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HOME OF THE PUPPET-PLAY

RICHARD PISCHEL



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RICHARD PISCHEL

ON ASSUMING THE OFFICE OF RECTOR OF THE KÖNIGLICHE VEREINIGTE FRIEDRICHS-UNIVERSITÄT, HALLE-WITTENBERG, ON THE 12TH JULY, 1900.

Translated (with the author's permission) by

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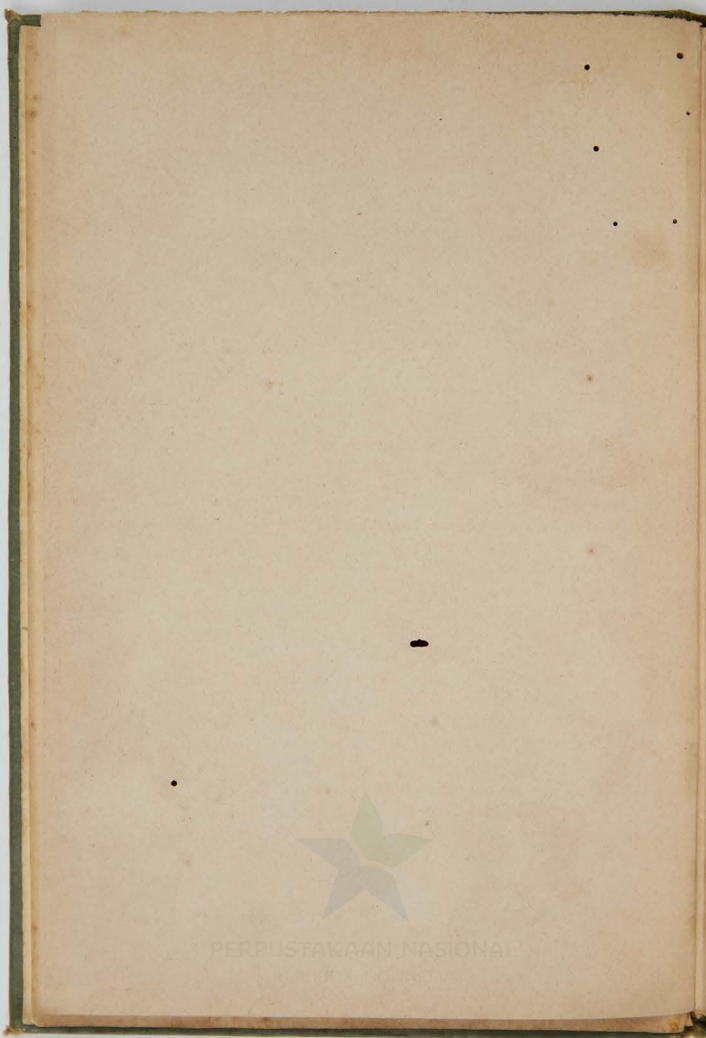

THE HOME OF THE PUPPET-PLAY.

An Address delivered by Richard Pischel on assuming the office of Rector of the Königliche Vereinigte Friedrichs-Universität, Halle-Wittenberg, on the 12th July, 1900.

MOST HONOURABLE ASSEMBLY!

Among the ineffaceable impressions which we retain from earliest childhood to ripest old age, we must include the recollection of the time when we first heard from our mother's lips the immortal fairy tales of Snow-white and the Seven Dwarfs, Dame Holle and Goldilocks, and Little Red Riding Hood and the wicked wolf. Our delight in all these beings became still greater when we saw them afterwards in flesh and blood before us on the stage. Nowadays the Christmas fairy tales are produced for children with lavish splendour, and owing to the gorgeous externals the simple story is often not duly appreciated. But those of us who were children in the fifties and sixties or earlier in the nineteenth century, had to be content with plainer fare. In those days the stage consisted of a platform erected in a room only partially lighted by oil-lamps, and furnished with wooden benches, the actors being puppets. Yet

the thrill of expectancy with which we, the children of that time, sat before the homely curtain was as great as it is to-day; the eagerness with which we followed the performance was perhaps even greater.

The birthplace of fairy tales has long been recognized to be India. They wandered from India to Persia, and thence the Arabs brought them to Europe. But the original home of puppet-plays still remains quite obscure. The problem is also more difficult to solve because the sources flow but feebly. Fairy tales were early written down in Sanskrit, Pali, and Prakrit; no single puppet-play has been handed down to us from antiquity. A place in literature was at once readily accorded to fairy tales, and all classes of people heard and read them with equal interest. The art of the puppet-player was always more or less a 'mystery,' receiving no substantial encouragement from the cultured classes. Xenophon, in his Symposion, makes the puppet-player from Syracuse assert that he esteems fools above other men; they being the spectators of his puppet-plays, and consequently his means of livelihood.[1] This is hardly borne out by facts. Adults of all stations and degrees of education have at times been unable to withstand the fascination of the puppet-play. The puppet-player Potheinos was so much run after in Athens, that the Archons gave up to him the very stage on which the dramas of Euripides had excited the enthusiasm of the populace.[2] France, in the time of Molière and Beaumarchais, England, under Shakespeare and Sheridan,[3] Germany, in the days of Goethe and Schiller,

had numerously attended marionette shows, which at times proved formidable rivals to the theatrical companies.[4] Puppet-players were also summoned to the courts of princes,[5] and the Emperor Joseph II, in company with his guests, visited in 1876 the Kasperle theatre in the Leopoldstadt in Vienna.[6] But these must still be regarded as exceptional cases. For the most part, the puppet-play continued to be the favourite child of the mass of the people, and only the stepchild of the cultured classes. And this is easily understood. The puppet-play appeals most strongly to the people because to them it owes its origin. Precisely for this reason, however, it is often a clearer mirror of the thoughts and feelings of the people than more finished poetry, and is in many cases the vehicle of old traditions. As a confirmation of this I need only cite the puppet-play of Dr. Faust. It is not improbable that the puppet-play is in reality everywhere the most ancient form of dramatic representation. Without doubt this is the case in India. And there, too, we must look for its home.

