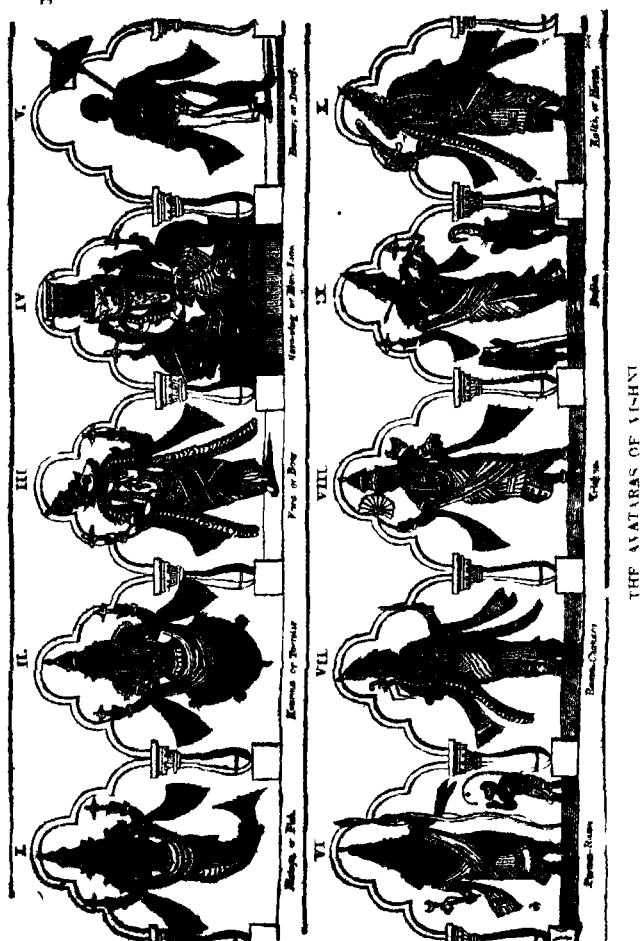


TEN INCARNATIONS OF VISHNU.

According to the generally received account, the incarnations of Vishnu are ten in number, each of them being assumed by Vishnu, the great preserving power, to save the world from some great danger or trouble.



1. The Fish (Matsya).—This is an appropriation to Vishnu of the ancient legend of the fish and the deluge as related in the Satapatha Bráhmána. The object was to save Vaivasvata, the seventh Manu, and the progenitor of the human race from destruction by a deluge. Manu recognised the divinity of the fish, and worshipped Vishnu thus incarnate.

The Bhāgavata Purāṇa gives another version. In one of the nights of Brahmā, the earth was submerged in the Ocean. The demon Hayagrīva drew near and carried off the Veda which had issued from Brāhman's mouth. To recover the Veda thus lost, Vishnu assumed the form of a fish. When Brahmā awoke at the end of this dissolution of the universe, Vishnu slew Hayagrīva and restored the Veda to Brahmā.

2. **The Tortoise** (Kūrmā).—In the Satyaṇtha Brāhmana it is said that Prajāpati, having assumed the form of a tortoise, created offspring. In the later form of the legend, Vishnu appeared in the form of a tortoise in the Satya-yuga to recover some things which had been lost in the deluge. In the form of a tortoise he placed himself at bottom of the sea of milk, and made his back the pivot of the mountain Mandara. The gods and asuras twisted the great serpent Vāsuki round the mountain, and dividing into two parties, each took an end of the snake as a rope, and then chained the sea till they obtained the 14 desired objects, the first of which was *amṛta*, the water of life. This was to have been divided between the gods and asuras, but the latter were defrauded of their portion.

3. **The Boar** (Varāha).—The old legend of the Brahmanas concerning the boar which raised the earth from the waters has been appropriated to Vishnu.

One version is that the Daitya Hiranyāksha, 'golden-eye,' dragged the earth to the bottom of the ocean. Vishnu infused part of his essence into a huge boar, dived down into the abyss, and after a contest of a thousand years slew the demon and raised up the earth. The Vana Parva of the Mahābhārata, on the other hand, states that the earth was pressed down and sunk by an ever-increasing population, until the boar descended into the waters, upheaved it on one of his tusks, and made it fit to be re-inhabited.

4. **The Man lion** (Narasimha).—The demon Hiranya-Kasipu, 'golden dress,' by the favor of Brahmā, had obtained a boon that he could not be destroyed by gods, men, and animals. Hence he became so powerful as to usurp the dominion of the three worlds. The demon's son, named Prahlāda, worshipped Vishnu, which so enraged his father that he tried to kill him, but his efforts were all in vain. Contending with his son as to the omnipotence and omnipresence of Vishnu, Hiranyakasipu demanded to know if Vishnu was present in a stone or pillar in the hall, and struck it violently. To avenge Prahlāda and vindicate his own majesty, Vishnu came forth from the pillar as the Narasimha, half-man and half-lion, and tore the arrogant Daitya king to pieces.

These four incarnations are supposed to have appeared in the first age of the world.

5. **The Dwarf (Vāmana).**—The origin of this incarnation is “the three strides of Vishnu,” spoken of in the Rig-Veda. In the Treta-yuga, or second age, the Daitya King Bali had, by his devotions and austerities, acquired the dominion of the three worlds, and the gods were shorn of their power and dignity. To remedy this, Vishnu was born as a diminutive son of Kasyapa and Aditi. The dwarf appeared before Bali, and begged of him as much land as he could step over in three paces. When his request was granted, the dwarf’s form expanded, and he took two strides over heaven and earth. Respecting the virtues of the king, he then stopped, leaving the dominion of Pātāla to Bali.

