ</i>	5
„	<i>ṭ, ṭh, ḍ, ḍh, ṇ</i>	5
„	<i>t, th, d, dh, n</i>	5
„	<i>p, ph, b, bh, m</i>	5
„	<i>y, r, l, v, ḷ</i>	5
„	<i>ś, ṣ, s, h</i>	4
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But in the ancient Sanskrit literature and also in the indigenous schools, which adhere to the oldest practices, the four vowels *ṛ*, *ṝ*, *ḷ*, *ḹ*, and *kṣ* are included in the alphabet, and *ḷ* is omitted. This makes it consist of altogether fifty letters. So, in the Gautamiya Tantra we read:—

Pañcāśal-lipibhir mālā vihitā sarva-karmaṇi |  
A-kārādi-kṣa-kārāntā varṇa-mālā prakīrtitā ||

“In all literary works garlands are prepared by the fifty letters. Those beginning with *a* and ending in *kṣ* are called the row of letters or the alphabet.”

Mallinātha, in the thirteenth century A.D., in his commentary on Kālidāsa's Raghuvamśa, says that the Sanskrit alphabet consists of fifty letters. Thus in the commentary on verse 28, canto iii, of the Raghuvamśa we read :—

lipeḥ pañcāśad-varṇātmikāyāḥ mātṛkāyāḥ | <sup>1</sup>

The Lautsha alphabet, which was introduced into Tibet probably in the seventh century A.D., consists of fifty letters, including *aṁ*, *aḥ*, and *kṣ*; but having no *ḷ*.

In the Lalitavistara (chap. x, p. 145, Bengal Asiatic Society's edition; ed. Lefmann, p. 127), where we meet with a grand description of the school in which Buddha learnt the alphabet, the letters *aṁ* and *aḥ* are mentioned in the row of vowels and *kṣ* in that of consonants. Thus, in the Lalitavistara we read :—

*Aṁ*-kāre amoghotpatti-śabdaḥ |

*Aḥ*-kāre astamgamana-śabdo niścarati sma |

*Kṣa*-kāre parikīrtyamāne kṣaṇa-paryant-ābhilāṣa-sarva-dharma-śabdo niścarati sma |

*Aṁ* being uttered there came out the echo, viz., “efficacious birth.”

*Aḥ* being uttered there came out the echo, viz., “going down or setting.”

*Kṣa* being uttered there came out the echo, viz., “the desire for all objects is momentary.”

It follows that Abhayadeva was not so far wrong after all.

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<sup>1</sup> *Sc.* “of writing, (that is to say) of the alphabet consisting of fifty letters.”—Ed.