The words for 'puppet' in Sanskrit are *putrikā*, *duhitṛkā*[7], *puttalī*, *puttalikā*, all of which mean 'little daughter,' and also *pāñcālikā*, of which the meaning is doubtful.[8] Of these the words *puttalī* and *puttalikā* have, as their form indicates, been adopted into Sanskrit from the vernaculars in which they still exist to the present day.[9] In ancient India puppets were made out of wool,[10] wood, buffalo-horn, and ivory, and these playthings were quite as popular long ago with the girls of that country as they are with our

girls at the present day.[11] A broken doll was then the cause of as many tears as would be shed nowadays; indeed, it was proverbially said of anyone who had caused his own misfortune and then lamented over it, that he was crying after breaking his own doll.[12] In India even grown-up people enjoyed playing with puppets. Vātsyāyana, in his Treatise on Love, advises not only boys but also young men to join the girls and young women in their games with puppets, as a means of gaining their affections.[13] In the Mahābhārata Princess Uttarā and her friends entreat Arjuna (whose son Uttarā shortly afterwards married) to bring back with him from his campaign against the Kurus fine, gaily-coloured, delicate, and soft garments for their dolls.[14] Puppets might even become dangerous rivals to deities. A legend runs[15] that Pārvatī, wife of the god Śiva, made herself such a beautiful doll, that she thought it necessary to conceal it from the eyes of her husband. She carried it far away to the Malaya mountain, but visited it every day, that she might adorn it. Śiva, rendered suspicious by her long absence, stole after her, saw the doll, fell in love with it, and gave it life. There is also an early mention made of puppets worked by machinery. We read in the Kathāsaritsāgara, the great collection of tales by the Kashmiri Somadeva, that Somaprabhā, the daughter of the Asura Maya, a celebrated mechanician, brought as a present to her friend Princess Kalingasenā a basket of mechanical wooden puppets, constructed by her father. There was a wooden peg in each of the puppets, and when

this was touched, one of them flew through the air, fetched a wreath, and returned when ordered ; another, when desired, brought water in the same way ; a third danced, and a fourth carried on conversation.[16] This delighted Kalingasenā so much that she neglected her meals in order to play with them. Somadeva was not born until the eleventh century of our era, but his work is only a Sanskrit adaptation of the oldest collection of Indian fairy tales, the Bṛhatkathā of Guṇāḍhya. This work, which was written in Paiśācī, one of the most ancient Prakrit dialects, has unfortunately not yet been discovered. Talking dolls must not, however, be considered as a mere invention of storytellers. Among the social amusements mentioned in the Treatise on Love[17] we find a game called *pāñcālānuyānam*, or the 'mimicry of puppets,' which, according to the commentator, consisted in the players mimicking the voices and actions of puppets. Mithilā, the capital of Videha in Eastern India, is mentioned as the place where this amusement was most in vogue.[18] Talking puppets were also introduced on the stage. In this case they were not, as a rule, worked by internal mechanism, but by means of a thread (*sūtra*), manipulated by the puppet-player. This arrangement prevailed in ancient Greece (where marionettes were called *νευρόσπαστα*, i.e. 'things drawn by threads'), and, as a general rule, in the Middle Ages and also in modern times. An allusion to such puppets moved by threads (*sūtraprota*), made of wood, is found as far back as the Mahābhārata. In this work men are compared to puppets, inasmuch

as they have no will of their own, but are subject to the control of God, and receive in turn from Him joy and sorrow, pleasure and pain. The actions of human beings are controlled by a power external to them, in the same way as are the movements of a properly constructed wooden puppet (*dārumayī yoṣā*). This idea is worked out at length in the Mahābhārata, where it is referred to as an old legend (*itihāsa purātana*), and thus still greater antiquity is claimed for it.[19] In the fifth act of his Bālarāmāyaṇa[20] Rājaśekhara, who flourished early in the tenth century, introduces two jointed puppets constructed by the mechanic Viśārada, the best pupil of the Asura Maya, of whom mention has already been made. One of the puppets represented Sītā, who was carried off by the demon Rāvaṇa, the other her foster-sister Sindūrikā. A starling that could speak Prakrit fluently,[21] even in verse, was placed in the mouth of the puppet representing Sītā; while the puppet-player, who appeared as the demon, spoke in Sanskrit and Prakrit[22] for the other puppet, which took the leading part. Talking starlings are frequently mentioned in Indian literature, and the teaching of parrots and starlings to speak belonged to the sixty-four arts necessary to the education of a girl in India.[23] In Rājaśekhara's drama the starling played his part remarkably well. Indeed, the two puppets imitated the originals so closely that Rāvaṇa took them for living beings. It was only when he embraced Sītā that he found out his mistake, and exclaimed, "This does not feel like a woman." However, he caused

the puppets to be brought to his palace for his diversion. Absurd as this incident is, we must yet be grateful to Rājaśekhara for it. It is the only passage in the whole of Indian literature where puppets appear on the stage in a Sanskrit drama, and, what is still more important, we learn from it the name for puppet-player in the tenth century. He is called *sūtradhāra*, i.e. 'threadholder' (5, 5; 7, 77), which corresponds to the epithet *sūtraprota*, 'attached to threads,' applied to puppets in the Mahābhārata.[24] And *sūtradhār* is still the name for a puppet-player in India at the present day. Puppet-plays are mentioned in ancient[25] and modern[26] writings on India, and are at the present time the only form of dramatic representation known to the country people.[27] As was generally the case in India in ancient time, so also at the present day puppets are moved by threads.[28] In the drama, as we find it in its most artistically developed form in Sanskrit and Prakrit, the stage-manager comes forward at the beginning of the piece, utters the blessing, and then introduces the prologue on the stage. This stage-manager is called, as in the puppet-play, *sūtradhāra*, 'threadholder.' From this fact, as early as 1879, a native scholar of European education, Shankar Pāṇḍurang Paṇḍit by name, drew the reasonable conclusion that performances by puppets and paper figures must have preceded those by human beings.[29] Otherwise it is impossible to conceive how the term *sūtradhāra*, i.e. 'threadholder,' could be applied to a stage-manager, who has nothing whatever to do with threads. Now we

learn from the Indian dramatists that in old days the *sūtradhāra* appeared and arranged a short introductory piece, consisting either of dancing, songs, and instrumental music, or of songs and instrumental music only, or simply one of these three. Originally this introductory piece was of considerable length; it was gradually cut shorter and shorter, until it was finally almost abolished.[30] At the close of this first piece the *sūtradhāra* retired, and in old days he was followed on the stage by another man, who resembled him in manner and appearance, and who was dressed in accordance with the subject of the play. He made known the poet's name, and intimated the subject of the piece, thus speaking the prologue as it was understood in the ancient drama. Later on he was completely abolished. He does not appear in any of the pieces preserved to us,[31] for one *sūtradhāra* managed everything, as the writers on Rhetoric expressly state.[32] This second manager was called *sthāpaka*, 'the setter up,' an expression which up to this time has never been successfully explained.[33] Except in this case, the word is applied only to the priest who had to set up the images of the gods, when they were solemnly consecrated. On the stage the *sthāpaka* was originally the setter up of the puppets.[34]

