APPENDIX I

Megasthenes

I. Life

All the information that we possess about Megasthenes is derived from a few incidental notices by Strabo, Arrian, Pliny and Clemens Alexandrinus. According to these, he lived with Seleucus Nicator, and with Sibyrtius, the Satrap of Arachosia. He was sent on an embassy to King Sandrocottus, i.e. the Maurya Emperor Chandragupta, who lived in the city of Palimbothra, i.e. Pataliputra (modern Patna). He often visited the Indian King, but there is no warrant for the assertion that he visited India more than once. He also met King Porus whom he regarded as even greater than Chandragupta. Megasthenes wrote a book on India, called Indika, which served as a source of information to many later Classical writers. McCrindle translates a passage of Arrian (above, p. 218) to the effect that Megasthenes resided at the courts of both Chandragupta and Porus, but this is perhaps inaccurate, as others have translated the passage to mean that ‘Megasthenes met them’. McCrindle himself translates the same passage elsewhere to mean that Megasthenes “often visited” these two kings, though there seems to be no warrant for the use of the word “often” in the translation of this passage.

The exact time of the visit of Megasthenes to India and the duration of his stay there cannot be determined with certainty. It is generally held that he came as an ambassador after the conclusion of the treaty between Chandragupta and Seleucus. According to this view he must have been in India shortly before 300 B.C.

II. The Indika of Megasthenes

The Indika of Megasthenes has not been included in the texts printed in this volume. The reason is obvious. The text of the Indika has not yet come to light, and what now passes current under that name is really a collection of passages supposed to be quoted from this book by later writers. All these passages (excluding accounts of the fabulous men and animals and some other topics which throw no light on the history and culture of India) will be found under these later authors. For the sake of
convenience the name of Megasthenes, wherever mentioned in these passages, has been printed in thick types, so that readers may have no difficulty in locating the passages quoted from, or based on, the authority of the *Indika* of Megasthenes.

The German scholar Dr. Schwanbeck rendered a great service by bringing together all the passages of the lost treatise which have survived in quotations by later classical writers. The English translation of Dr. Schwanbeck's collected fragments of *Indika* by J. W. McCrindle has made this book familiar to all students of ancient Indian history. For nearly a century they have made full use of this first-hand account of India written by an eyewitness at the beginning of the Maurya period, i.e., towards the end of the fourth century B.C.

Dr. Schwanbeck, and following him McCrindle, have arranged these passages, called by them Fragments, in serial numbers. The Table at the end of this Appendix gives a list of these Fragments together with the corresponding pages in this book where they occur. This will enable the readers to find out easily any Fragment of the *Indika* of Megasthenes included in McCrindle's translation, which is frequently referred to as a source book of considerable importance. In view of this it is necessary to consider the question whether all these Fragments did really form a part of the long-lost *Indika* of Megasthenes.

When the study of Indology was at its infancy, one could not be expected to be very critical of the few sources of first-rate importance then available to him. Schwanbeck's reconstruction of Megasthenes' *Indika* was therefore accepted without criticism, and this mental attitude, by sheer inertia, has persisted among the students of ancient Indian history even today.4

But the progress of Indological studies has rendered it necessary to subject many of the old accepted notions to a searching criticism, and among these should be included the genuineness of the *Indika* of Megasthenes, as reconstructed by Schwanbeck, and rendered familiar by McCrindle's translation into English.

The passages which Dr. Schwanbeck has accepted as "Fragments" of the *Indika* may be divided into four classes:

I. The passages in the works of later writers which are explicitly attributed to Megasthenes.

II. Passages closely resembling those under I, though not specifically attributed to Megasthenes.

III. Passages preceding or following those under I or II.
IV. Long passages including, incidentally, those under I, or II-III.

The figure in the last column of the Table at the end of this Appendix shows the class to which the corresponding Fragment belongs.

Now there can be no doubt that the passages of categories I and II formed part of the Indika of Megasthenes. But the same cannot be said of the other passages belonging to categories III and IV.

Fragments of category IV must naturally be viewed with great suspicion. For, in the first place, we have no reasonable grounds to believe that they were derived from the *Indika* of Megasthenes. Secondly, in some cases at least, we have ample evidence to prove that they could not possibly be derived from that work.

A typical instance of the second type of category IV is furnished by the very first Fragment, from the History of Diodorus (II. 35–42), which Schwanbeck has labelled as "An Epitome of Megasthenes." Now, it is a notable fact that in this long extract, extending over 14 printed pages, the name of Megasthenes is conspicuous by its absence.

Although this passage of Diodorus contains a few extracts of category II, it seems more likely to be a compilation from many sources; at least there is no ground to suppose that he depended solely, or even mainly, upon Megasthenes, far less, intended to give a summary of his work. If such had been the case we could certainly expect a reference to the name or authority of Megasthenes. The English translator of the work of Diodorus was constrained to observe: "It cannot be known whether Diodorus used Megasthenes directly or through a medium; his failure to mention his name a single time is a little surprising, if he used him directly."

The theory that Diodorus used Megasthenes through a medium may explain the omission of Megasthenes' name, but certainly reduces, to a very considerable extent, the value of the account as a genuine source of information based on the *Indika* of Megasthenes alone.