In the next three incarnations we have the heroic element

6. **Parasu-rāma** (Rāma with the axe).—He was so called from an axe, *parasu*, said to have been given to him by Siva. He was a Brahman, the son of Jamadagni and Renukā. Kārtavīrya, a Kshatriya king, had a thousand arms. The king visited the hermitage of Jamadagni in the absence of the sage, and was hospitably entertained by his wife; but when he departed he carried off a sacrificial calf. Parasu-rāma, enraged at this, pursued Kārtavīrya and slew him. In retaliation the sons of Kārtavīrya killed Jamadagni. Parasu-rāma then vowed vengeance against them and the whole Kshatriya race. Thrice seven times did he clear the earth of the Kshatriya caste, and he filled with their blood the five large lakes of Samanta-panchaka. He then gave the earth to Kasyapa, and retired to the Mahendra mountain.

In the Rāmāyana Parasu-rāma challenges Rāma to a trial of strength, but is defeated.

7. **Rama-chandra.**—(The moon-like Rāma).—Rāma, the hero of the Rāmāyana, was the son of Dasaratha, king of Ayodhya, of the Solar race, and was born in the Treta-yuga for the purpose of destroying Rāvana, the tyrant demon who reigned in Ceylon.

In the Rāmāyana, as originally written, Rāma is only a hero, endued with superhuman powers. He frankly confesses that he believes himself to be only a mortal. In the Yuddha-Kānda Brahmā thus addresses Rāma: “Thou art the god, the glorious lord Nārāyana, armed with the discus. Thou art the one-horned boar, the conqueror of thy foes, past and future, the true imperishable Brahmā, both in the middle and end, Sītā is Lakshmi.” In the Uttara Kānda Brahma again says, “Enter thine own body as Vishnu. For thou art the abode of the worlds.” Such passages are considered by Oriental scholars to be later additions.

8. **Krishna** (The Black).—This is the most popular of all the later deities, and has obtained such pre-eminence that his votaries look upon him, not simply as an incarnation, but as a

* Chandra is often added names to express beauty

perfect manifestation of Vishnu. This descent, at the end of the Dvāpara, or third age of the world, was for the destruction of the tyrant Kansa, the representative of the principle of evil as Ravana was in the previous incarnation.

Goldstücker says

"Krishna is the most interesting incarnation of Vishnu, both on account of the opportunity which it affords to trace in Hindu antiquity the gradual transformation of mortal heroes into representatives of God, and on account of the numerous legends connected with it as well as the influence which it exercised on the Vaishnava cult. In the Mahābhārata Krishna is sometimes represented as paying homage to Siva, and therefore acknowledging his own inferiority to that deity, or as recommending the worship of Umā, the consort of Siva, and as receiving boons from both these deities. In some passages, again, he bears merely the character of a hero endowed with extraordinary powers, and in others his divine nature is even disputed or denied by adversaries, though they are eventually punished for their unbelief. As the intimate ally of Arjuna, he claims the rank of the supreme deity, but there are other passages, again, in the Mahābhārata in which the same claim of Siva is admitted and an attempt is made at compromising their rival claims, by declaring both deities one and the same. Sometimes, moreover, Krishna is in this Epos declared to represent merely a very small portion—'a portion of a portion' as it is called—of the divine essence of Vishnu. In the Mahābhārata, therefore, which is silent also regarding many adventures in Krishna's life fully detailed in the Purānas, the worship of Vishnu in this incarnation was by no means so generally admitted or settled as it is in many Purānas of the Vaishnava Sect; nor was there at that period that consistency in the conception of a Krishna Avatāra which is unceasing in the late works."*

Krishna appears in two very different characters. The popular idea of him is found in the Bhāgavat Purāna. He is represented as mischievous and disobedient as a child, guilty of theft and lying, stealing the clothes of the gopis and sporting with them as having 8 queens and 16,100 wives, who burnt up Kasi, destroying its inhabitants, and who finished his course by slaying a great number of his 180,000 sons.

In the Bhagavad Gītā, included in the Bhīshma Parva of the Mahābhārata, there is no reference to the disgraceful conduct of Krishna as described in the Purānas, but he discourses to Arjuna on the Vedānta philosophy, and reveals himself as the Supreme Being with a lustre greater than that of a thousand suns bursting forth at once into the sky.

"According to some," says Monier-Williams, "Krishna ought not to be reckoned as one of the ten avatāras or descents of portions of Vishnu's essence, for he was nothing short of Vishnu's whole

* Chambers's *Encyclopædia*

essence. Those who hold this doctrine substitute Balarāma, 'The strong Rāma' the elder brother of Krishna, as the eighth incarnation of Vishnu. This Balarāma is more usually regarded as an incarnation of the great serpent Sesha."*

9. **Buddha.**—"This incarnation of Vishnu", says Goldstücker, "is originally foreign to the cycle of the avatāras of Vishnu, and therefore is only briefly alluded to in some of the Purānas. Where this is done, the intention must have been to effect a compromise between Brahmanism and Buddhism, by trying to represent the latter religion as not irreconcilably antagonistic to the former." "The Brahmanical writers were far too shrewd to admit that one who could influence men as Buddha did could be other than an incarnation of deity; and as his influence was in favor of teaching opposed to their own, which was for a time prohibited throughout the country, they cleverly say that it was to mislead the enemies of gods that Buddha promulgated his doctrine, that they, becoming weak and wicked through their errors, might fall an easy prey."†

One theory was that Vishnu, in his compassion for animals, descended as the sceptical Buddha that he might bring discredit on Vedic sacrifices. A second was that wicked men might bring destruction on themselves by accepting Buddhism, and denying the supremacy of the gods.

The Brahmins appropriated Buddha as far as it suited their own purpose.