The art of the puppet-player was a two-sided one. He was not only an exhibiting but also a constructive artist; i.e., he brought the puppets on the stage and spoke for them, and also made and mended them himself. As one man seldom understood both duties

equally well, it was a common arrangement for two to enter into temporary or permanent partnership. So in France, in 1717, Carolet was associated as poet with Bertrand and his son-in-law and successor, Bienfait, as puppet-players ;[35] in Germany, Reibehand, by profession a tailor, from 1734 head of a theatrical company, with Lorenz.[36] Of the famous puppet-players Dreher and Schütz, who in 1804 achieved such striking success in Berlin with their performance of "Faust," the former was rather the practical, the latter the literary artist, who had himself tried his hand at poetry.[37] When a man united in himself both talents, he usually belonged to the working class. For example, the above-mentioned puppet-player in France, Bertrand, was originally a gilder.[38] Powell, who in the beginning of the eighteenth century temporarily ruled the London stage, was an extremely clever mechanician.[39] In the same way in Germany, early in the nineteenth century, there was the unequalled Geiselbrecht, who, as well as his son-in-law, Tendler, was a wood-carver from Berchtesgaden, and is well known to many people from Storm's splendid novel "Pole Poppenspäler." Mechanics and tailors were, by their training, particularly fitted for one side of the puppet-player's art. Next to them on the list of puppet-players and showmen we find a profession represented which otherwise is not usually a source of pleasure to mankind, that of a dentist, or what was its primitive equivalent. In the reign of Louis XIV, the famous French puppet-player Jean Brioché (whose constant companion, the

monkey Fagotin, has become a typical and proverbial term to denote French puppet-players), was a tooth-drawer ;[40] while in Germany, about 1736, Johann Ferdinand Beck, who called himself "Head of a high princely privileged high-German Saxon company of comedians to the Court of Waldeck," was previously "Dentist and Jackpudding in vulgar farces."[41]

It was probably much the same in India as in Europe. I have already mentioned that Maya and Viśārada, the only two puppet-makers whose names we know, are described as mechanicians.[42] We are entitled to assume that in the puppet-show the *sūtra-dhāra* was the actor, who moved the puppets and spoke for them ; the *sthāpaka* the man whose duties consisted, first and foremost, in making, mending, and putting them on the stage. However that may be, it is certain that two of the most important members of the *personnel* of the oldest Indian stage have, as their names show, been taken over from the puppet-play. And this is not the only fact which tends to prove that the Indian drama was developed out of the puppet-play. Other facts point to the same conclusion.

The art of dramatic expression in India dates from very ancient times. Even the oldest monument of Indian literature, the Ṛgveda, of which the earliest parts date back to 3,000 years B.C., contains more than a dozen hymns in the form of dialogue and of partially dramatic construction. On solemn occasions, such as that of the sacrifice of a horse, it was the custom in Vedic times to recite old histories and

songs, and the performers, the priests of the Ṛgveda and the Yajurveda, spoke turn about.[43] On the day of a Mahāvrata an Ārya and a Śūdra appeared, who disputed about a skin;[44] and at the ceremony of the purchase of Soma a buyer and a seller were introduced, who held an animated conversation about the price. The buyer makes his offer, the seller raises his price. If the Soma-dealer proved refractory, the purchaser was bound to tear the Soma from him, and also to take away the gold and the cow which he had given for the Soma. If the dealer resisted, the buyer had to beat him with a leather strap or with billets of wood.[45]

These are, without doubt, characteristics which remind us of popular performances. The great grammarian Pāṇini, who is usually supposed to have lived in the fourth century B.C., mentions textbooks for actors (*naṭasūtra*, 4, 3, 110), and his commentator, Patañjali, who lived, as is generally believed, towards the middle of the second century B.C., not only frequently alludes to actors but also to jugglers (*śobhanikāḥ*). The latter brought the story of the god Kṛṣṇa so vividly before men's eyes, that it seemed as if Kaṃsa, the uncle and persecutor of Kṛṣṇa, were really and actually killed, and the demon Bali really put in chains by the god Viṣṇu. He further mentions that the rhapsodists, when reciting the story of Kṛṣṇa, divided themselves into two groups. The one belonged to Kaṃsa's party and coloured their faces red, the other represented the adherents of Kṛṣṇa and coloured their faces black.[46]

The Mahābhārata mentions dramas only once, but players frequently.[47] Unfortunately, of ancient dramas none has come down to us. The Indian drama presents itself to us at once in its most perfect shape in the pieces of Kālidāsa, who lived in the sixth century after Christ. However, the dramas themselves tell us by their form a part of their history.

The hymns in dialogue of the Ṛgveda and other works also, as the Suparṇādhyāya, are almost incomprehensible in the form in which they have come down to us. The connection between the separate verses is very loose, often quite impossible to discover. To understand it we need a connecting text, which in some cases is given in prose by the Brāhmaṇas, works explanatory of the Vedas. Later works, such as the Mahābhārata and the Purāṇas, sometimes contain the entire narrative, but then often in a very different form. On the ground of similar cases in Irish literature, Windisch[48] first threw out the suggestion that originally only the verses were unchangeable, and that the reciters connected them by means of prose narrations. This view is undoubtedly correct. It is borne out by the name of the rhapsodist *granthika*, i.e. joiner or connecter.[49] The prose narrations were in general only rigidly fixed as regards their contents; their development in detail was left to the judgment of the rhapsodist. Originally it was precisely the same with the drama. The classical drama of India has a peculiar construction, the prose being continually interrupted by stanzas in various metres. Such stanzas in pre-classical times formed

the 'fixed capital' of the player. As regards the prose the greatest freedom was left to him.[50] This is the case up to the present day in the popular plays. Popular plays have never been written down in India. The manager gives his actors a short summary of the contents of the piece they are to act, and leaves the development of it to their talent for improvisation.[51] We have literary imitations of popular plays in Bengal and Nepal, all of which have the same characteristics. The verses are fixed: only suggestions are given for the prose, and these in the Nepali pieces are in the dialects of the country.