But even if we assume that Diodorus derived his knowledge of the *Indika* from other books, there are good grounds to believe that he had relied on sources other than the *Indika*. The statement that Alexander advanced as far as the Ganges⁸ may be cited
as an instance. It seems almost incredible that such a statement could be made by Megasthenes, belonging to the same generation as Alexander and living in Pataliputra, on the banks of the Ganges, in intimate touch with the king and the people who must have possessed a correct knowledge of the extent of Alexander's advance in India.

Nor is it difficult to trace the source from which Diodorus could possibly have derived this information. Strabo informs us that Craterus wrote to his mother that Alexander advanced as far as the Ganges. It is obviously from this or a similar statement made by others, either independently or on the authority of Craterus, that Diodorus must have derived his information.

Several other statements of Diodorus are directly contradictory to those of Megasthenes. For example, Diodorus gives the extent of India from East to West as 28,000 stadia, whereas according to Megasthenes it was 16,000 stadia. Surely a difference of 75% in measurement between a book and what is supposed to be its epitome needs an explanation. Again, Diodorus says that the Indus is perhaps the largest of all rivers in the world after the Nile, whereas Arrian quotes Megasthenes to the effect that of the two, the Indus and the Ganges, the Ganges is much the larger. In Fragment II of McCrindle there is a statement that the Nile and the Danube taken together are not equal even to the Indus, not to speak of the Ganges. Surely, Fragments I and II cannot both be extracts from the Indika of Megasthenes, though, curiously enough, they are treated as such by Schwanbeck and McCrindle.

If, therefore, it is practically certain that Diodorus utilised sources other than the Indika of Megasthenes, it is obviously impossible to regard his long account of India as "an epitome of Megasthenes." Further, one might naturally doubt whether any passage in the account of Diodorus, save and except those included under category II, mentioned above, may be regarded as based, even indirectly, on the authority of Megasthenes.

We may next consider Fragment XXVII which is a specimen of the first type of category IV. The Fragment comprises four paragraphs of Strabo (53-56) which are all treated as a substantial reproduction from the Indika of Megasthenes. Now, in this long passage Strabo thrice refers to Megasthenes, specifically by name, as authority for three isolated statements, one each in paras 53, 54, and 56 (cf. pp. 170-71 above), though he deals with vari-
ous other topics quite unconnected with these statements.

It is well known that Strabo utilised many other sources and has specifically referred to some of them. There is thus no reason to suppose that Strabo must necessarily have derived from Megasthenes all the information included in a single para or consecutive paras, which contain any reference to Megasthenes. There is, no doubt, a possibility, that some of the passages, if not all, in these paras, were based on the Indika of Megasthenes. But it is surely unsafe to proceed on this assumption; and then it is difficult to find out which of the passages falls in this category.

If the whole of Fragment XXVII were taken from the Indika of Megasthenes, three isolated references to him would be difficult to explain. Indeed such specific citations of Megasthenes’ authority for three separate statements would be redundant and unusual if all the four paras were taken from his Indika. On the other hand, it indirectly supports the inference that the long passage included in Fragment XXVII is not based upon, far less quoted from, the Indika, except in respect of the three statements for which Megasthenes is specifically cited as the authority.

We may now consider Fragment XXXIV which is a typical instance of category III. It comprises paras 50-52 of Strabo, which are followed by the Fragment XXVII just discussed. Of the eleven paras of Strabo which precede these two, seven, namely 39-41 and 46-49, describe the seven castes on the authority of Megasthenes. Paras 42-45 form a digression. These give an account of the wild animals and may be regarded as a supplementary note to para 41 which describes the third caste, shepherds and hunters, whose profession was to deal with animals. At the end of the digression in para 45 Strabo says: “Let me now return to Megasthenes and continue his account from the point where I left it” (p. 267). This account obviously refers to that of the seven castes which Strabo began in para 39 and, after the digression, referred to above, continued in the next four paras 46-49.

Now para 49 deals with the seventh caste, the members of which held the chief offices of State. As the next three paras, 50-52, describe the officers, it has been presumed—although the name of Megasthenes does not appear, even once, anywhere in these paras,—that they were taken from his Indika. But, as stated above, Strabo’s description of the third caste, namely, shepherds and hunters, based on Megasthenes, is similarly followed imme-
diately by a long account of elephants and other animals, which, as Strabo himself says (p. 266), was based on "both Megasthenes and others". It is, therefore, unsafe to take this supplementary note on the seventh caste also as based on the Indika of Megasthenes. It is true that Strabo does not make any similar statement that it was derived from others. But there was no occasion for it. In the case of paras 42-45, they were really a digression, coming between two parts of a statement derived from Megasthenes; but para 49 having concluded that statement, the paras that follow, not being a digression in any way, needed no such comment or explanation. Further, Strabo's statement that in his account of the hunters, i.e. the third caste, he mentioned what both Megasthenes and others have said (p. 266), makes it doubtful whether the details of each caste are wholly derived from Megasthenes. Attention may be drawn in this connection to substantial difference in details given by Strabo and Diodorus of the second, fourth, and sixth castes. These differences are of such a nature that it is difficult to hold that both derived their information from Megasthenes alone.