10. **Kalki or Kalkin.**—This descent is not to appear till the close of the Kali age, when the world has become wholly depraved. He is then to be revealed in the sky, seated on a white horse, with a drawn sword blazing like a comet, for the final destruction of the wicked, for the redemption of the gods, for the renovation of all creation, and restoration of the Satya Yuga.

It is a remarkable fact that a belief in a coming Redeemer seems to exist in all the great religions. In Buddhism there is the future Buddha, in Islam, the Mahdi, in Christianity, Jesus Christ.

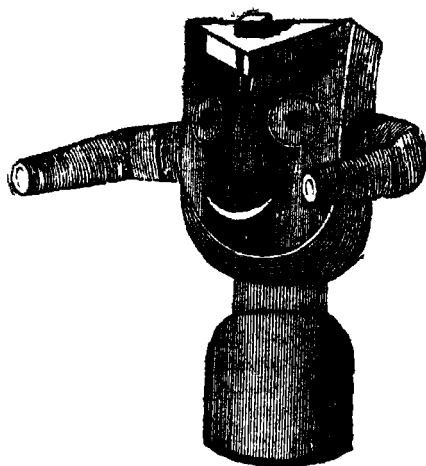
The above are the usually recognised Avatāras, but the number is sometimes extended. The Bhāgavad Purāna enumerates 22 incarnations, but adds "The incarnations of Vishnu are innumerable, like the rivulets flowing from an inexhaustible lake. Rishis, Manus, sons of Manus, Prajāpatis, are all portions of him."

JAGANNATH.

JAGANNATH, 'Lord of the world,' is a form of Krishna especially worshipped at Puri, in Orissa. The following legend thus explains the origin of the image.

When Krishna was accidentally shot by the hunter Jara, his bones were left by him to rot under the tree where he died, until

* *Brahmanism and Hindunism*, p. 112. † Wilkin's *Hindu Mythology*, p. 190.



JAGANNATH.

some pious person collected them and placed them in a box. There they remained until Indradhumna, a king who was earnestly striving to propitiate Vishnu, was directed to form an image and place in it these bones, with the assurance that he would obtain a rich reward for his religious deed. When Indradhumna wished to follow this advice, he prayed to Visvakarma to assist him in making the image. The architect of the gods consented to do this, but was most careful in explaining to the king, that if any one looked at him whilst he was at work, he would immediately desist, and leave the image in an unfinished state. The king promised to observe this condition, and Visvakarma commenced his work. In one night he raised a grand temple on the blue mountains of Orissa, and was working at the image in the temple. The king, after restraining his impatience for 15 days, foolishly tried to see the god at work. He at once discontinued as he had said, and the image was left with a very ugly face and without hands or feet. The king, being exceedingly grieved as he saw the result of his curiosity, went in his distress to Brahmā, who comforted him with the promise that he would render the image famous in its present form. The king invited the gods to be present at its inauguration. Brahmā himself officiated as priest, gave eyes and a soul to the god, and thus the form of Jagannath was completely established.

The picture of the image is copied from one in Dr. Rajendra-lala Mitra's *Antiquities of Orissa*, and is an exact likeness. He describes the image as "*the most hideous caricature of the human face divine*." In the Audience Hall there are some human figures

which Dr. Mitra says are "disgustingly obscene." Attached to the temple there are about 120 dancing girls.

The image of Jagannath is not only worshipped in the temple, but three days each year it is exposed to view. On the first of these days, called the *Snána Yātra* (Bathing Festival) the idol is taken from its shrine, and on a lofty platform, in sight of vast multitudes, is bathed by the priests. It is pretended that a cold is thus given, and the image is taken to the Sick Chamber for a fortnight. The real object is to wash off the dust and soot contracted during the year. The *Ratha Yātra* (Car Festival,) is next celebrated, when the image is placed in an immense car and taken to Jagannath's country house. The third is the Return Festival. The great desire of the pilgrims is to see the image, which is supposed to cleanse from all sin, but religious merit is also supposed to be obtained by assisting to draw the car.

THE NAMES OF VISHNU.

Vishnu's worshippers have endowed him with a thousand names and epithets. The repetition of any or all of these names (*nāma sankirtana*), either with or without the help of a rosary, constitutes an important part of daily worship, and is productive of vast stores of religious merit. Some of the most common names are the following: *Ananta*, 'the endless'; *Chaturbhuja*, 'four armed'; *Dāmodara*, 'bound round the belly with a rope,' as *Krishna*, *Govinda* or *Gopāla*, 'the cowkeeper'; *Hari*; *Kesava*, 'the hairy, the radiant'; *Madhu-sūdana*, 'destroyer of Madhu'; *Nārāyana*, 'who moves on the waters'; *Purushottama*, 'the highest of men', etc.

VAISHNAVA SECTS.

Some account will now be given of the principal.

THE RAMANUJAS.

Of the existing Vaishnava sects, one of the earliest and purest is that founded by Rāmānuja, who lived in the 11th century of the Christian era, and was born at a place called Sri Perumbadur, 25 miles to the west of Madras. He studied and taught at Conjeveram, and resided towards the end of his life in the great temple of Vishnu at Srirangam, near Trichinopoly.

The Sivite religion had been flourishing through the teaching of *Sankara Achārya*; Rāmānuja directed all his energy to abolish the worship of the *linga* and to set up Vishnu as the only true god. He recommended the adoration of Vishnu, Krishna, and Rāma, with their lawfully married wives Lakshmi, Rukmani, and

Staté. Rádhá worship is unknown in Southern India. Images of Rámánuja and of some of his leading followers are provided with special niches in the Vishnuvite shrines belonging to this sect. At Sri Perumbadur there is a temple in which an image of Rámánuja is worshipped as the principal deity.