That the widest scope should be given to improvisation is not specifically Indian. The same was the case with the Commedia dell' arte or Commedia a soggetto, which appears in Italy from the middle of the sixteenth century, and a great deal earlier in Germany, in the carnival plays and improvised pieces which flourished in the first half of the fifteenth century, and of which we find traces up to the second half of the eighteenth century. In Germany it was notably Master Johannes Velten of Halle[52] who with his troupe, "the famous band," practised improvisation, later, however, curtailing it. Improvisation prevailed even more in puppet-plays than in popular dramas. Holtei, in his "Vagabunden," makes the before-mentioned puppet-player, Dreher, say that puppet-players are "an old fraternity, a survival from the dark ages." He goes on to say that of books they have none, no play is written down. It is handed down from father to

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son; the one learns it by heart from the other, and then carries the whole story about in his head. Each one of them has to take an oath that he will never write down a line of it, lest it should fall into alien hands, that would rob them of their bread.[53] This is for the main part correct. Acting without a book of words is also very common to-day, especially in the small puppet-theatres in the suburbs and villages,[54] and even now there is much improvisation. In earlier times this was the rule, which explains the fact that no puppet-play has been preserved to us from antiquity, and that those, which later on were written down, show so marked a variation in their text. In the classical dramas, on the other hand, the text was of course quite fixed from the first. But in their mixture of prose and verse they retain a clearly recognizable trace of their origin from popular plays with improvisation, and these popular plays must, in the first instance, have been puppet-plays, of which they, according to the judgment of eye-witnesses, sometimes directly remind us.[55]

Indian dramas often extend to a very considerable length. Pieces of seven and ten acts are not uncommon; indeed, the Mahānāṭaka has, in one recension, as many as fourteen. We are able to ascertain the exact length of one variety of the Indian drama, the Samavakāra, a spectacular play of the nature of a pageant, such as even to-day is often performed at great festivals in India. There were only three acts in it; but the first act lasted 9½ hours, the second 2½ (according to others 3¼), the third 1½ hours, the whole

piece therefore 13½ or 14¼ hours, a time which ought to have contented even the most enthusiastic play-goer. As a rule the pieces were much shorter. But the performance did not conclude with the play. It was invariably followed in the popular playhouses by a farce. As the performances do not begin till after sunset, they last the whole night, and the farce only begins at daybreak.[56] This combination of drama and low farce was at one time also customary in Germany. In this way the above-mentioned "famous band" of Velten played in Hamburg in 1688 first the *Haupt- und Staats-Action*, "Adam and Eve," and following it "Jackpudding in a Box"; and also in Hamburg in 1702, first the *Haupt-Action*, "Elijah's Translation to Heaven, or the Stoning of Naboth," and following it the farce "The Schoolmaster murdered by Jackpudding, or the Baffled Bacon-thieves."[57] This has been called an instance of degeneration on the part of the comedians. In reality it is something very old, and a concession made to the taste of the people of India as well as of Europe. To this corresponded also the often very indelicate contents of the farce, and above all the figure of the buffoon, who in the above-mentioned pieces by Velten is called "Pickelhering." Devrient has insisted in his history of German dramatic art, that the careful study of this comic character is of great importance for understanding the progress of the history of art, and that the fundamental type of the buffoon is just as ancient as it is imperishable.[58] People have tried to trace the German "Hans Wurst"

back to the Maccus of the Italian Atellana; others derive him from the clown of the wandering English comedians of the seventeenth century, others from the Arlecchino of the Commedia a soggetto. Both derivations are absurd on chronological grounds, because the German buffoon is met with in mystery and carnival plays long before people in Germany knew anything about the clown or Arlecchino. Others, again, have declared him to be an ancient German figure,[59] which does not correspond with facts. The matter is cleared up for us by the Indian drama.

Putting aside the mixture of prose and verse, and the use of numerous Prakrit dialects side by side with Sanskrit, nothing is so characteristic of the Indian drama as the appearance of the buffoon even in quite serious pieces. His technical name is *Vidūṣaka*. In the oldest treatise on dramatic art, the Bhāratīyanāṭyaśāstra, the only person that has a special protecting deity assigned to him, with the exception of the hero and heroine, is the Vidūṣaka; all the remainder come under the protection of one and the same deity. We read (1, 63), "Indra protects the hero, Sarasvatī the heroine, the holy syllable Om the Vidūṣaka, S'iva all the remaining persons."[60] Bharata informs us (24,106) that the Vidūṣaka should be represented as a dwarf with protruding teeth and humpbacked, a Brahman with a distorted face, a bald head, and yellow eyes. Viśvanātha, in his Sāhitya-darpaṇa, says (79) he must take his name from a flower, or the spring, or such like, must excite merriment by his behaviour, his figure, his dress and

speech, he must take pleasure in quarrelling, and understand how to look after number one, i.e. be interested in eating and drinking. In the dramas preserved to us this is an important trait in the character of the Vidūṣaka. In the Mṛcchakaṭikā, where he appears as the friend of the impoverished merchant Cārudatta, he begins his monologue with the complaint that the glorious time is past when he gorged himself on the sweetmeats, which were prepared day and night with care, and which exhaled a delightful odour. Then he used to sit at the entrance of the inner apartments, surrounded by hundreds of porringers, like a painter, snatching dainties with his fingers, now here, now there, and afterwards ruminate like an ox in the market-place. In the Vikramorvaśī of Kālidāsa the Vidūṣaka compares the rising moon to a sugar-cake, and when in the Ratnāvalī the king asks to be told what a talking starling is saying, he replies that the starling says that the king is to give him (the Vidūṣaka) something to eat. In both cases he has to be told by the king that with a glutton everything turns on eating. The same characteristic of greediness and delight in dainty fare is prominent in all pieces where he appears, and is illustrated in the beautiful reliefs on the doors of the great Tope of Sānci in Central India, dating from the first century of our era, where he is depicted as a dwarf with a protruding stomach.[61] We often find allusions to his ugliness also. He is called a painted or red ape, and he does not hesitate to compare himself to one, and to ridicule his own baldness. His ugliness makes

him a source of general amusement; as also does his stupidity, which is, however, often only assumed, and is coupled with cunning. He is the crafty accomplice of the king in his gallant adventures, but quite as often gets the latter into the greatest scrapes with the queen by his clumsiness and garrulity, so that though he is addressed by the king as "friend," he is as frequently called by him "blockhead." Other prominent features of his character are his vanity, his ignorance, his cowardice, which, however, at once changes to insolence when the impending danger is over, his mania for blaming other people for everything that disturbs his comfort, and his rudeness to everyone who tries to convert his friend the hero to views differing from those which he himself holds. Hence he derives his name Vidūṣaka, which means detractor, faultfinder, mocker.[62] He is further very pugnaciously inclined, and always ready to lay about him with his stick. On the other hand, he frequently gets a beating himself, and is even bound and imprisoned by the queen's maids.[63] As regards his rank, he is a Brahman, belonging therefore to the highest caste of the Indian people. And this shows more than anything else that he is a national figure. Priests of all Indian religions were a favourite butt for ridicule in the Indian farces. Their hypocrisy, arrogance, fondness for women, for intoxicating drinks, and dainty dishes, form an inexhaustible and most prolific subject of ridicule. The fact that the Vidūṣaka, unlike other men of his class, does not speak Sanskrit but Prākrit, like men of lower caste and women, except nuns and courtesans,

points also to his origin from the popular pieces, where he still reigns supreme as he did in the ancient drama.[64] Literature in India early came into the hands of the priests, and it is quite incredible that they would have adopted a figure such as the Vidūsaka into the artistically developed drama, had it not been so closely bound up with the stage in the mind of the people that its exclusion was impossible.

