Twitter Thread by Tanvangi



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William Carey and Languages

There are multiple references in his various letters where he writes about how various translations are coming along. I will post some of the references here. The reader can draw their own conclusions.

Letter describing his daily routine. He implies that he was attempting to learn multiple languages at that point of time with the help of various locals/natives.

Here we find him mentioning his book on Sanskrit grammar which he hoped to send to England.

A reference to the languages that Carey was somewhat familiar with as per him.

Another reference to Him translating Bible into Sanskrit.

While digging up some of the information, I came across a PDF named Carey Hymns. Out of curiosity I checked out a few of the hymns. I expected them to be poems or songs. Curious I got @miiranarayan to translate a couple of them for me. She was sweet enough to do that.

The entire book is full of hymns praising Jesus written in Bengali. Some are written by Carey himself while some are written by others and translated by Carey. This shows that he had a certain amount of command over the language.

In fact the Britannica Encyclopaedia goes on to call him the father of Bengali prose. No idea how true this is though. Seems far-fetched.

He is also credited to having translated the entire Ramayana into English.He is credited to have written a book on Sanskrit grammar.

Plus he has written dictionaries on words in Bengali, Sanskrit, and Marathi.

He was at least familiar with some of the local languages, most prominently Bengali, Sanskrit and Marathi.