

sented the books to our Library. He loved learning and all other good things; he was always considerate and helpful to others while he was with us; and by the leaving with us of these fruits of his scholarship we are assured of his example's being always present as a worthy inspiration. It is not without interest to mention that in addition to the novels themselves, a working reference library, including all the important histories of fiction since Miss Clara Reeve's *Progress of Romance* (1785), makes the use or examination of the collection more profitable.

Steps have been taken to add to the collection from time to time. Already a rare novel of Bage (*Barham Downs*) and two original manuscript novels in a copper-plate hand of 1753 have been acquired by gift and purchase since the installation of the Memorial. It is destined to grow, with the years, in value to the scholar and the lover of rare books.

## PENNSYLVANIA'S "HOME OF SARASVATI"

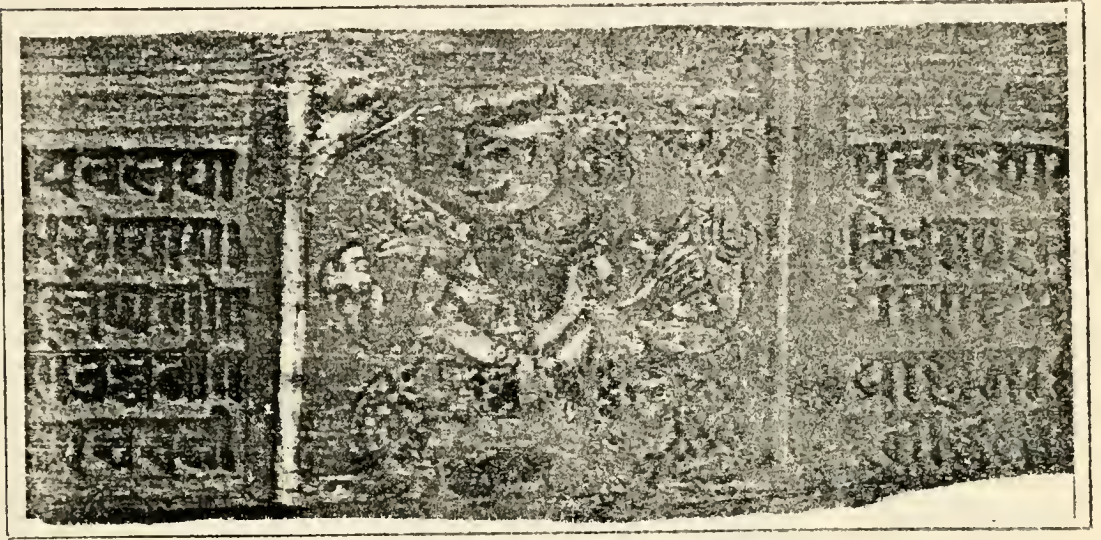
By DR. W. NORMAN BROWN

The Hindu goddess of learning Sarasvati is represented in sculpture and painting with a manuscript book in one of her four hands; and no "Home of Sarasvati" deserves that name, to a Hindu's mind, unless it has a notable collection of manuscripts.

Sarasvati's book is long and narrow; for in most parts of ancient India books were written on tough and durable palm leaves which when prepared for writing might vary from six inches in length to thirty, and were usually less than three inches in width. The writing ran across the page the long way, and each page therefore had only a few lines. The writing in northern and western India was done with ink; in southern India a stylus was used to scratch lines in the leaf, and the symbols were made visible for reading by dusting a dark powder into the scratches.

The reader of a book, if sitting down in the usual Indian cross-legged fashion, might lay it out flat before him on the ground or on a low desk, or he might hold it in his hands on one of the carefully fitted termite-proof teakwood boards that make a stiff cover for the book. After reading one side of a folio, the user would turn the page over, before and

away from him, as though there were an imaginary binding along the top of the palm leaf, and then he would read the other side. There is here a part analogy with our custom of binding a book at the side and turning the pages from right to left. At the center of short or medium-sized folios, or sometimes at two points in very long folios, holes were pierced through the palm leaves for strings to keep them from getting separated, and the string, or strings, were knotted behind the wooden cover. Hence one of the common words for book in India is *grantha*, "knot."



