

being cut out of the papyrus stalk. Written on this material, the orders of the Khalifs went out into all the world until shortly before our time. Papyrus has this advantage over vellum, that you can neither rub out nor change anything on it, because thereby it would be destroyed. It was in China that paper was first manufactured. Chinese prisoners introduced the fabrication of paper into Samarkand, and thereupon it was made in various places, so as to meet the existing want.

The Hindus have in the south of their country a slender tree like the date and cocoa-nut palms, bearing edible fruits and leaves of the length of one yard, and as broad as three fingers one put beside the other. They call these leaves *târî* (*tâla* or *târ* = *Borassus flabelliformis*), and write on them. They bind a book of these leaves together by a cord on which they are arranged, the cord going through all the leaves by a hole in the middle of each.

In Central and Northern India people use the bark of the *tûz* tree, one kind of which is used as a cover for bows. It is called *bhûrja*. They take a piece one yard long and as broad as the outstretched fingers of the hand, or somewhat less, and prepare it in various ways. They oil and polish it so as to make it hard and smooth, and then they write on it. The proper order of the single leaves is marked by numbers. The whole book is wrapped up in a piece of cloth and fastened between two tablets of the same size. Such a book is called *pûthî* (cf. *pusta*, *pustaka*). Their letters, and whatever else they have to write, they write on the bark of the *tûz* tree.

As to the writing or alphabet of the Hindus, we have already mentioned that it once had been lost and forgotten; that nobody cared for it; and that in consequence people became illiterate, sunken into gross ignorance, and entirely estranged from science. But then Vyâsa, the son of Parâsara, rediscovered their

On the  
Hindu  
alphabet.