After this description it is practically superfluous to tell you who the Vidūṣaka is; he is the "Hans Wurst" of the popular stage, the "Kasperle" of the puppet-theatre.[65] We find all the characteristics of the Indian comic personage reproduced in the European buffoon, and so striking is the resemblance between the two that there can be no doubt of their identity. His love of eating is considered so characteristic of him, that in most countries he is called after the favourite dish of the inhabitants. Thus in England he is called "Jack Pudding," in France "Jean Potage," in Italy "Signor Maccaroni," in Hungary "Paprika-Jancsi, in Holland "Pekel-haaring," hence by the English comedians "Pickle-herring," and in Germany at one time, as in the above-mentioned Velten pieces, "Pickelhering."[66] In Germany he was also called "Hans Wurst." The latter name was particularly in vogue on account of Luther's controversial pamphlet "Against Hans Wurst," i.e. Duke Henry of Brunswick, but, as is well known, was not Luther's invention. At the same time the comic character had other names, partially confined to the puppet-show. Thus, in Italy he is called "Arlecchino," whence, since 1700,

in Germany "Harlekin," in the dialect of Naples "Pulcinella," from which is derived the French "Polichinelle," the English "Punchinello," shortened into "Punch," in Holland "Jan Klaassen," in Germany "Kasper" or "Kasperle," a name which originated in Vienna towards the close of the eighteenth century, and which has survived till to-day in the puppet-theatre. The Hans Wurst was, to quote Devrient,[67] "a half doltish, half cunning, partly stupid, partly knowing, enterprising and cowardly, self-indulgent and merry fellow, who, in accordance with circumstances, accentuated one or other of these characteristics." This corresponds, feature for feature, to the Indian Vidūṣaka. And that nothing should be wanting we must call special attention to the prominent part which the cudgelling scenes played in connection with the Hans Wurst and Kasperle. Up to the end of the last century drubbings were among the most popular of stage effects in Germany, and in the better class of companies the actor was compensated for the blows which he had to receive, according to a regular fixed rate, a gulden for each stroke.[68] Among the generality of troupes, the rule indeed was, as Prutz says, "plenty of cudgel and no gulden." Anyone who has ever been to a Kasperle theatre will remember how many blows Kasperle gave and received. This, too, is a concession to the taste of the populace, who would not be deprived of this character. In India, in the eighth century of our era, Bhavabhūti, after Kālidāsa the most celebrated of Indian dramatic poets, tried to banish the Vidūṣaka from the stage,

but without success, as did Gottsched and Friederike Neuber the Hans Wurst in Germany.

Now the home of the Kasperle is also that of the puppet-theatre. Such figures are not independently invented in different places in so strikingly similar a form, but they have a native place from which they migrate, and in the course of their migrations become modified in detail according to the country to which they travel. And, moreover, this may be clearly demonstrated in the case which we are considering. From India the puppet-show, with all the Indian culture, came to the island of Java, and there became extraordinarily popular. But the Javanese puppet-show also, the *Wajang pūrwā*, has the same comic figure, who is called there *Sĕmar*. Serrurier has already compared the Sĕmar to the Vidūṣaka, and has laid stress on the fact that he is not a Javanese creation.[69] Further, the Turkish shadow-play performed by puppets has the same character in its Karagöz. Jacob, who by his investigations of the Karagöz comedies has deserved well of this branch of literature, expressly points out that the character of the Karagöz corresponds exactly with that of the Kasperle. His description of the Karagöz tallies closely with the Vidūṣaka. Even in the external peculiarity of baldness they are both alike.[70] Also the buffoon of the Persian puppet-show, the *Kačal Pahlawān*, i.e. 'the bald-headed athlete,'[71] does not differ from his brothers. In a puppet-show seen by Ouseley in Tabriz, in the year 1812, he comes on the scene as a lovesick youth, who for a maiden's sake

engages in the fiercest fights with demons. In this contest it absolutely rains blows.[72] Ouseley remarks that the Persian Pahlawān squeaked in exactly the same kind of feigned voice as Punch in the common English puppet-shows, and that his witty sallies provoked bursts of laughter from the audience. The puppet-players whom Ouseley saw in Persia were gypsies,[73] and this must have been the case originally in Turkey also. This explains the fact that so early as the middle of the seventeenth century the Turkish traveller Evlija, as is emphasized by Jacob,[74] was able to assert that the historical Karagöz was a gypsy, and that the Karagöz in the Turkish shadow-plays was apt to appear as a gypsy in speech and appearance. In Europe, also, the gypsies were, and to a certain extent still are, skilled puppet-players, who not only perform pieces they have learnt, but also improvise dramas, "often genuine autobiographies in fiction and fact."[75] They understand quite perfectly how to adapt themselves to circumstances. In Moldavia, from Christmas to the end of Lent, one used at night in old days to hear a man crying out in the streets, "To the puppets, to the puppets!" If one admitted the crier, he was shortly followed by two gypsies with a little lighted theatre, on which they exhibited marionettes. At the close of the performance there always appeared on the stage, at the time of the Russo-Turkish war of 1828–1829, a Turk and a Cossack, who came to blows. If the Turks had just been victorious, the Turk cut off the Cossack's head; if the Russians had recently been successful, the Turk

lost his head. The gypsy, who manipulated the puppets from a place of concealment, spoke with varying voice and manner, at one time as a Turk, at another as a Cossack.[76] Gypsies were also puppet-players in Bulgaria,[77] Germany,[78] and England.[79]

This accomplishment they brought with them from their home.[80] The art of the puppet-player was always that of a wandering people, and this the gypsies have ever been as far back as we know anything of them. But the home of the gypsies is the home of fairy tales and the home of the puppet-play: the old 'wonderland' India.

NOTES.

[1] Symposion, 4, 55.

[2] Athenaeus, 16, p. 19 E.

[3] Magnin: "Histoire des marionettes en Europe depuis l'antiquité jusqu'à nos jours"; deuxième édition (Paris, 1862), p. 25.

[4] Magnin, pp. 155 f., 240.