The philosophy of Rámánuja is popularly called *Vishishtadwaita*, or qualified non-duality. But he believed in three distinct original principles

1. The Supreme Spirit (Parabrahma or Isvara).
2. The Separate Spirits of Men, 'Chit.'
3. Non-spirit 'A-chit.'

Vishnu is the Supreme Being; individual beings are separate spirits; the visible world (*drisyam*) is non-spirit. All have an eternal existence and are inseparable, yet Chit and A-chit are different from Isvara and dependent upon him. At great dissolutions of the Universe, human souls and the world are re-absorbed into Isvara, but without losing their own separate identity.

The Rámánujas, about a century ago, were divided into two parties, called the Vadagalai, or Northern School, and the *Tengalalai*, or Southern School. They are more opposed to each other than both parties are to Saivas. The northern school accept the Sanskrit Scriptures. The Southern have compiled a Veda of their own, called The Four Thousand Verses (*Nalayira*) written in Tamil by seven Vaishnava Alvars or saints. It is sometimes called the Tamil Veda.

An important difference of doctrine, caused by different views of the nature of the soul's dependence on Vishnu, separates the two parties. The view taken by the Vadagalais is called the 'monkey theory'. The soul, say they, lays hold of the Supreme Being by its own free will, act, and effort, just as the young monkey clings to its mother. The Tengalais hold what is called the 'cat-hold theory'. The human soul remains helpless until acted on by the Supreme Being, just as the kitten remains helpless until transported by the mother cat.

Another difference between the tenets of the two sects lies on the views they take of the position of Vishnu's consort. The Vadagalais regard Lakshmi as equal to Vishnu in every respect, but the Tengalais maintain that Lakshmi is a created and finite being, and that she is to be worshipped only as a mediator.

The two sects have different forehead marks by which they can be distinguished. The *Tilak* of the Vadagalais is like the letter U, and that of the Tengalais like the letter Y. In both a perpendicular red or yellow streak, representing Sri or Lakshmi, bisects the space between the arms which are painted with white clay.

In addition to the mark painted on the forehead, the Rámánujas, both male and female, brand themselves with the marks of

Krishna's emblems, namely conch shell, and discus. Boys are branded after the thread ceremony, at the age of seven or upwards, and girls are subjected to the rite after marriage. The branding is done by the family guru, with a red-hot metallic stamp, and forms a part of the rites which are performed by him when he communicates to his disciple the sacred formula that is supposed to cause his regeneration. In Northern India branding is never practised, and the sacred formula consists of a few meaningless syllables. But among the Vaishnavas of Southern and Western India, the branding is the most important part of the ceremony. The sacred formula is significant of reverence for either Krishna or Rāma. Thus 'homage to the divine son of Vasudeva (Om namo Bhāgavate Vāsudevāya.) 'homage to the adorable Rāma' (Sri Rāmāya namah), or the eight-syllabled formula, 'adorable Krishna, is my refuge' (Sri Krishna Saranam mama)

A peculiarity common to both Rāmānuja sects is the strict privacy with which they eat and even prepare their meals. No Indians like to be looked at while eating. They are firm believers in the evil influence of the human eye (*drishti dosa*). The Rāmānujas carry these ideas to an extravagant extreme. They are prohibited from eating food that has been cooked or even seen by a stranger. They carefully lock the doors of their kitchens, and both during cooking and eating protect their operations from the gaze of even high-caste Brahmans of tribes and sects different from their own.

The Achāryas visit periodically every large town, when young persons are brought before them to be branded. Even those who have been initiated with the Brahmanical thread require, in addition, the Vaishnava brand. The Acharya is the guest of some well-to-do Brahman in the town, and reaps a rich harvest in fees.

MADHVACHARIS.

Next to the Rāmānuja, the Madhvas are the most important Vaishnava sect. They were founded by a Kanarese Brahman, named Madhva—otherwise called Ananda-tirtha—born about 1200 A.D., at a place called Udipi in South Canara. His doctrine is called Duality (*Dvaita*), and is noted for its opposition to the non-duality (*Advaita*) doctrine of Sankarāchārya.

Madhva taught that Vishnu is the one eternal Supreme Being, all other gods being subject to the law of periodical dissolution.

"Brahmā, Siva, and the greatest of the gods decay with the decay of their bodies, greater than them is the undecaying Hari."

Madhva differed from Rāmānuja in asserting that there are only two separate eternal principles, instead of three. The one

is the independent principle (God identified with Vishnu), the other is the dependent principle, consisting of innumerable human spirits.

It was Madhva's denial of the unity of the Supreme and human spirits which made him the opponent of Sankara.

The Vedantists maintained that the difference between one spirit and another was only illusory. Madhva affirmed that there was a real and inextinguishable difference.

"The Supreme Lord," said Madhva, "differs from the individual spirit because the Lord is the object of its obedience. A subject who obeys a king is different from that king. In their eager desire to be one with the Supreme Being, the followers of Sankara lay claim to the glory of his excellence. This is a mere mirage."

Nor have these two principles a qualified unity, comparable to the union of spirit and body, as affirmed by Rāmānuja. They are absolutely distinct.

According to Madhva, the Supreme Being is to be honoured in three ways—by naming, by worship, and by branding.

The act of naming (*nāma-karana*) is performed by giving a child one of the thousand names of Vishnu as a memorial of his dedication to the god.

The act of worship is three fold—(1) with the voice—by veracity, right conversation, kind words, and repetition of the Veda; (2) with the body—by giving alms to the poor, by defending and protecting them; (3) with the heart—by mercy, love, and faith.

The Madhvas, like the Rāmānujas, lay great stress on marking the body indelibly with the discus and shell of Vishnu. "On his right arm let the Brahman wear the discus, on his left the conch-shell."

The frontal mark of the Madhvas is the same as that of the Vadagalais, but there is a central black line made with charcoal, taken from incense burnt before images of Vishnu.

