

A
GRAMMAR
OF THE
MAHRATTA LANGUAGE

TO WHICH ARE ADDED
DIALOGUES ON FAMILIAR SUBJECTS.

THE THIRD EDITION.

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PREFACE.

THE successes which have lately crowned our military operations, have added several rich and important provinces to the British Empire in India. The Mahratta language is universally spoken in some of these provinces, and throughout the whole of those states from which it is denominated.

A line drawn across the peninsula in the latitude of Visiapore, will nearly express the southern boundary of this language, and another at a small distance from *Oojjuina*, in about twenty-four degrees north latitude, will nearly mark its northern limits. From east to west its extent is various, but it may, in general, be reckoned to be spoken from the mountains which separate Bengal, Bahar, and Orissa from the countries immediately west of them, to the western side of the peninsula, and the province of Guzerat.

The study of this language having been lately introduced into the College of Fort William (an institution which will always reflect the highest honour on its Noble Founder, and Patron) elementary books became absolutely necessary; and the office of teaching it having been confided to the author of the following work, he thought it a part of his duty to do the

most in his power towards facilitating the acquisition thereof
by attempting this grammar.

Every one must be sensible of the difficulty of reducing to rules a language which has hitherto been almost wholly neglected. On this account it is hoped the public will put the best construction on any imperfections which may attend a first attempt. A grammar of this language was, indeed, written, many years ago, in the Portuguese tongue, but the writer of this, not having been able to procure a copy of it, could not derive any assistance from the labours of its author, and has been therefore obliged to strike out a plan of his own.

Very considerable assistance has been received from the observations of Vidya-natha, the chief Mahratta pundit in the College of Fort William, whose zeal and ability are highly honourable to himself, and promise to be of great advantage to those students who may engage in the study of this language.

The character used in the Mahratta states, in all writings which relate to business, is the Moorh, but among men of learning the Deva Naguri is the best known, it being the character in which their books are written. This was the reason why that character was used in the first edition; but it having since appeared that a knowledge of the current character is neces-

sary to the transacting of business, it has been made use of in the present edition.

Some familiar dialogues, upon common subjects, are added, by way of Appendix, which may serve for exercises to the student, and will be a sufficient introduction to the study of writings of a higher class.

This grammar is now submitted to the candour of the public. If it be found to yield assistance in acquiring a language, which introduces to our acquaintance so many millions of our fellow creatures, to whose customs, commerce, wants, and interests we have hitherto been, necessarily, strangers, it will be esteemed a sufficient compensation for the time spent in writing and preparing it for the press.

W. CAREY.

Serampore, 1st June, 1808.