GODDESS SARASVATI  
*From a manuscript in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, dated  
equivalent to A.D. 1260. (Natural size.)*

About the beginning of the 14th century paper came into use in India proper for bookmaking, and since that time a Sarasvati, but for the power of iconographic convention, might in many cases have held a book of different shape from that of the long and narrow palm leaf. This was especially true in northern and western India where writing was done with ink; paper provided a writing surface for that fluid which was better than palm leaf, and paper quickly supplanted palm leaves. In southern India paper was not successful, for it is not adapted to the use of a stylus, and palm leaf is still common there. The paper books were shorter and deeper than the older manuscripts, but the greater dimension was still the width, and the pages still turned over forward. Today books are sometimes printed in India in this format, and are bound along the top.



If Sarasvati has as her most characteristic attribute a manuscript, the symbol is almost mandatory for a department of humanistic Indian studies. The source materials for India's historic civilization are predominantly found in her great and ancient literature, a literature so extensive that even now, after a century and a half of exploration by western critical scholars and Indians who have adopted western methods, large sections of it are still far from fully known and in some cases hardly known at all. In ancient India kings or temples or monks or rich men or even poor scholars accumulated great or small collections of texts that interested them. Some collections of this sort still exist; but for the most part they were scattered or destroyed or driven into hiding when the disruptive blast of Islam swept northwestern and western India, from about 1000 A.D. on. Hindu books, like Hindu temples and Hindu sculptures, were mutilated or ruined; Hindu culture and learning were contracted and suppressed. Families that had held a tradition of learning for centuries were uprooted or impoverished, and their descendants, after some generations, literally had no better use for precious manuscripts than as kindling for the fire on which to cook a meal.

When the European nations came to India from 1498 on this was the state of the country, and the inner dissension accompanying it made easy the western penetration. About the beginning of the 19th century, when the British and then the Germans and the French began to cultivate Indic studies, Hindu learning was disorganized. These foreigners soon realized the value of preserving texts, and increasingly they made collections of manuscripts, some of which are now housed in London, Oxford, Cambridge, Berlin, Paris, Florence, Vienna, and elsewhere in Europe, and some in India. Other Hindu collections, including some belonging to the Jains, had somehow escaped the Muslim fury, and remained either in the open, as at Tanjore, or semi-secret as at Patan, Cambay, Jaisalmir. Continuing up to our own day the Government of India regularly appropriated funds for the purchase of manuscripts, kept in such depositories as those at Benares and Poona, and only the severe financial retrenchment that the "depression years" have made obligatory has now compelled the Government reluctantly to suspend this program. But manuscripts are still abundant in India, scat-

tered in private, and therefore unstable and unsafe, tenure, which should be assembled in permanent quarters.

For many years the only notable American collection of manuscripts from India was that at Harvard, where about 2000 belong to the university library. But in 1930 the University of Pennsylvania entered the field. Our Provost, Dr. Penniman, himself gave the first sum to purchase Indic manuscripts, and as soon as he was assured that it could be spent to advantage approached Mr. John Gribbel, who made a generous contribution. Further money was given by Dr. Charles W. Burr, and a few manuscripts have been purchased on the Faculty Research Fund. All these purchases, with the gifts of a few miscellaneous manuscripts that had come to the University in previous years, have brought our collection to something over 850 separate items. We have now the second largest collection in the United States. The third largest is that of the Library of Congress, where I believe there are about fifty.

The materials of the University of Pennsylvania collection are almost entirely connected with the religion of Hinduism (or Brahmanism); the two other great Indic religions, namely Jainism and Buddhism, are hardly represented. The goddess Sarasvati, though one, is also many. The Hindu Sarasvati would feel at home in our library; the Jain or Buddhist Sarasvati would miss her accustomed literature.

We have examples of many of the standard texts, such as the Rig Veda, some of the Brahmanas, parts of the epics and legendary history called Puranas, some legal texts, philosophical works, grammatical treatises, belles lettres, hymns of praise to various deities, sectarian religious books. We have also much material that represents texts so far unpublished or only inadequately published.