VALLABHA SECT

The third great Vaishnava sect is that founded by Vallabha. He is said to have lived in the 16th century. Originally he resided at Gokul, near Mathura. Afterwards he travelled for nine years, visiting the principal places of pilgrimage. On his return to Brindavan, he was honoured by a visit from Krishna in person, who then enjoined him to introduce the worship of the infant Krishna.

Vallabhachārya taught a new doctrine which he called *Pushti Mārga*, or the eat-and-drink doctrine. As privation formed no part of sanctity, God should be worshipped, not by nudity and hunger, but by costly apparel and good food; not in solitude and with mortification of the body, but in the pleasures of society and

in the enjoyment of the world. In accordance with these precepts the gossains, or teachers, are always clothed in the best raiment and fed with the daintiest viands by their followers over whom they have unlimited influence.

The descendants of Vallabha, now called Mahārājas, claim to be incarnations of Krishna, and are supposed to be privileged to act as he did. Men and women prostrate themselves at their feet, offering them incense, fruits, and flowers, and waving lights before them. It is believed that the best way of propitiating Krishna in heaven is by ministering to the sensual appetites of the Mahārājas. Body, soul, and property (*tan, man, dhan*), are to be wholly made over to them. Women are taught to believe that the highest bliss will be secured to themselves and then families by intercourse with the Mahārājas.

Children of the Vallabha sect on initiation have a necklace of 108 beads, made of tulsi wood, put round their necks by the Mahārājas, and they are taught the use of the eight syllabled prayer *Sri Krishnah saranam mama*, 'The adorable Krishna is my refuge.

The god worshipped is Krishna as a child, when he sported with the gopis.

There are said to be 60 or 70 Mahārājas scattered over India. Many of their followers are traders, who regularly tax themselves for their support, by giving 4 per cent. on sales effected.

The Mahārājas have also the occasional sources of income, given by Mr. Malabari.—

For homage by sight, Rs. 5, for homage by touch, Rs. 20, for the honour of washing the Mahārāja's foot, Rs. 35; for the credit of swinging him, Rs. 40, for the glory of rubbing sweet unguents on his body, Rs. 42, for the joy of sitting with him, Rs. 60, for the bliss of occupying the same room, Rs. 50 to 500, for the performance of the circular dance, Rs. 100 to 200, for the delight of eating the *pan supari* thrown out by the Mahārāja, Rs. 17, for drinking the water in which the Maharaja has bathed, or in which his foul linen has been washed, Rs. 19.

SWAMI NARAYAN, born about 1780 A.D. in North India, endeavoured to reform the abuses of the Vallabhachāris, and a small sect still professes to adhere to his doctrines.

CHAITANYA SECT.

The fourth principal sect of Vaishnavas are the followers of CHAITANYA in Bengal. Chaitanya is said to have been born at Nadiya, 1484 A.D. As a child he is said to have been disobedient like Krishna. His first wife died of snake bite, so he married again. At the age of 25, he commenced a series of pilgrimages which occupied six years. The last twelve years of his life were spent near the great temple of Jagannath at Puri. According to

some accounts he ended his life by walking into the sea near Puri, fancying he saw a vision of Krishna sporting on the waves with the Gopis.

Bhakti was the great mode of salvation proclaimed by Chaitanya. It might be exhibited in the four following ways :

1. The devotion of a servant to his master.
2. Do. friend to a friend.
3. Do. parent to a child.
4. Do. a lady to her lover.

The last was held to be the highest feeling. To bring about a condition of intense religious fervour, various practices were enjoined—for example, incessant repetition of the deity's name. (*nama-kirtana*), singing (*sankirtana*) music, dancing, or movements of the body allied to dancing.

Under the titles of *Lord Gauranga* or *Salvation for all*, his life was published in 1897 by S. Kumar Ghose.

RAMANANDIS.

RAMANANDA is said to have been born in the 13th century. The sect founded by him has many adherents in the Ganges valley, especially around Agra. The Rāmanandis have doctrines of their own. They worship Vishnu under the form of Rāma, either singly or conjointly with Sītā, and they are not, like the Rāmānugas, scrupulous about the privacy of their meals.

Their two favourite books are the *Bhakta māla*, lives of certain Vaishnava saints, and the *Rāmāyana* in Hindi of Tulsidās.

Rāmananda is chiefly noted for his twelve disciples, the most celebrated of whom was Kabir, who founded a theistic sect, called Kabir-panthis.

REVIEW.

Some account has been given of Vishnu as described in the principal Sacred Books of the Hindus, from the Rig Veda to the Purānas. References have been given, and the books mentioned can be examined by the readers

FIRST QUESTION FOR CONSIDERATION.

1. DOES SUCH A BEING AS VISHNU REALLY EXIST ?

Suppose a certain firm promises cent per cent return on investments, a prudent man will first enquire whether it really exists or is a bogus affair ? If Vishnu is merely an invention of the

poets, his worship must be useless. The reader is invited earnestly to consider the following remarks :

REASONS FOR DISBELIEVING THE EXISTENCE OF VISHNU.

1. In times past thousands of Gods have been invented which are no longer worshipped. —

The pages of history are strewn with the names of what may be called dead gods, as Bel, Merodoch, Jupiter, Juno, Apollo, Minerva, Thor, Woden, &c. They have been ascertained to have been mere imaginary beings, and have not now a single worshipper.

Principal Caird says

"The classic Paganism, Greek and Roman, the Syrian, Egyptian, and North African, the Druidic, and ultimately the Teutonic have all fallen to rise no more, and at this moment there is not on the face of the earth a single worshipper of 'the great goddess Diana' or 'the image that fell down from Jupiter,' of Baal or Dagon, of Isis or Serapis, of Thor and Woden."

"The gods that have not made the heavens and the earth, even they shall perish from the earth and from under these heavens."

