

॥ ஸம்ஸ்க்ரு'தஸ்ய மாஹாத்மயம்,
ஸங்க்ஷிப்த, விஸ்வப³ந்தூ⁴லிகி²த ॥

.. Importance of Sanskrit, Short
essay by Shri Vishva Bandhu ..

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In the words of Jawahar Lal Nehru, 'the finest heritage of India is the Sanskrit language and literature. This is a magnificent heritage and as long as this endures and influences the life of our people, so long the basic genius of India will continue.' As William Jones declared about 200 years ago, Sanskrit is 'more perfect than Greek, more copious than Latin, and more exquisitely refined than either.' Not only has it provided a rich medium for the expression of the countless ideas and the highest ideals which the people of India have conceived and pursued during the past ages, but it has also deeply influenced and effectively moulded the varied cultural patterns of millions upon millions of people living in so many other lands extending in all the four directions, thousands of miles beyond the frontiers of India.

It is a veritable mirror of Indian civilization and culture, being the repository of a mass of literature which has given expression to the intellect and the spirit of India in her progressive march through the great creative ages. This literature is copiously rich in religion, philosophy, law, linguistics, aesthetics, fine arts, positive and technical sciences, gnomic and didactic verse and belles-lettres. It easily transcends in extent anything which any ancient or mediaeval literature could show. At the top of it, a very large proportion of it possesses an extraordinarily high quality which has to be taken into account in assessing its importance not only for the people of India but for the entire mankind.

It is, however, not a merely classical language, just enshrining the ancient literature of India. It is much more and something of much greater significance. As a language it is an instrument of the greatest precision in the delineation of all thought-processes, however deep and subtle, and of all forms of aesthetic and motional perception as well as of spiritual intuition and experience. Its study involving the rigorous dialectics of its

grammar and different systems of Philosophy forms an intellectual discipline of the highest order. As a most sonorous and most musical language, it makes a never-failing appeal to the deeper aesthetic sensibility of one and all. In sooth, it has the power to lift us above ourselves, which is one of its most subtle aesthetic and dynamic appeals. Up till very recent time, Sanskrit as a force that welled out from within suffused all aspects of Indian life with the waters of a hidden stream of power and beauty, making them flourish with vigour. Intellect of India found its culmination in it and, in its turn, it has been and still is the one common reservoir from which all the later Indian and many Greater Indian languages have been drawing their sap and sustenance.

Sanskrit has always been effective in binding together, culturally, the People living in all the parts of India. In this unifying force of Sanskrit lies its paramount importance for India of the Present day. The more this perennial substratum of emotional oneness and cultural harmony Will flourish, the less the fissiparous propensities, which being a part of the game could not. be totally ruled out, Will find it possible to exercise their evil influence towards undermining the political unity of the country.

In view of all this, therefore, it augurs well for Bharat of today and tomorrow that Sanskrit stands recognized in its constitution as one of its National Languages, concurrently, alongwith its modern spoken regional languages and that the Union Government are quite alive to the great need of gradually adding more and more to the strength of Sanskrit in the educational and cultural set-up in the country.

They have however yet to devise effective ways and means to secure for Sanskrit its proper place in the Secondary Education Scheme, maybe, by re-interpreting or, if need be, by recasting the Three Language Formula for this purpose. It is feared that unless this is done, all other efforts in this direction, otherwise, however commendable, might in the long run prove to have been like spraying the leaves at the top and douching the trunk and branches in

the middle of a tree without watering its roots deep down in the ground below.

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