

Lahndā has no written character of its own. It contains no prose literature,¹ and the poetry written in it is of the nature of folk-poetry, stored in the memory, and seldom committed to writing.

Written Character.

Perhaps the Persian character is the one most commonly employed for literary purposes, but this is only because it is the character familiar to the educated men who may wish to record a piece of Lahndā for some special need. The Gurmukhī character is also sometimes used under the same circumstances. But the character used all over the country by Hindūs is that current over the whole of the Panjab and Sind, and known as the *Laṇḍā* or 'clipped' alphabet. It is closely related to the Mahājanī character of Marwar, and also to the Ṭākri of the Panjab Hills and, through it, to the Śāradā alphabet employed in Kashmir. It is a very incomplete alphabet, vowel signs being hardly ever used except when initial. It is in fact generally legible to no one but the original writer, and not always to him.² European students of Lahndā invariably write it in the Roman character, and this is followed in the present account. But specimens written in the Persian character will be found on pp. 312 and 349, and a specimen in the *Laṇḍā* character on p. 315.

The Gurmukhī alphabet is an improved and polished form of *Laṇḍā*, said to have been invented by Aṅgad, the second Sikh Guru (1538-1552 A.D.), for the purpose of recording the Scriptures of the Sikh religion. It is said that he found that Sikh hymns written in *Laṇḍā* were liable to be misread, and he accordingly improved it by borrowing signs (especially vowel signs) from the Nāgarī alphabet and by polishing up the forms of the existing *Laṇḍā* consonants.

The following table shows the *Laṇḍā* alphabet compared with Gurmukhī :—

¹ The *Janam Sākhi*, a well-known Sikh book, is written in a dialect which is half Pañjābī and half Lahndā. This is the dialect described as Lahindā by Mr. Tisdall. The book is usually printed in the Gurmukhī character.

² Several specimens of the *Laṇḍā* character will be found in Dr. Leitner's *Collection of Specimens of Commercial and other Alphabets and Handwritings as also of Multiplication tables current in various Parts of the Panjab, Sind and the North-West Provinces*, 'Anjuman-i-Punjab' Press, Lahore, no date. These are not accompanied by any explanation, and are hence of little help to the learner. It is hardly necessary to point out that the word '*Laṇḍā*' has no connexion whatever with the word '*Lahndā*.'

Gurmukhi.	Landa.	Transliteration.	Gurmukhi.	Landa.	Transliteration.
ੜ	ੜ	a ('āirā')	ੜ	ੜ	da
ੲ	ੲ	i ('īrī')	ੲ	ੲ	dha
ਊ	ਊ	u ('ūrā')	ਊ	ਊ	na
ਊ	ਊ	ō	ੳ	ੳ	ta
ਸ	ਸ	sa	ਬ	ਬ	tha
ਜ	ਜ	ha	ਦ	ਦ	da
ਕ	ਕ	ka	ਪ	ਪ	dha
ਖ	ਖ	khu	ਨ	ਨ	na
ਗ	ਗ	ga	ਪ	ਪ	pa
ਘ	ਘ	gha	ਠ	ਠ	phu
ਙ	ਙ	na	ਬ	ਭ	ba
ਚ	ਚ	cha	ਭ	ਭ	bha
ਛ	ਛ	chhu	ਮ	ਮ	ma
ਜ	ਜ	ja	ਯ	ਯ	ya
ਝ	ਝ	jha	ਰ	ਰ	ra
ਞ	ਞ	ña	ਲ	ਲ	la
ਟ	ਟ	ṭa	ਵ	ਵ	va
ਠ	ਠ	ṭha	ਰ	ਰ	ra

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