Of the latter class are various works of law, of which the most outstanding is the law code of the great Sivaji (1627-1680), a Maratha chieftain of western India who bitterly fought the Mohammedans and perhaps more than any other single leader contributed to the downfall of the Mughal empire. He endeavored to re-establish Hinduism, devoted himself to protection of the cow and honor of the Brahmins, and had his legal system modeled with timely variations on the orthodox Hindu codes. A voluminous and rare



Sanskrit manuscript in our possession contains his system as formulated by one of his Brahman ministers.

We have some valuable manuscripts dealing with Indian medicine, some of them coming from Nepal, and one being devoted particularly to the use of mercury in therapy. For some centuries in India, as I believe also in the West, this substance has been employed for a number of diseases, including syphilis.

One of the most interesting fields represented among our manuscripts of unpublished texts is that of mediaeval and current practice of domestic religious rites (or sacraments). The most ancient texts of this department of Indian religions have been fairly well, although not completely, explored. Later rites, which differ from the older as mediaeval and modern Christian baptism, marriage, funerals differ from those of early Christianity, have at best been reported only sketchily and hardly a text has been edited, translated, or even systematically analyzed. We have a number of these works showing how properly to be born, live, and die an orthodox Hindu. One of the best in our possession tells in thirty-six closely written folios what to do just before, during, and after death, if you and your close relatives want you in the next existence to get the full advantage of pious Hinduism. This manuscript formed the starting point of a doctoral dissertation in Sanskrit presented to this university in 1933 by Dr. H. I. Poleman, which has given us a critical edition of the text, now supplemented by a translation and commentary, and has led into the study of related texts of death rites, which Dr. Poleman is to pursue here next year (1934-35) as a Harrison Fellow for Research. In our collection are manuscripts of texts which could start similar important investigations into other mediaeval and current practices, for example, the daily rites of an orthodox Hindu.

A prominent modern Hindu variety of cult practice, which goes back to an antiquity we cannot yet determine, is that of Saktism, wherein the male creative principle and female energization of it constitute inseparable associates. We have numerous texts dealing with this, many of them so far unpublished.

In philosophy, which in India is never separated from religion, we have unpublished texts, the value of which can be determined only when scholars work upon them. Most

of these belong to the Vedanta system, which is orthodox in Hinduism today, but other systems are also represented.

One of the most famous Indian story collections, compiled about a thousand years ago, was known as the "Great Tale" and a version of this, of which perhaps only six other manuscripts have so far been reported, is represented by one of our Sanskrit manuscripts.

Our collection has been catalogued on cards, and it is likely that the catalogue will be published. The American Council of Learned Societies is financing a census of all Indic manuscripts in the United States, and our works will be listed therein. This census is of unquestioned necessity in the case of unpublished or unsatisfactorily published primary materials of research.

When a Hindu commences any important undertaking, he is likely first to invoke the god Ganesha, who removes obstacles that otherwise would prevent success. Then, if his labor is to be one of the intellect, he makes a prayer to that goddess Sarasvati, for whom our University is now making a place. Like an author I was recently reading, we might say: "She, through whose grace men see the entire three worlds like pearls in her hand—may that goddess Sarasvati be victorious."

## DR. CHEYNEY'S "WILL"

At a dinner given by the Alumni of the College on March 7 to Professors Schelling, Rolfe, and Cheyney, retiring this year, Professor Cheyney made the following reference to the Library in one clause of a "Last Will and Testament (Academic)".

"The Library is the heart of the University. The circulation of books is much like the circulation of blood. If, as now demonstrated, the difference between an inferior and a superior brain is a matter of blood supply, so the intellectual activity of a university may be closely connected with the abundant flow of books and periodicals that can be pumped from the library into the thinking organs. No greater foundation in the University, no finer memorial or more evident proof of appreciation of higher things could be given by any alumnus or friend of the University or citizen of Philadelphia than the erection and endowment of a great Library, like the