These gods were once worshipped as zealously as Vishnu and Siva now are in India. The inference is that *possibly* the worship of the latter may similarly pass away.

2. Imaginary gods have been framed according to the advance in civilization of the time.

Among savages the only beings worshipped are evil spirits. When some progress of civilization and government has been made, the gods are supposed to be like the despotic kings of the time. They are provided with wives and children. They are above all law, and may act as they please, *Samarthi ko dosh nahin* 'To the mighty is no sin.'

The gods of the Hindus are typical of themselves at different periods in their history. More than 2,000 years ago, Aristotle, a famous Greek philosopher, said, 'Men create the gods after their own image, not only with regard to their form, but also with regard to their manner of life.' In Vedic times Indra is the soma-drinking martial god who recovers the celestial cows from the fort of Pani, and helps the Aryans in their wars against the aborigines. When the Aryans had overcome their enemies and were settled in India, Indra, as described in the Puranas, "is a gorgeous king of a luxurious and somewhat voluptuous court, where dance and music occupy most of his time." The gods of the Puranas are Hindu Rajas, with their tastes and surroundings, but possessed of superhuman powers

3. **The character attributed to Vishnu shows that he is an imaginary being.**—Cicero, a celebrated Roman, says of his countrymen and the Greeks, "Instead of the transfer to man of that which is divine, they transferred human sins to their gods, and experienced again the necessary action."

Any book attributing evil passions to God shows that it was not inspired by Him, but proceeded from the imagination of an evil heart.

Vishnu and Siva are considered the greatest of the gods, but the story of Mohini alone makes one regard their whole history as a wicked invention. The same remark applies to Krishna as described in the Bhāgavad Purāna. The conduct of the Vallabha-chāris shows its pernicious influence.

But educated Hindus now generally admit that the tales in the Purānas are fictions, they adopt as their ideal the Krishna of the Bhāgavad Gītā, and claim him as Supreme.

It is fully admitted that the Krishna of the Bhāgavad Gītā stands on a far higher level than the Krishna of the Purānas. The poem is exquisitely composed, and expresses some noble sentiments. Nevertheless, an examination of it shows that it contains serious errors, disproving its claim to be inspired. Only a few can be briefly mentioned.

1 **Its acknowledgment of Polytheism.**—Thus IX. 25. "Those who make vows to the gods, go to the gods" and elsewhere. No intelligent man is now a polytheist.

2 **Its debasing ideas of God.**—The three *gunas* are said to proceed from Krishna. Krishna says

"Know also that the *gunas* which are of the quality of goodness, and those which are of the quality of passion and of darkness, are indeed all from me, I am not in them, but they are in me" VII. 12

Passion and darkness are said to proceed from God as well as goodness.

3 **Its denial of the eternal distinction between right and wrong.**—Krishna says

"He who hath no feeling of egoism (that he is the doer of the actions) and whose mind is not tainted (with the feeling that the fruit of the action must accrue to him), though he kills (all) these people, kills not, is not bound, (by the action)." xviii. 17.

Ajuna might kill all his relations, yet, if he acted without attachment, he would be free from the consequences. When a man realizes that he is one with the Supreme Spirit, then virtue and vice are alike to him.

4 **Its claim of Caste as a Divine Institution.**—Krishna claims to be the author of Caste:—

"The four castes were created by me according to the apportionment

of qualities and works, know that I, though formless and inexhaustible, am the author of them." IV, 13.

'This alone condemns the whole book. An iniquitous lie is put in the mouth of the Deity. Dr. K. M. Banerjéa well says: "*Of all forgeries the most flagitious and profane is that which connects the name of the Almighty with an untruth.*" Yet this is what is done in the Gîtâ.

5 **Its teaching with regard to Salvation.**—It is alleged that knowledge reduces sin to ashes. Krishna says:

"As the natural fire, O Arjuna, reduceth the wood to ashes, so the fire of knowledge reduceth all actions to ashes." 37.

What is the knowledge that has such effects? The blasphemous assertion, *Aham Brahma, I am God*!

6. **Dying in the light fortnight is considered essential to salvation:**

"Those holy men who know Brahman, departing this life in fire, light, the day-time, in the bright season of the moon, within the six months of the sun's northern course, go unto him." viii, 24.

"But those who depart in smoke, night, the moon's dark season, and whilst the sun is yet within the southern part of his journey, ascend for a while to the regions of the moon, and again return to mortal birth." viii 25.

Does any intelligent man believe that his future happiness or misery depends upon his dying in the light or dark fortnight?

7. **Its false Reasoning.**—When Arjuna was unwilling to fight and kill his near relations, Krishna encouraged him by saying that the soul "neither killeth nor is it killed." II. 19. According to this logic, murder is impossible. A man accused of it might say, "The soul can neither kill nor be killed. It is eternal and indestructible. When driven from body it passes into another." Would such a plea be accepted?

The poem bears internal evidence that it was written by a Vaishnava Brahman, who had the ordinary Hindu polytheistic and pantheistic ideas, who sought to uphold caste and the privileges of his order, while he endeavoured to harmonise some doctrines of Hindu philosophy, and give prominence to Krishna *bhakti*. A blasphemous claim is made that "the Deity" spoke the words which he wrote, and the book was foisted into the *Mahabharata* to get the support of its authority.

The Krishna of the Bhagavad Gîtâ, like the Krishna of the Bhâgavad Purâna, had no existence.*

* See *The Religious and Moral Teaching of the Bhagavad Gita Examined*. 8vo, 72 pp., 2 As., Post-free, 2½ A.