Special interest attaches to this Fragment, for it contains an account of the Municipal and Military Boards of Administration. Very important conclusions have been drawn from this Fragment regarding the state of things in the time of Chandragupta Maurya, and it has figured prominently in the discussion of the genuineness of the text of the Arthasastra, attributed to Kautilya. In particular, the absence of any reference to the Municipal and Military Boards in Kautilya's Arthasastra has been put forward as a strong argument against accepting that work as belonging to the time of Chandragupta Maurya. In view of such great importance naturally attaching to any statement of Megasthenes, we must be very cautious in attributing to Megasthenes any passage for which his name or authority is not specifically cited.

It might be argued that as Megasthenes lived at Pataliputra, the accounts of the eastern parts of Northern India, as given by the classical writers, were most probably based on his Indika. But Arrian quite clearly tells us that "a few authors have described the country as far as the river Ganges and the parts near its mouth and the city of Palimbothra." Thus there were other sources of information about Palimbothra (Pataliputra) and the neighbouring region than the Indika of Megasthenes.

Dr. Schwanbeck, consciously or unconsciously, makes the
tacit assumption that the *Indika* of Megasthenes gave the most elaborate and reliable account of India, and the subsequent classical writers drew so largely upon it, that one may be excused in regarding their account as based on Megasthenes, unless otherwise stated. McCrindle goes even a step further. Thus although Clemens Alexandrinus refers to Alexander Polyhistor, specifically by name, as his authority for the passage quoted above, on p. 439, McCrindle states in his Introductory remarks that it “appears to be a citation from Megasthenes”. Schwanbeck’s assumption is belied by the fact that the classical writers themselves had no great faith in the veracity of Megasthenes and did not put a very high value on his *Indika*. How far this view was just or not, it is immaterial for our present purpose to decide. But the existence of such a general belief should make us hesitate to refer all that they said, without any specific mention of the source, to the authority of Megasthenes.

This brings us to the question of the veracity of Megasthenes. Schwanbeck very rightly observes: “The ancient writers, whenever they judge of those who have written on Indian matters, are without doubt wont to reckon Megasthenes among those writers who are given to lying and least worthy of credit, and to rank him almost on a par with Ktesias. The foremost among those who disparage him is Eratosthenes, and in open agreement with him are Strabo and Pliny”. The relevant passage of Strabo reads as follows: “However, all who have written about India have proved themselves, for the most part, fabricators, but pre-eminently so Deimachus; the next in order is Megasthenes; and then, Onesicritus, and Nearchus,... But specially do Deimachus and Megasthenes deserve to be distrusted”.

Pliny also says, with reference to Megasthenes and Dionysius, that “it is not worth while to study their accounts with care, so conflicting are they and incredible”. Schwanbeck’s comments on these observations are interesting. He says: “The fact is they find fault with only two parts of the narrative of Megasthenes,—the one in which he writes of the fabulous races of India, and the other where he gives an account of Herakles and the Indian Dionysus; although it so happens that on other matters also they regarded the account given by others as true, rather than that of Megasthenes.” The first part of this comment is unwarranted, and is contradicted by the last part.
Schwanbeck takes great pains to show that the stories of fabulous races written by Megasthenes were of Indian origin. He then observes:

"The relative veracity of Megasthenes, then, cannot be questioned, for he related truthfully both what he actually saw, and what was told him by others." 19 In support of this Schwanbeck has cited the passage in Arrian's Indika (above, p. 231), in which Megasthenes is referred to as a man of approved character. It is, however, curious that Schwanbeck does not refer to the views of Arrian, quoted above, 20 in which he clearly says that no true account of India beyond the Hyphasis is known, since the account of Megasthenes is absolutely unreliable; and he supports this by mentioning the latter's description of the river Silas. Again, referring to the statement of Megasthenes 'that the Indian tribes number in all 118,' Arrian makes the very apposite comment: "I am at a loss to conjecture how he arrived at it, for the greater part of India he did not visit, nor is mutual intercourse maintained between all the tribes." 21 Again Arrian says: "Megasthenes avers that the tradition about (gold-digging) ants is strictly true." and very correctly observes: "Megasthenes writes what he had heard from hearsay." 22 Megasthenes may certainly be excused, as Schwanbeck has argued, for recording "truthfully both what he actually saw, and what was told him by others." But when Megasthenes does not evidently distinguish between the two, and 'avers as strictly true' what he merely 'heard' from others, we may certainly be sceptical about the real value of his accounts. Besides, it is obvious from the way in which he has recorded the most unnatural phenomena and incredible tales about men and animals, without any comment, that he did not possess a very high degree of critical judgment such as we find, for example, in the writings of Arrian and Strabo. It is to be seriously considered how far we can place absolute reliance on the statements of such an uncritical man, even if they were based on his own observations. This particularly applies to his description of social manners which would be in any case difficult for a foreigner to comprehend rightly even if he had a higher degree of critical ability than Megasthenes possessed. His description of the seven castes, which are unknown to Indian literature or tradition, may be cited as an example, where, on a few basic facts, he has reared up a scheme which is mostly inaccurate and misleading. On the whole, time has surely come when we must make a re-assessment.
of the nature and value of the *Indika* of Megasthenes as a source of our knowledge regarding ancient Indian history and culture.

