

## 8. THE INDIAN BOOMERANG.

SIR,—At the Oriental Congress in Paris, in the course of a paper read before the Indian Section, I alluded to the use of the boomerang among both the ancient and modern Dravidian tribes of the south of India, and hazarded the suggestion that this weapon was not known in the north. I was promptly corrected by several members present, and from what I could then gather its use seems to have been known, at least in modern times, to the Bhils and other pre-Aryan tribes. There remains the question of its antiquity. Professor Ludwig stated that the boomerang was mentioned in the *Mahābhārata*. He has now favoured me with the reference, and I think it may be of interest to your readers if published. The passage is found in Nilakaṇṭha's Commentary on the *Mahābhārata* (V, 155, 9), where he explains *r̥ṣṭi*—*Dravideṣu prasiddham hasta kṣēpyam vakram kāṣṭhaphalakam* (a small board, flat and crooked, to be thrown out of the hand, well known amongst the Dravidas). Dr. Ludwig writes: "Other arms, partly of a similar sort, are explained before; for instance, *pāçāḥ samīpagatasya gale prakṣepārtham*, etc." (a noose to be thrown around the neck when near); and he then expresses his conviction that the above is the only passage in Nilakaṇṭha's commentary relating to the term *r̥ṣṭi*. Nilakaṇṭha was a southron, and alludes frequently to Mārāṭhi expressions.

R. SEWELL.

## 9. THE TEXT OF THE MAHĀBHĀRATA.

SIR,—I send you an extract from a letter received by me from Professor Ludwig, after obtaining his permission. It relates to the various recensions of the text of the *Mahābhārata*, and is of considerable interest.

"I have now compared a few thousand strophes of the Madras *Mahābhārata*, and have found to my astonishment that it is nearly identical with the *Mahābhārata* of the Calcutta