4. The false Geography of the Vishnu Purana disproves its statements about Vishnu.

The great bulk of the people of India are in that low state of civilization that the most incredible statements are accepted without evidence. Sir H. S. Maine said, "The Indian intellect stands in need before anything else of stricter criteria of truth." The Twentieth Century is not satisfied with childlike credulity; it demands that the laws of evidence and common sense shall be applied to statements. India has now some skilled lawyers. Let them use their knowledge in the study of the Hindu Sacred Books.

"If a witness is convicted of making some false statements, discredit is thrown upon all his evidence."

Every educated man knows that the statements in the Vishnu Purāna about the seven seas, Mount Meru, &c., are wrong; its account of Vishnu is equally untrustworthy. Vishnu, in the Boar incarnation, is said to have spent a thousand years wrestling with Hiranyāksha to raise the earth. The earth is only about 8,000 miles in diameter, and the ocean averages only about three miles in depth. The story is the invention of a poet unacquainted with geography.

All the other stories about Vishnu are equally untrustworthy. There never was such a being. The benefits, therefore, expected to be obtained through him cannot be realised.

5. The Vaishnava Promises regarding the pardon of Sin are fallacious.

Of all the questions which concern us, one of the most important is, How can sin be forgiven?

It is true that most people take their neighbours for their standard, and have no ideas of their sinfulness. But the best men are the first to confess that they sin daily in thought, word, and deed. God contrasts the gratitude of the very beasts with the regardlessness of man. "The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib, but my people doth not know, doth not consider."

Every envious, proud, lustful, covetous desire is a sin. We sin not only by doing things which ought not to be done, but by not doing the things which ought to be done.

Vaishnavas consider themselves very holy, because they take so much care lest any one should see their food. The great Teacher says "that a man is defiled not by what he eats, but by what comes out of him—evil thoughts, adultery, murders, theft, covetousness, deceit, pride. These evil things come from within and defile the man."

The following are some of the promises of Vaishnavism

The Vishnu Purāna says of the Ganges

"The sacred river, when heard of, desired, seen, touched, bathed in, or hymned, day by day purifies all beings. And those who living

even at a distance of hundred ~~years~~ ^{ages} explain ~~the~~ ^{the} 'Yuga' are relieved of the sins committed during the three previous existences."

The First Book of the Vishnu Purāna concludes as follows

"Thus, O twice-born one, the first portion of the Purāna has been related to you, hearing which one may be freed from sins. The man who hears this, obtains the fruit of bathing in the Pushkar lake for twelve years in the month *Kartika*. O Muni, the celestials confer upon him who hears this Purāna the dignity of a divine sage, of a patriarch, or of a spirit of heaven."

The common belief is that sins may be pardoned by *bhakti*, wholly independent of moral conduct. Wilson says:

"Entire dependence upon Krishna, or any other favourite deity, not only obviates the necessity of virtue, but it sanctifies vice. Conduct is wholly immaterial. It matters not how atrocious a sinner a man may be, if he paints his face, his breast, his arms with certain sectarian marks; or, which is better, if he brands his skin permanently with them with a hot iron stamp, if he is constantly chanting hymns in honour of Vishnu; or, what is equally efficacious, if he spends hours in the simple reiteration of his name or names: if he die with the word *Hari* or *Rāma* or *Krishna* on his lips, and the thought of him in his mind, he may have lived a monster of iniquity—he is certain of heaven."

Even the repetition of the name of the god without any reference to him is supposed to be efficacious. In proof of this the following story is told:

Ajamila had committed the most enormous crimes, having killed cows and Brahmins, drunk spirits, and lived in the practice of evil all his days. He had four sons; the name of one was Nārāyana. In the hour of death, Ajamila was very thirsty, and thus called to his son: "Nārāyana, Nārāyana, Nārāyana, give me some water." After his death, the messengers of Yama seized him, and were about to drag him to a place of punishment; when Vishnu's messengers came to rescue him. A furious battle took place; but Vishnu's messengers were victorious, and carried off Ajamila to Vishnu's heaven. Yama demanded of Vishnu an explanation of this affair. Vishnu reminded him that however wicked this man might have been, he had repeated the name Nārāyana in his last moments, and that if any man, either when laughing or by accident, or in anger, or even in derision, repeated the name of Vishnu, he would certainly go to heaven, though like Ajamila, covered with crimes, and without a single meritorious deed to be laid in the balance against them.

Such beliefs will prove false refuges which will fail in the day of trial.

6. "Where there is Faith, there is God."

This means that a man receives simply according to his faith. This saying is considered sufficient, and saves the trouble of all inquiry as to the real value of the object of faith. Let it be examined.

A man's faith may arise from ignorance as well as from knowledge. If a man believes that jewels are gold while they are only brass, will his faith have any effect? If a man intrust his property to a thief believing him to be an honest man, will his faith save his money? If a man take a cooly to be the king, will he be really such? If a man, wishing to cross a deep and rapid river, goes into a leaky boat saying that faith is the chief thing, will this save him from being drowned?

In like manner, if a man worship an idol believing it to be God, will his faith make it God? If a man believes that bathing in the Ganges will wash away his sins, he believes what is untrue and his sin remains.

In worldly matters men are not such fools as to believe that faith is sufficient. A banker does not say this when asked for the loan of money, nor a father when the marriage of his daughter is proposed. Faith placed on a false object is worthless, and simply ruins the man who trusts to it. Our first inquiry should therefore be, Is our faith placed on a proper object?

Every Vaishnava should most carefully examine whether such a being as Vishnu exists, otherwise his faith is vain.

THE PRAYER OF THE UPANISHAD.

The Brihad Aranya Upanishad contains the following beautiful prayer which all should offer

*"From the unreal lead me to the real,
From darkness lead me to light;
From death lead me to immortality."*

The "unreal" are the stories told of Vishnu in the Purāṇas and other Sacred Books of the Hindu. There is no such being as Vishnu or Vaikuntha. Those who believe in them are in the darkness of ignorance; the result must be death.