In the light of what has been said above, it would appear that the passages bearing upon the history and culture of India that may be confidently referred to the authority of Megasthenes may be listed as follows:

1. The geographical features of India quoted by Arrian and Strabo (pp. 216-8, 248), and a short account of Taprobane (p. 345).
2. The fertility of India ‘which produces fruit and grain twice a year’ (p. 252).
3. The description of Pataliputra (pp. 224, 262).
4. The absence of slavery in India (p. 224, 271).
5. The division of the people into seven castes (pp. 224-6, 236-8, 263-8).
6. Theft was of rare occurrence (p. 270).
7. The men of the Caucasus having intercourse with the women in the open (p. 271).
8. Description of Indian supper (p. 455).
9. Description of Indian philosophers (pp. 273-4, 439).
10. The statement that the “Indians neither invade other men, nor do the other men invade the Indians” (pp. 218, 245).
11. The assertion that the women of the Pandaean realm bear children when they are six years of age (p. 455).
12. The Indian tribes number in all 118 (p. 220).
13. The legendary account of the parts played by Dionysus and Heracles in India (pp. 220-22).

As regards other passages included in Schwanbeck’s (and McCrindle’s) *Indika* of Megasthenes, their authenticity is highly doubtful, and it may be justly questioned whether one should regard them as emanating from Megasthenes. Among these the most important are:

1. Fragment I (the so-called “Epitome of Megasthenes” by Diodorus) except the topics or passages included in the above list (pp. 232 ff).
2. The major part of Fragment XXVII describing the manners and customs of the Indians (pp. 269-72, paras 53-56), excluding Nos. 4, 6, 7 mentioned above.
3. Fragment XXXIV (pp. 268-9, paras 50-52) describing the Municipal and Military Boards of Administration.
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FOOTNOTES

1 M-II, 13-4.
2 E. I. Robson’s Translation, II. 319
3 M-II, 14.
4 M-II, 16. The death of Chandragupta Maurya is now generally placed about 300 B.C.
5 B. C. J. Timmer has discussed this question in her doctoral dissertation entitled “Megasthenes en de Indische Maatschappij” (Amsterdam, 1930). She has not, however, gone very deeply into this subject.

See Introduction.

7 Above, p. 284.
8 Above, p 262.
9 Above, p. 232.
10 Above, p 216. It may be noted that both Schwanbeck and McCrindle regarded it as certain “that 16,000 stadia is the only measure Megasthenes gave of the breadth of India” (M-II, 48, footnote)
11 Above, p 292
12 Above, p. 217
13 M-II, 47.
14 M-V, 183
15 M-II, 18
16 Translation by H. L. Jones, I 263
17 M-II 21
18 Ibid
19 M-II 26
20 Above, p. 219
21 Above, p 220
22 Above p 229

19 This Appendix is based upon my paper “The Indika of Megasthenes” published in the Journal of the American Oriental Society, Volume 78, number 4 (1958), pp 273-6
20 In the cases of some fragments, column IV is left blank as they cannot be placed under any category. It is difficult to understand on what grounds they were regarded as based on the Indika of Megasthenes
APPENDIX II

Indian Embassy to Augustus.

Along with his account of the Indian travels of Apollonius of Tyana: (above, pp. 383-412) Pitraux published a critical account of the several embassies sent from India to Rome, noted by classical writers. His dissertation on the Indian Embassy to Augustus, the first and the most important one, is reproduced below. Cf. accounts of embassies given by Strabo, and Dion Cassius and miscellaneous notices about them (above, pp. 282, 451-53).

ON THE INDIAN EMBASSY TO AUGUSTUS.

NICOLAUS DAMASCENUS, in a fragment preserved by Strabo, relates that at Antioch Epidaphne he fell in with three Indian ambassadors, then on their way to the court of Augustus. They were, as their letter showed, the survivors of a larger embassy, to the other members of which the length of the journey principally had proved fatal. Their letter was written on parchment and in the name of Porus and in Greek. It set forth that Porus, though lord over six hundred kings, much valued the friendship of, and was ready to open his dominions to, Caesar, and to assist him on all just and lawful occasions. The presents they brought with them were in the charge of eight well-anointed slaves naked all but their girdles, and consisted of a youth whose arms had been amputated at the shoulders in childhood, a sort of Hermes, some large vipers, a snake ten cubits long, a river tortoise of four cubits, and a partridge somewhat larger than a vulture. With the ambassadors was that Indian, who burned himself at Athens—not to escape from present ills, but because, hitherto-successful in everything he had undertaken, he now feared, lest any longer life should bring him misery and disappointment; and so smiling, naked and perfumed, he leaped into the burning pile. On his tomb was placed this inscription:

"Here lies Zarmanochegas, of Bargosa, who according to the ancestral custom of the Hindus gave himself immortality."