[5] Thus, in 1669 Jean Brioché and François Daitelin were called to the Dauphin's court at Saint-Germain-en-Laye: Magnin, p. 133.

[6] Flögel: "Geschichte des Groteskekomischen" (Liegnitz und Leipzig, 1788), p. 154. I quote from the first edition, which is the only one accessible to me here.

[7] Thus in Vātsyāyana, Kāmasūtra, p. 208. Also *śālabhañji*, *śālabhañjikā* means not only 'statue,' but 'puppet' as well. In the commentary to Vāsavadattā, p. 109, there is quoted from Hemacandra, *śālabhañjī pāñcālikā ca puttalikā*; Ujjvaladatta, on Uṇādigaṇasūtra, 2, 32, explains it by *kāṣṭhaputrikā*; Puruṣottama, Trikāṇḍaśeṣa, 2, 6, 3, by *dārustrī*. In the Siṃhāsanadvātriṃśikā, *puttalikā* is used indifferently with *śālabhañjikā* (Ind. Studien, 15, Index s.vv.). It is, however, only used of ornamental figures, cf. note 18.

[8] Sylvain Lévi, "Le théâtre indien" (Paris, 1890), p. 325, is inclined to derive the word from the country Pañcāla, the present Tirhut, and to assume that marionettes spread from there all over India. That puppet-plays were particularly popular in Eastern India is borne out by the subsequently mentioned social game *pāñcālānuyāna*. Lévi's assumption is, however, not likely to be correct.

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[9] Thus Marāṭhī, Gujarātī *puṭḷī*, Hindī *puṭlī*, Sindhī *puṭilī*, Urdū *pūtlī*, Oriyā *putlikā*.

[10] Kāmasūtra, p. 210: *sūtradārugavalagajadantamayīr duhitṛkāḥ*. By *sūtra* we are to understand 'wool' rather than 'thread.' Puppets of ivory are also mentioned in the Mālatīmādhava, 350, 1 (ed. Bhandarkar): *dantapāñcālikeva kriḍāyogaṃ . . . prāpitā*, on which Jagaddhara remarks: *dantapāñcālikeva dantamayakṛtrimaputrikeva | . . . pāñcālikāpi kriḍādikaṃ kāryata iti prasiddham eva*. Nānyadeva, p. 253 (ed. Telang) explains: *gajadantamayī pāñcālikā putrikātvenābhimanyamānā*.

[11] Kāmasūtra, 33, 13; cf. Yas'odhara's commentary on it, 41, 7 f.

[12] Priyadars'ikā, 18, 4 (ed. Vishṇu Dâji Gadré): *tumaṃ jeva puttaliaṃ bhañjia dāṇiṃ rodasi*.

[13] Kāmasūtra, pp. 208, 210.

[14] Mahābhārata, 4, 37, 29: *Bṛhannale ānayethā vāsāṃsi rucirāṇi ca | pāñcālikārthaṃ citrāṇi sūkṣmāṇi ca mṛdūni ca | vijitya saṃgrāmagatān Bhīṣma Droṇamukhān Kurūn* ||

[15] Vīracarita in Indische Studien, 14, 116.

[16] Kathāsaritsāgara, 29, 18 ff.; cf. Lévi, l.c., p. 324 f.

[17] Kāmasūtra, p. 56.

[18] Yas'odhara on Kāmasūtra, p. 57: *pāñcālānuyānam | bhinnālāpaceṣṭitaiḥ pāñcālakriḍā | yathā Mithilāyām || Ālāpa* is also used of the language of puppets in the Kathāsaritsāgara, 29, 20 (*kathālāpam athākarot*), 29, 46 (*vyaktikaroti cālāpam*) and in the Bālarāmāyaṇa, 118, 5; 207, 18 (*vaktrasthasārikālāpā*). Talking *śālabhañjikāḥ* are mentioned by Bāṇa, Harṣacarita, 140, 8 ff.; cf. Vāsavadattā, 110, 1.

[19] Mahābhārata, 3, 30, 21 ff.

[20] p. 118 ff.

[21] For *sārikā* = starling, see Bühler, Z.D.M.G., 46, 69 = Epigraphia Indica, 2, 259.

[22] This is more correct than G.G.A., 1883, p. 1228.

[23] Kāmasūtra, p. 33, 8: *śukasārikāpralāpana*.

[24] Cf. Prasannarāghava, 11, 8 ff.: *naṭati narakarāgraviyagrasūtrāgralagnadvipadaśanaśalākāmañcapāñcālikeyam . . . kṣmābhṛtāṃ cittavṛttiḥ* ||

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[25] The only detailed mention of a puppet-play in ancient India is found in the Kathākośā, translated by Tawney (London, 1895), p. 40, in a passage to which my attention was called by Zachariae. Tawney supplied me at my request most kindly with the Sanskrit text. A puppet-play is performed before King Sundara on the occasion of the marriage of his son Amaracandra: *tāvat preraṇiyaiḥ Sundararājño 'gre 'vasaro maṇḍito 'sti | vaṃśe putrikātra nṛtyaṃ karoti ||* By *preraṇiyaiḥ* we are probably meant to understand 'puppet-players.' It expresses most likely what were formerly known as 'motion-men' in England, although the form *prerakaiḥ* would have been more what we should have expected to find used. *Avasara* is, according to Apte, s.v., also a kind of 'gathering' or 'assembly'; *maṇḍita* may belong to *maṇḍayanta*, 'actor,' if this meaning can be justified. Hemacandra, Uṇādigaṇasūtra, 221, makes no mention of it. For 'puppet' *putrikā* is used; later on for the four puppets *dārāḥ*. Here they are manipulated by means of pegs (*kilikāḥ*), as in the Kathāsaritsāgara. The 'attendants that tire the puppets' are called *veṣakarāḥ*, the 'master of the puppet-show' *narttakaḥ*. The following expressions — *antaraṅganāṭaka*, *bāhyanāṭaka*, *raṅgabhūmi* — have, like *narttaka*, no special connection with the puppet-play. This passage evidently does not refer to acting done by puppets, but to an exhibition of their dancing; cf. notes 34, 42, 77.

[26] E.g., in Dubois, "Mœurs, institutions, et cérémonies des peuples de l'Inde" (Paris, 1825), p. 87; Oman, "Indian Life (Hindu and Muhammadan), Religious and Social" (Philadelphia 1889), p. 194.

[27] Shankar Pāṇḍurang Paṇḍit on Vikramorvasīya, Notes, p. 4.

[28] Oman, l.c.; Paṇḍit, l.c. In Marāṭhī a thread of the kind is called *kaḷāsūtra*, hence the puppet play *kaḷāsūtrācā khela*, a puppet *kaḷāsūtrācī bāhulī*.

