

admixture of Arabic and Persian, is called Urdū or Hindūstānī), Bihārī, and Bengālī. The Dravidian dialects of Southern India, Telugu, Tamil, Canarese, Malayālam, though non-Āryan, are full of Sanskrit words, and their literatures are dominated by Sanskrit models.

3. A form of Semitic writing was introduced into the north-west of India by way of Mesopotamia, probably about 700 B.C. The earliest Indian adaptation of this script, known from coins and inscriptions of the third century B.C., is called Brāhmī or 'writing of Brāhmā.' Though written from left to right it bears clear traces of having once been written from right to left. From the Brāhmī are descended all the later Indian scripts. The most important of these is the Nāgarī ('urban writing,' or perhaps 'writing of the Nāgara Brahmins' of Gujārāt) or Deva-nāgarī ('city writing of the gods,' a term of late but obscure origin), which assumed its characteristic shape about the middle of the eighth century A.D. Sanskrit is most commonly written in Deva-nāgarī in Northern India, but other modern Indian characters, such as Bengālī or Oriyā, are also employed in their respective provinces; while in the non-Āryan south the Dravidian scripts are regularly used.

4. The Devanāgarī alphabet consists of forty-eight letters, thirteen vowels and thirty-five consonants (including the pure nasal called Anusvāra, and the spirant called Visarga). These represent every sound of the Sanskrit language. The arrangement of the alphabet in the table facing p. 1 is that adopted by the ancient Indian grammarians, and being thoroughly scientific, has been followed by European scholars as the lexicographical order in their Sanskrit dictionaries<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> As Anusvāra and Visarga cause beginners much difficulty in finding words in a glossary, the following note on their alphabetical order will

5. The vowels are written differently according as they are initial or follow a consonant. They are—

(a) Simple vowels :

अ (-)<sup>1</sup> a, इ (f) i<sup>2</sup>, उ (u) u, ऋ (r) r, ए (e) e.  
आ (ā) ā, ई (ī) ī, ऊ (ū) ū, ऐ (ē) ē.

(b) Diphthongs :

ए (ē) e<sup>3</sup>, ऐ (āi) ai<sup>4</sup>, औ (ō) o<sup>3</sup>, औ (āu) au<sup>5</sup>.

probably be useful. The unchangeable Anusvāra (before a semivowel, sibilant, or ह h: cp. 42 B 1) has precedence of every other consonant: hence संवर samvara, संशय samśaya precede सक sa-ka. The changeable Anusvāra (10; 42 B 2) occupies the place of the nasal into which it might be changed. Thus संग sam-ga would be found beside सङ्ग saṅga. Similarly the unchangeable Visarga (before a hard guttural or labial) has precedence of every other consonant. Thus अन्तःकरण antaḥkaraṇa and अन्तःपुर antaḥpura follow अन्त anta and precede अन्तक anta-ka. But the changeable Visarga (before a sibilant) occupies the place of the sibilant into which it might be changed. Thus अन्तःस्थ antaḥstha would appear where अन्तस्थ antasstha might be written.

<sup>1</sup> There is no sign for medial (or final) ā, as this vowel is considered to be inherent in every consonant;—e.g. क = ka.

<sup>2</sup> Medial or final ī is written before the consonant after which it is pronounced;—e.g. कि ki. Originally both ī and i were written as curves to the left and the right respectively above the consonant; but for the sake of clear distinction were later prolonged with a vertical downward stroke, the one on the left, the other on the right.

<sup>3</sup> Though based, in nearly all cases, on āi and āu respectively, e and o are at present, and have been since at least 300 B.C., pronounced like the simple long vowels ē and ō in most European languages.

<sup>4</sup> Though etymologically representing āi and āu, ai and au are at present, and have been since at least 300 B.C., pronounced as āi and āu.

<sup>5</sup> The medial forms of the vowels are in combination with consonants;—e.g. क k, written as follows: क ka, का kā, कि ki, की ki, कु ku,