In this narrative, the king of kings Porus, the Greek letter, the beggerly presents better suited to a juggler's booth than to the court of a great sovereign, strike us with surprise; and we ask whether an Indian, or what purported to be an Indian Embassy, and such an embassy as described by Damascenus, ever presented itself to Augustus, and by whom and from what part of India it could have been sent?
To this Indian Embassy, Horace, a contemporary, in more than one ode, exultingly and with some little exaggeration alludes, and to it Strabo almost a contemporary a second time refers, when in opening his account of India he laments the scantiness of his materials; that so few Greeks, and those but ignorant traders and incapable of any just observation, had reached the Ganges; and that from India but one embassy to Augustus from one place and from one king Pandion or Porus had visited Europe. Of later writers who mention it, Florus (A.D. 110, 117) states “that the ambassadors were four years on the road and that their presents were of elephants, pearls, and precious stones”, and Suetonius (A.D. 120, 130) attributes it to the fame of Augustus’ moderation and virtues, which allured Indians and Scythians to seek his alliance and that of the Roman people. Dio Cassius (A.D. 194) speaks of it at length; he tells, that “at Samos (B.C. 22, 20) many embassies came to Augustus, and that the Indians, having before proclaimed, then and there concluded, a treaty of alliance with him, that among their gifts were tigers now seen for the first time by Romans and even Greeks, and a youth without arms like a statue of Hermes, but as expert with his feet as other people with their hands, for with them he could bend a bow, throw a javelin, and play the Trumpet”. Dio then goes on to say that “one of the Indians, Zamaros, whether because he was of the Sophists and therefore out of emulation, or whether because he was old and it was the custom of his country, or whether as a show for the Athenians and Augustus who had gone to Athens, expressed his determination of putting an end to his existence. And having been first initiated in the mysteries of the two Gods held out of their due course for the initiation of Augustus, he afterwards threw himself into the burning pile.”

Hieronymus (A.D. 380) in his translation of the Canon Chronicon of Eusebius just notices an Indian Embassy to Augustus, but places it in the third year of the 188th Olympiad, or B.C. 26. And Orosius, a native of Tarragona (early part of the 5th century), relates, that “an Indian and a Scythian Embassy traversed the whole world, and found Caesar at Tarragona, in Spain”, and with some rhetorical flourish, then observes, “that just as in Babylon Alexander received deputations from Spain and the Gauls, so now Augustus in the furthest west was approached with gifts by suppliant Indian and Scythian Ambassadors”. From these authorities, I think we may safely conclude, that an Indian Embassy, or
what purported to be an Indian Embassy, was received by Augustus.

But while we allow that our authorities are applicable to, or certainly not irreconcilable with, Damascenus' embassy which Augustus received at Samos, 22-20 B.C., we cannot but observe that St. Jerome's is referred to the year 26 B.C. and that Orosius brings it to Tarragona, whither Augustus had gone 27 B.C. and where he was detained till 24 B.C. by the Cantabrian war. Hence a difficulty, which Casaubon and others have endeavoured to remove by assuming two Indian Embassies; the one at Tarragona to treat of peace, the other at Samos to ratify the peace agreed upon. But—not to mention that this preliminary embassy is unknown to the earlier writers, who all so exult in the so-called second embassy that they scarcely would have failed to notice the first—I would first remark that no author whatever speaks of two Indian Embassies. And I would secondly refer to the ambassadorial letter of which Damascenus has preserved the contents, and in which we find no allusion to any previous contract or agreement between the two sovereigns, but simply an offer on the part of the Hindu prince to open his country to the subjects and citizens of Rome in the person of Caesar. Surely then, than this embroglio of embassies which come to sue for peace where war was impossible, it is more natural to suppose that Jerome, a careless writer, misdated his embassy; and that Orosius, a friend and pupil of Jerome, finding that the date in Jerome tallied with Caesar's expedition to Spain, seized the opportunity both of illustrating his native town and of instituting a comparison between Augustus and Alexander the Great. I think we may rest content with one embassy.

But is Damascenus' account of this embassy a trustworthy and faithful account? Strabo evidently gives credit to it, and to some extent confirms it by stating that the Hermes he himself had seen and in another place, while he attributes our embassy to a Pandion rather than a Porus, he still connects it with the Indiar who burned himself at Athens. Plutarch in noticing the self-cremation of Calanus, Alexander's Gymnosophist, adds, that many years afterwards at Athens another Indian in the suite of Augustus similarly put an end to his life, and that his monument is still known as the Indian's tomb. Horace, Florus, and Suetonius give indeed another character and other objects to the embassy but write too loosely to be authorities for any fact not reconcilable
with the narrative of Damascenus. With that narrative Dio Cassius, too, in the main agrees; but as he specifies tigers, a truly royal gift, and unknown to Damascenus, as among the Indian presents, he gives us an opportunity of testing his and Damascenus' accuracy. For he affirms that the tigers of the embassy were the first ever seen by Romans. Now Suetonius mentions it as a trait of Augustus, that he was ever so ready to gratify the people with the sight of rare or otherwise remarkable animals, that he would exhibit them "extra ordinem", out of due course and on ordinary days and that in this way he exhibited a tiger on the stage. And Pliny states that "a tame tiger" (and other than tame tigers our ambassadors would scarcely carry about with them) "was shown in Rome for the first time at the consecration of the Theatre of Marcellus (the in scena of Suetonius) in the Nones of May and during the consulships of Q. Tubero and Fabius Maximus, or in the year 11 B.C. i.e. nine years after the date of our embassy, and therefore, a tiger presented by it. The evidence of Dio Cassius on this point is then, to say the least of it, unsupported, and we see no reason to believe that tigers were among the Indian gifts. We thus find the account of Damascenus confirmed in several particulars, and in none satisfactorily impugned. We accept the Indian Sophist, we accept the Hermes, we accept the beggarly presents, and because we accept so much we accept also the Greek letter, and the Pandyan or Puru, king of kings; for we believe, as Strabo also evidently believed, that what Damascenus wrote, he wrote from his own knowledge. But how then explain what is so at variance with our established notions?