[29] Vikramorvasīya, Notes, p. 4; cf. Pischel, G.G.A., 1891, p. 359.

[30] Pischel: G.G.A., 1891, p. 359.

[31] In the Karpūramañjarī, I, 9 (ed. Konow), we ought to read with the greater number of MSS. *sūtradhāraḥ*, instead of

sthāpakaḥ. Moreover, in other places, according to the scholiasts, MSS. of dramas often give *sthāpaka* instead of *sūtradhāra*, in order to comply with the rules laid down by the Rhetoricians. Cf. Bollensen on Vikramorvas'i, p. 138.

[32] Sāhityadarpaṇa, 283, commentary.

[33] Windisch: "Der griechische Einfluss im indischen Drama" (Berlin, 1882), p. 77 f., 105 f. Lévi, l.c., 379 f. Cf. Bharata, 5, 150 ff.; Sāhityadarpaṇa, 283, with the commentary.

[34] In the verse with two meanings, Haravijaya, 40, 38, to which my attention has been called by Zachariae, we find the still clearer *utthāpaka* used instead of *sthāpaka*. This may be compared to *sthāpitā*, Mālatīm. 350, 3, used in connection with puppets, and *sthiti* in the Kathākos'ā, p. 40, note *.

[35] Magnin, l.c., p. 152 f.

[36] Prutz: "Vorlesungen über die Geschichte des deutschen Theaters" (Berlin, 1847), p. 220.

[37] Magnin, l.c., p. 329.

[38] Magnin, l.c., p. 148.

[39] Magnin, l.c., p. 246 ff.

[40] Magnin, l.c., p. 130.

[41] Prutz, l.c., p. 207.

[42] In the Kathākos'ā the assistants of the puppet-player are described as *veṣakarāḥ*, i.e. 'tailors.'

[43] Hillebrandt: "Ritual-Litteratur," p. 150.

[44] Hillebrandt: "Romanische Forschungen," v, 337.

[45] Hillebrandt: "Vedische Mythologie," 1, 75 ff.; cf. particularly p. 81. I cannot agree with the explanation.

[46] Weber: "Indische Studien," 13, 488 ff.

[47] Dahlmann: "Das Mahābhārata als Epos und Rechtsbuch" (Berlin, 1895), p. 298. Huizinga: "De Vidūṣaka in het Indisch Tooneel" (Groningen, 1897), p. 13.

[48] "Verhandlungen der 33 Versammlung deutscher Philologen und Schulmänner in Gera 1878" (Leipzig, 1879), p. 28.

[49] Pischel: G.G.A., 1891, p. 357.

[50] Pischel, l.c.

[51] Rosen: "Die Indarsabhā des Amānat" (Leipzig, 1891), p. 4; Minajev: "Narodnyja dramatičeskija predstavlenija v prazdnik Holi v Almoré" (Sanktpeterburg, 1891), p. 1.

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[52] So first Devrient in his "Geschichte der deutschen Schauspielkunst" (Leipzig, 1848), 1, 225, who wrote 'Velthen'; after him Carl Heine, "Johannes Velten: ein Beitrag zur Geschichte des deutschen Theaters im xvii Jahrhundert" (Halle-a.-S., 1887, p. 3), supports the spelling 'Velten.' The name is generally written 'Veltheim,' and Leipzig is mentioned as his birthplace.

[53] "Die Vagabunden," 3, 181 (Breslau, 1852).

[54] Kollmann: "Deutsche Puppenspiele" (Leipzig, 1891), p. 15.

[55] Oman: "Indian Life," p. 194.

[56] Rosen, l.c., p. 4, note; Kissory Chand Mittra, Calcutta Review, lvii (1873), pp. 261, 272.

[57] Prutz, l.c., p. 207; Devrient, l.c., p. 316; Magnin, l.c., p. 310.

[58] l.c., 176. 178.

[59] So, lastly, Reuling in "Die komische Figur in den wichtigsten deutschen Dramen bis zum Ende des xvii Jahrhunderts" (Stuttgart, 1890), who also treats of puppet-plays, p. 145 ff., without recognizing that from them the comic figure took its beginning. Dieterich, "Pulcinella" (Leipzig, 1897), p. 266 ff., tries to prove its origin from Lower Italy.

[60] Huizinga, l.c., p. 65. It must suffice here to refer to this work for the subsequent accounts of the Vidūṣaka. I shall give a more detailed treatment of the whole subject later on, if I succeed in obtaining from India fuller information about the puppet-play. Then I shall also treat of the Bhāṇa and the Chāyānāṭaka.

[61] Compare the reproduction of it in Schlagintweit: "Indien in Wort und Bild" (Leipzig, 1881), 2, 12.

[62] This explanation of Yaśodhara, on Kāmasūtra, 59, 6, seems the most probable of all those suggested (cf. Huizinga, p. 64). Perhaps Vidūṣaka is only a Sanskrit corruption of a vernacular expression meaning something quite different.

[63] Ratnāvalī, 317, 11 ff.

[64] Kissory Chand Mittra, l.c., pp. 248, 271 f.; Oman, l.c., p. 186.

[65] Lassen ("Indische Alterthumskunde," 4, 829) has already called the Vidūṣaka "the Indian equivalent of the German Hanswurst and Italian Policinello and Arlequino." But neither

he nor anyone else has, up till now, identified the two as one and the same person.

[66] Thus more correct in my opinion than Creizenach, "Die Schauspiele der englischen Komödianten," p. xciii ff.; cf. also Heine, l.c., p. 23, f. 29.

[67] l.c., p. 178. Cf. also Reuling, l.c., pp. 4, 152.

[68] Prutz, l.c., p. 214.

[69] "De Wajang poerwâ" (Leiden, 1896). Serrurier rejects the common assumption that Sĕmar and his sons are a Javanese creation, and says (p. 93): "Ze zijn te veel geacheveerd, te goed in hunne rol, en daarbij te populair om niet een lange geschiedenis achter zich te hebben; zulke figuren komen maar niet op eens pasklaar voor den dag." Cf. p. 98.

[70] "Türkische Litteraturgeschichte in Einzeldarstellungen," Heft I: "Das türkische Schattentheater" (Berlin, 1900), p. 19 ff.

[71] Chodzko: "Théâtre persan" (Paris, 1878), p. xiv ff. From p. xvi it follows that the Persian comic character still resembles the Indian on account of "son éducation éminemment religieuse" and "son occupation favorite . . . . à faire la cour aux dames et parfois aux mignons."

[72] "Travels in Various Countries of the East, more particularly Persia" (London, 1823), iii, 400 ff.

