

FROM THE ILLUMINATED SANSKRIT MANUSCRIPT OF THE 19th CENTURY described in the preceding folder. This manuscript was illustrated with charming miniatures, one of which is here submitted as an example of Hindu painting. The Mughal School of pictorial art, essentially Persian, influenced, but by no means dominated, the native Indian art, which after the glorious period of the Ajanta frescoes had sunk into obscurity for a thousand years, only to reappear in the 16th Century. This modern Indian revival, however, developed an art of distinct character and beauty, which reached its height in the Rajput School of the 17th and 18th Centuries, and has inspired all Hindu schools to the present day. ¶ "Broadly Mughal art may be defined as aristocratic and genuinely realistic," writes Percy Brown, "while the Rajput painting, although similar in all its technical aspects, is democratic and, in the main, mystic. The latter art reveals all the religious fervor of the Ajanta frescoes, but, in place of the passiveness of the Buddhist religion, it is founded on the restless energy of the Hindu pantheon. This is its fundamental idea, but it also embraces every aspect of Indian national life, and delves deeply into the fascinating folklore of the country. From this it will be seen that Rajput painting is essentially a people's art, produced naturally by the people for their own pleasure and edification. . . . This art, therefore, resolves itself into two broad divisions, on the one hand representations of the everyday life of the ordinary Indian, and on the other pictures of that mythological and religious work which was the delight of his fancy and at the same time the bedrock of his existence." ¶ The miniature here selected represents scenes from the Mahabharata already referred to, and at once exemplifies the weird symbolism of that fantastic epic, and the modern lavish employment of decoration, in contrast to the severity of the early Buddhist art.