Lassen, in that great Encyclopaedia of Hindu literature, the "Indische Alterthumskunde", evidently struck by the good faith of Damascenus' narrative, has endeavoured to smooth down the difficulties attached to it. The six hundred subject kings he sets down to evident exaggeration, but he identifies the Porus of the embassy with the Paurava king, who at the beginning of our era on the death of Kadphises II founded an independent kingdom in the western Punjab. This Prince he observes was a serpent worshipper, and as a serpent worshipper would naturally look upon the sacred reptile as a fit offering to a brother sovereign. He accounts: for the presents, by suggesting that the more valuable of them the ambassadors had sold on the road: and for the Greek letter, by supposing that it was obtained from some Greek scribe.
and substituted for the royal credentials.

This explanation, however ingenious, is scarcely satisfactory. For,

1st. Even supposing that our ambassadors had procured a Greek version of the royal letter, yet as Damascenus expressly states that their letter was in Greek, not translated, it follows that they must have suppressed the original and substituted for it what may or may not have been a translation, i.e. we must suppose them guilty of the gravest crime which can be laid to the charge of ambassadors, the falsification of their credentials.

2ndly. Allowing our Porus to have been a serpent-worshipper, was he therefore likely to approach an unknown ally with one of his pet gods, and such a god! as an offering? I have never heard that the old Egyptian Pharaohs, in reciprocating civilities with any neighbouring king, ever presented him with some well-grown crocodile, or a case of beetles with their appropriate garniture. But let the serpent pass. You have still to account for the vipers and the tortoise. And if you allege in apology that these were but the dregs and refuse of a once richly freighted embassy, and that all that was of value, the pearls and spices, had been sold: then as it could only have been sold under the pressure of want, you have to show that under the circumstances the pressure of want was probable. Now, though the journey before our ambassadors was long and perhaps dangerous, it was over no strange and untrodden country, but along the most ancient route in the world, frequented by caravans, with many stopping places well known and at ascertained distances, it is scarcely credible that they should set out otherwise than provided against all contingencies, as well-provided at least as the merchants whom they probably accompanied, and scarcely credible that they should have actually suffered from want. But may not the troubles which then harassed the Parthian Empire have delayed their progress, lengthened their journey, and thus increased its expenses? Yes, but as those troubles were now of long standing, they appear surely rather as a reason against the setting out of the embassy than as one for its miserable plight on arrival.

3rdly. The Paurava Prince to whom Lassen would ascribe this embassy, obtained his throne only after the death of Kadphises II, and in the beginning of our era. And as Kadphises conquered India, more properly the Punjab and Kabulistan, according to Lassen himself about 24 B.C. and died about 10 B.C.
and as our embassy met Augustus at Samos 22, 20 B.C. it very
evidently could not be the embassy of the Paurava Prince. And
it could hardly have represented either Kadphises or the King
whom Kadphises dethroned: because it is improbable that Kad-
phises in any transaction with a foreign sovereign would appear
disguised under a Hindu name; and very improbable that either
the king who had just conquered a kingdom, or the king who was
on the point of losing one, should occupy himself with embassies
not of a political but of a purely commercial character, and for
an object which the very countries that separated him from Rome
rendered impossible.

But how then account for all that surprises us in this
embassy?

What do we gather from Damascenus' narrative?

I. He met our ambassadors at Antioch Epidaphne. Now
Antioch Epidaphne is so situated that it is just as probable they
arrived there on the road to Greece from the western coast of
the Indian Peninsula, either by way of the Red Sea and Alexan-
dria or the Persian Gulf and the Euphrates, as by the mid-Asiatic
route and from the Punjab.

II. Damascenus speaks of a native of Bargosa as accom-
panying or attached to the embassy, and though he states that the
ambassadorial letter was written in the name of Porus, Strabo
rather attributes it to a Pandion: and as Barygaza is a trading
town at the mouth of the Nerudda on the Indian coast, and
Pandya a kingdom extending along the Western shores of the
Indian Peninsula, to the Western coast of India I conclude with
Strabo that the embassy probably belongs.

III. This native of Bargosa or Bargaza, Sanscrit Varikatcha
(Julien), is described as a Hindu, and bears a name Zarmanos
Chegan, Sanscrit Sramanakarja, i.e. Teacher of the Shamans,
which points him out as of the Buddhist faith and a priest, and
as his death proves, a priest earnest in his faith. His compa-
nions then were probably not Hindus also, and perhaps Buddhists
and the representatives of a Hindu and possibly a Buddhist prince.

