

OBITUARY NOTICE

Hermann Jacobi

With the passing of Hermann Jacobi on 19th October, 1937, in his eighty-eighth year, the Society lost one of its oldest and most respected Honorary Members, and Orientalism one of its finest scholars. Born in 1850, he proceeded to the University of Berlin in 1868 with the intention of studying mathematics, a bent for which was evinced subsequently in his predilection for astronomical and chronological problems, but he soon turned to Sanskrit and comparative philology. After taking his doctorate at Bonn in 1872, he studied in London for a time and travelled in India, before beginning to teach in Bonn in 1875. The following year he went to Münster as Professor, and in 1885 was appointed to Kiel. Finally in 1889 he was recalled to Bonn as Professor and spent the rest of his life there. This bare outline covers a life of intense scholarly activity in many domains of Sanskrit learning, which it is only possible to indicate briefly here.

It was a characteristic of Jacobi that nearly all his work was in the nature of pioneering, in which he opened out new paths for his successors to tread, and nowhere is this trend more apparent than in the subject which engaged his attention at all stages of life, that of Jainism. Amongst his earliest publications in this line was the edition of the *Āyāraṅga Sutta* for the Pali Text Society, which was followed by other editions and translations from the canon, while he facilitated the study of Jaina Prakrit by the publication of what is still the best textbook on the subject, the well-known *Ausgewählte Erzählungen*. Next he turned to the philosophical side of this religion, and by his translation of Umāsvāmin's *Tattvārthādhigama-sūtra* laid the foundation of all subsequent work on the subject. From this he went on to tackle the later literature in Apabhraṁśa and with his edition of the *Samarāṅgikāhā*

and other work led the way in a development which has been of outstanding importance in recent years for Indian linguistics. Among other subjects with which he dealt in earlier days should be mentioned the two great epics, his books on which have a permanent value, and in middle life he did much valuable work on Indian theories of poetics, a line of study in which he has had too few successors among European scholars. In later life he gave most time perhaps to investigations into the early history of the orthodox philosophical systems, attempting more especially to determine the relative dating of the various sūtras and to elucidate their original meaning. Of the numerous books and papers in which his results in this sphere of learning were embodied specific mention should be made of what was almost his last publication, the paper "Über das ursprüngliche Yogasystem" in *SBPAW.*, 1929, which to the writer of this notice ranks among the finest pieces of research ever carried out in the domain of Sanskrit literature.

All Jacobi's work, of which only a portion has been alluded to above, was marked by a thoroughness of scholarship and an accuracy, which would have been remarkable in any age; he had in particular a singular capacity for wresting the last ounce of significance from a text, while command of detail was never allowed to obscure the wider implications of a subject. Whether the views he put forward were acceptable to others or not (and not even the finest scholar can hope always to carry conviction), they were fully thought out with the evidence stated judicially and carefully, and therefore exact earnest consideration at the hands of later workers in the same fields. Of the man himself I am, to my regret, unable to speak, but his work ensures him a high place in the roll of honour of Sanskrit scholars.

E. H. JOHNSTON.

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We deeply regret to learn of the recent death of H.H. Maharajdhiraja Sir Bhupindar Singh, G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E., G.B.E., of Patiala, who had been a member of this Society for twenty-seven years.