

adopted by all nations has but little chance of success, though all the researches referring to the subject, are of the greatest importance, and have materially facilitated the rapid progress of comparative philology.

Simplicity in the mode of spelling generally used, and the avoiding as much as possible of all unusual signs and letters, not only assist the general spreading of a system, but possess also a real practical bearing. On this particular head I may refer to Colonel ARTHUR COTTON's detailed considerations "On the Study of Living Languages."¹ With regard to the more general introduction of Roman characters in preference to the use of native alphabets, there seems to be a good chance of success, at least if we may rely upon the opinion of many men thoroughly acquainted, by long personal residence and experience, with the condition of the country.

As a further consideration I may suggest that, although a powerful influence attaches to the political position of Europeans in the Orient, it might yet be considerably enhanced by the introduction of the Roman alphabet, provided the effect of the latter was not weakened by the employment of too many distinctions, which would materially limit its ready acceptance by the natives.

I cannot do better, in concluding this portion of my essay, than recur to Dr. CALDWELL's noteworthy remarks upon this subject: he says, that the Roman alphabet is "a) the most simple, b) the most legible, c) the most compact character in existence; its introduction would decidedly facilitate the writing and reading of the native languages, even for the natives."²

5. ACCOUNT OF SYSTEMS HITHERTO PROPOSED.

The works in connection with the various questions alluded to above, are far too numerous to be quoted here with any attempt at completeness; we have, however, here brought together the titles of many standard and useful productions as an assistance to the reader. As particularly interesting for general consideration I first mention LEPSIUS's "Standard Alphabet for reducing Unwritten Languages

¹ Madras Journal of Literature and Science. New Series, Vol. II., No. IV., pp. 214-253.

² Journal of the Madras Literary Society. New Series, Vol. IV., p. 243, et seq. As incidental to the subject, although not important enough to be connected with the propositions made above, I may still allude to the difficulty of sending telegraphic messages in native characters, writing mathematical formulæ, and a great number of other similar cases.