IV. The wretched presents—the Greek letter—the sort of
doubt which hangs over the name and country of the prince, are
all indicative not of the sovereign of a great kingdom but of the
petty raja of some commercial town or insignificant district.

V. The presents not unsuited to the tastes of Augustus,
and the Greek letter and its purely commercial tone, indicate that
our embassy was planned and organized by Greek traders, and more for Greek than Hindu interests.

VI. This embassy is conceivable only under the supposition that, if it forwarded the interests of the Greeks who planned it, it also benefited the Hindu prince who was induced to lend it its name.

But who was this Prince? who these Greeks? and what their common interests? The prince and his residence we are unable to identify. There is nothing in the reptiles of the presents, larger indeed in Guzerat but common to the whole western coast of India, which can enable us to fix on the locale of the embassy. If we turn to the name of the prince, we find that he is a Porus in the ambassadorial letter, but had become Pandion when Strabo wrote and the Peninsula was better known. A Puru of the Punjab we have seen that in all probability he was not; and I do not understand how he could well have been a Pandyan; because Pandya was a great and powerful sovereign and of the Saiva faith, the most bigoted of the Hindu forms of religion and was not likely therefore either to have initiated a commercial alliance with a foreign state, or to have initiated it by such an embassy as ours. D'Anville suggests that he was a Rana of Ougein who claimed a descent from Porus. But surely a descent from Porus, real or pretended, is not in itself sufficient to identify our prince, unless it can be shown that like the Pandyans and the Guptas he attached to his own name that of his ancestors, used it as a family name and in all public documents styled himself son of Puru. Besides, it seems to me that Ougein is too far inland to have already come into direct contact with Greek traders, and to have known anything of Augustus and the Roman Empire. To recur then to our narrative, it records the name of one Indian town, Bargosa or Barygaza. And in the neighbourhood of Barygaza, and indeed throughout the Northern part of the Peninsula, statues and temples of Buddha are still seen, which indicate that there formerly Buddhism was certainly recognised, perhaps flourished, and was on the ascendant. Barygaza besides being situated at the mouth of a great river, was, when the Periplus was written, a place of considerable trade, the great and legal mart for the commerce of the West, a city therefore which would probably avail itself with eagerness of any opportunity for assuring its friendly relations with its great customer, Rome; and to it I should be inclined to refer our embassy. But when we remem-
ber that Damascenus miscalls it, and that Strabo copies and does not correct him and never himself notices the place, we may well doubt whether in the times we are speaking of it was frequented by Greeks, or better known to them than the other commercial ports on the same part of the coast. And except that one of its citizens was in the ambassadorial suite, I do not think it can show any special claim to our embassy.

Who our Greeks were we may more accurately determine. After the destruction of the Persian Empire, the two great Western marts for the produce of India were Palmyra and Alexandria. But with regard to Palmyra—

I Its distance from the Peninsula of India was too short, and the route through the Persian Gulf and up the Euphrates too direct to admit of a journey so long, that from the mere time it occupied as hinted by Damascenus several of the ambassadors should have died on the road.

II Palmyra at this period still retained its national character and civilization and was essentially a Syrian republic. It had not yet merged into that Graeco-Roman city which it became after the time of Trajan, and which its ruins and the legends on its coins and the names of some of its citizens illustrate. Greek and Roman residents it no doubt admitted, but they could have been neither numerous enough nor powerful enough to have organised and forwarded our embassy.

III Palmyra, situated in the desert some eighty miles from the Euphrates, was pre-eminently an inland town. Its citizens and resident strangers were merchants, warehousemen, carriers, agents, but they assuredly were not seafaring men they possessed no ships, and received the produce of India through the Arabs, whose vessels delivered it at Sura or Thapsacus on the Euphrates whence it was brought on camels to Palmyra. They neither had nor could have any direct intercourse with India, and without such an intercourse our embassy is not conceivable.

IV Palmyra is not likely to have encouraged any Indian embassy to the Roman Emperor. It was a free city. Its inhabitants had not forgotten the designs of Antony and the dangers they had but lately escaped, and it is not probable that they would now of their own free will call Roman attention to their wealth, and place the Indians from whom they derived it in direct communication with their own best customers. Through Palmyra this embassy could not have made its way to Augustus.
We turn now to the Greeks of Alexandria. Alexandria with a population made up of about every nation under the sun was essentially a Greek city. It carried on a large, profitable and increasing trade with the East. And though at the period of our embassy its merchants seldom ventured beyond the Arab Ports of Cane and Aden, where they traded for the products and manufactures of India, they nevertheless occasionally sailed for the Indian Seas, and made their way even to the Ganges.

And as they then interfered with the Arab monopoly, they saw themselves everywhere jealously watched and opposed by the Arabs, everywhere treated as interlopers, and had everywhere to encounter the persecutions of an excited populace. Only in some of the smaller and therefore neglected ports, could they find opportunity and permission to trade. And then how eagerly would they lay before the authorities the advantages of a direct trade! They would show them the prices asked and obtained by the Arabs for Hindu and Greek commodities, and point out how of the profits the Arabs carried away the lion’s share. And if they fell in with some Rajah of the Buddhist faith—a faith without the prejudices of race, proselytising, catholic—and not averse to travel, they surely would easily persuade him, as in after times the Rajah of Ceylon was persuaded, to further and attempt to assure the direct trade by an embassy, the details of which a small Prince would willingly leave to them.