[73] Cf. also Magnin, l.c., p. 36, note 3.

[74] l.c., p. 20 f.

[75] Liebich: "Die Zigeuner in ihrem Wesen und in ihrer Sprache" (Leipzig, 1863), p. 63.

[76] Kogalnitchan: "Esquisse sur l'histoire, les mœurs, et la langue des Cigans" (Berlin, 1837), p. 18, = translated . . . . by Casca (Stuttgart, 1840), p. 25.

[77] A description and picture of a puppet-show by gypsies at Mahale is to be found in Kanitz, "Donau-Bulgarien und der Balkan," ii, 192 (Leipzig, 1877). I must thank Herr Dr. Jacob for the reference. It is probably only a coincidence that there, as in the Kathākos'a, there are four puppets used, and that they are not moved by threads.

[78] Liebich, l.c., p. 63; Kollmann, l.c., p. 14; Groome, Journal of the Gypsy Lore Society, ii, 23.

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[79] Groome, l.c., ii, 23 f.

[80] By this, of course, it is not meant that gypsies have contributed in any way whatever to the spread of the puppet-play in the West. The Romany word for 'puppet' is *kuki*, *kukli*, for 'puppet-play' *kukiengĕro khĕlĕpĕn*, for 'puppet-player' *kukiengĕro khĕlĕpaskĕro*: Bischoff, "Deutsch-Zigeunerisches Wörterbuch" (Ilmenau, 1827), p. 43; Liebich, l.c., pp. 138, 221, 230; v. Sowa, "Wörterbuch des Dialekts der deutschen Zigeuner" (Leipzig, 1898), p. 45. The word, up till now, has only been found among German gypsies, and Pott, "Die Zigeuner in Europa und Asien," 2, 92, traces it back to the modern Greek κούκλα, 'puppet.' *Kukla* is said by Zenker to be also Turkish; and Gustav Meyer, "Türkische Studien" (Wien, 1893), I, 40 (cf. Jacob, l.c., p. 5, note 1), traces this also back to κούκλα, and compares it with the Latin *cucullus*. All of them have overlooked the fact that *kukla* is also the ordinary word for 'puppet' in Russian. It can hardly have come into Russian from the modern Greek. Among the Slavonic elements in the gypsy dialects, Miklosich does not mention *kuki*, *kukli*, in "Ueber die Mundarten und die Wanderungen der Zigeuner Europas," i, 20. The gypsy word might be allied to the provincial Indian *kukulā*, 'bride' (Hemacandra, "Desīnāmamālā," 2, 33). Thus, in the Kathākosa also, *dārāḥ*, 'wife,' is used for 'puppet' (note 25). But the modern Greek κούκλα and Russian *kukla* make this improbable. Perhaps we shall attain certainty as soon as the direction taken by the puppet-play in its wanderings can be more definitely traced. Further India and China must be taken into consideration as well as Java.

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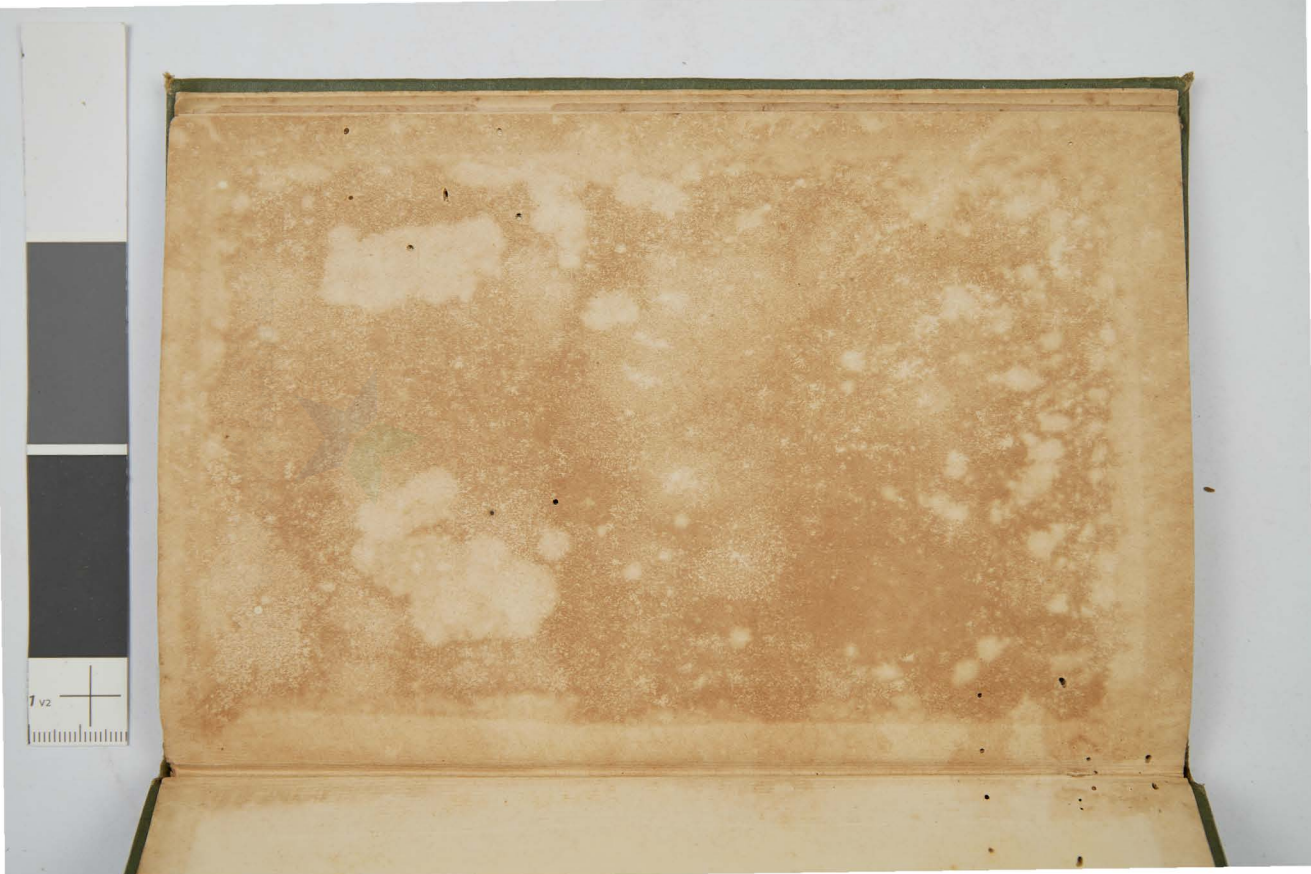


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