But besides this commercial interest common to both peoples, the Greeks of Alexandria had an interest of their own in getting up this embassy. In the great civil war but just concluded they had been partisans of Antony, they had fought in his ranks and were the last to yield after his defeat. They had to conciliate the favour of the conqueror. But they were no vulgar flatterers, theirs was not that adulation which repeats over the same cuckoo note of praise. They studied their man and to his temper and character adapted their tone. To the literary Claudius they devoted a new room in their Museum, and placed his works among their class books. The theatre-circus-loving Nero they wheedled by hued bands of artistic claqueurs. And the usurpation of the plebeian Vespasian they sanctioned by endowing him with miraculous powers. How now would such a people seek to win over the politic Augustus? They bring to his feet these Indian ambassadors, and thus raise him to a rivalship with Alexander. That he was too wise and far-seeing to be himself deceived is probable
enough, but is no valid objection. What cared he that the crown was of copper-gilt and the robes of tinsel, provided that the plaudits were real? The object of the Alexandrians was not to impose on him, but to gain his favour by enabling him to impose on the Roman people; and that they fully succeeded Roman history sufficiently testifies.

In conclusion, I thus explain and account for our embassy. In the northern half of the Indian Peninsula Greek merchants in their intercourse with a Hindu Raja often press upon his notice the greatness and wealth of their metropolis, and insist upon the advantages which he and his country would derive from more intimate commercial relations with it. They advise an embassy, and offer a passage in their ship for the ambassadors and for such presents as they can conveniently carry and he conveniently send. The Raja is persuaded. In due course the embassy arrives at Alexandria, and for Alexandria only it may have been originally intended. But the Alexandrians, alive to their own interests, quickly forward it on to Augustus, and give it weight and dignity by affixing to the Greek letter with which they provide it a well-known and time honoured name. The presents they leave unchanged, aware that the travel-worn ambassadors, whose home is so distant that some of them have died on their way to Caesar, will impress the imagination more strongly than heaps of barbaric pearl and gold.

While I offer this explanation, I do not pretend that it is entirely satisfactory, "refutation-tight"; enough if it seems to others as to me, less improbable, less open to objection, more simple and more in accordance with the facts given, than others.
APPENDIX III

Arrian's *Indika*

The English translation of Arrian's *Indika* by McCrindle has been given above, on pp. 214 to 231. The English translation of the same work, by E. Ilff Robson, published in 1933, i.e., 56 years after that of McCrindle, materially differs in many places from the earlier work. The more important points are noted below:

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<th>McCrindle's translation given in the text</th>
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<td>216</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>point of Taurus</td>
<td>mountain</td>
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<td>22</td>
<td>they were accuracy</td>
<td>the information is not so certain.</td>
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<td>19-20</td>
<td>from the dominions of a tribe</td>
<td>at the place</td>
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<td>32-33</td>
<td>rising in the dominions of</td>
<td>among</td>
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<td>218</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>resided at the court of</td>
<td>met</td>
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<td>31</td>
<td>at the court of</td>
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<td>219</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>suspended</td>
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<td>36</td>
<td>fountain</td>
<td>spring</td>
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<td>220</td>
<td>28-9</td>
<td>Indians, no doubt, who live in the south-west</td>
<td>southern Indians</td>
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<td>221</td>
<td>19-20</td>
<td>furnished them with the implements of agriculture</td>
<td>armed them also with the arms of warfare</td>
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<td>25</td>
<td>turban</td>
<td>conical cap</td>
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<td>222</td>
<td>22-3</td>
<td>but among these a republic was thrice established</td>
<td>and during this time thrice</td>
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<td></td>
<td>36</td>
<td>in which their praises are celebrated</td>
<td>[movements were made] for liberty,</td>
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<td>224</td>
<td>15-6</td>
<td>The same writer</td>
<td>which they sing at their funeral</td>
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<td>29</td>
<td>India</td>
<td>This also is remarkable in India</td>
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<td>State</td>
<td>people of India</td>
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<td>40-41</td>
<td>as if</td>
<td>since</td>
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<td>be silent for the future</td>
<td>hold his peace for ever</td>
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1 speak
2 pruning the trees
25-6 retail-dealers
26-7 They have to perform...of their labour.

226 2 superintendents
5 against use and wont
12 and hence enjoys the prerogative of
14-5 choosing

229 40 cotton
230 4-7 They wear an...round their head

231 30-31 no longer than three cubits of much
4-5 lighter weight
25 which, as the best known
29 army

prophesy
shaking down apples
shop-keepers
these are workers, and pay tribute
from their works
overlookers
illegal
from this class are selected

officers of army and navy, financial
officers, and overseers of agricultural
workers

linen
They have a linen tunic to the middle of
the calf, and for outer garments, one
thrown round about their shoulders, and
one wound round their heads
its length not under three cubits much
lighter in movement
being the most notable things which
navy