WHO SHOULD BE WORSHIPPED INSTEAD OF VISHNU?

The true object of worship is the one true God, the Creator of heaven and earth; who was worshipped by the ancestors of the Aryan Hindus, and the English under the name of Dyaus Pitar, Heaven Father.

Considering the high esteem with which the late Max Müller is regarded by educated Hindus, special attention should

be given to the following words of ~~his~~, which may be looked upon as his last message from the unseen world :

*"Thousands of years have passed away since the Aryan nations separated to travel to the North and South, the West and East : they have each formed their languages, they have each founded empires and philosophies, they have each built temples and razed them to the ground, they have all grown older, and it may be wiser and better ; but when they search for a name for that which is most exalted and yet most dear to every one of us, when they wish to express both awe and love, the infinite and the finite, they can but do what their old fathers did when gazing up to the eternal sky, and feeling the presence of a Being as far as far and as near as near can be. they can but combine the self-same words and utter once more the primeval Aryan prayer, Heaven Father, in that form which will endure for ever, 'Our Father, which art in heaven.' " **

WHY GOD IS CALLED OUR FATHER.

Two reasons may be mentioned.

1. **He gave us being.**—What particularly distinguishes an earthly father is that, under God, he is the author of the child's existence. This can be said of no other person. However much another may love the child and be kind to him, he has no claim to the name of father. As their Creator, God is the Father of all men. They did not exist until He called them into being.

Christianity teaches that God is our Creator. In prayer it directs us to call Him our "Father in heaven." Educated Hindus now generally admit the Fatherhood of God, and regard Him as their Creator, but such is not the teaching of Hinduism : it was learned from Christianity. In the Sastras, father may be one of the numerous names given to God, but He is not a father as the source of our existence. It is a fixed dogma of Hindu philosophy, *navastuno vastusiddih*, nothing can be produced out of nothing. By the word Creator Christians mean one who gave being to things which had no being before. In this sense no Hindu sect believes God to have created anything.

The Bhagavad Gita describes the soul as eternal and all-pervading.

"It is not born, nor does it ever die; nor having existed before does it exist no more." ii. 20

"It is everlasting, all-pervading, still, unmovable, and eternal." ii. 24.

Souls are said to be eternal *sayambhu* essences, without beginning or end, continually in the process of *samsdra* or transmigration.

Krishna says in the Bhagavad Gîtâ :

"As a man having cast off his old garments taketh others that are new, so the embodied (soul) casting off old bodies, entereth others that are new." ii. 22.

"At the end of a *kalpa*, all things enter my material nature, at the beginning of a *kalpa* I send them forth again." ix. 7.

According to the above doctrines, we are all little gods, as eternal as Brahma himself.

To explain what we were doing through the countless past ages, the doctrine of transmigration was invented, although no one has any recollection of a previous state of being.*

2. **God may be called our Father in heaven because He supplies all our wants.**--A father provides his children with food, clothing, and every thing they need. He does not do so on account of any service they have rendered to him, but from pure love. What has our Father in heaven done for us? He not only gave us life, but He keeps us in life. We are dependent upon Him for every breath we draw; we live upon His earth; it is His sun that shines upon us. Every thing we have is His gift. This is the teaching of Christianity, and Christians therefore praise and thank God for His goodness.

In the above respect Hinduism does not acknowledge the Fatherhood of God. According to it, every thing that happens to a person is determined by his *karma*. Every thing that God does to souls He does with reference to their good and evil deeds only, in order that they may receive reward for good deeds, and suffer for evil deeds. The blessings we receive have their source, not in God's benevolence, but in our own good deeds in a previous birth. Why should we be grateful to Him? True religion is thus destroyed.

OUR DUTY TO OUR FATHER IN HEAVEN.

Jesus Christ summed this up in one word, LOVE. He said, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment."

We should behave towards our heavenly Father as affectionate obedient children do to their earthly father. They love to be near their father, they are sorry when he goes away; they are glad when he returns. They delight to speak to him, they tell him all their joys and sorrows; they ask his guidance: They try to please him in all things avoiding what he dislikes and doing what he approves. Lastly, they try to be like him, copying his example

* See *Transmigration and Karma* By the Rev. T. E. Slater. 8vo. 60 pp. 2 As.

We should act in the same manner towards our heavenly Father. We should live as continually in His sight, and rejoice that He is watching over us. We should delight to speak to Him in prayer; we should try to please Him in all things. We should strive to be like Him. Jesus Christ says, "Be ye therefore perfect as your Father in heaven is perfect."

OUR DUTY IS SINFUL.

Suppose a child has been disobedient to a wise, good, and loving father, what is his duty? He should feel truly sorry for his misconduct, he should confess it to his father, ask forgiveness, and try to be loving and affectionate in future.

It sometimes happens that an ungrateful wicked son leaves his father's house, and lives among companions like himself, never thinking of his father, and caring nothing about him. Although men have thus acted towards their heavenly Father, His heart still yearns over them, and He would welcome their return. This is vividly shown in a parable spoken by the Great Teacher, the Lord Jesus Christ.

A certain man had two sons. The younger of them said to his father, "Father, give me the portion of goods that falleth to me." The father then divided all he had between his two sons. A few days after, his younger son went away to a far country, where he soon spent all his property among bad companions. He was now so poor that he went into the fields to feed swine, and he was so hungry, that he would gladly have taken some of the food that the swine did eat.

Afterwards, the younger son thought that, while he was starving, his father's servants had more than they could eat. Then he said, "I will arise and go to my father, and will say to him, Father, I have sinned against heaven and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son." As soon as his father saw him coming, he ran, fell on his neck, and kissed him. He told the servants to bring the best robe, and make ready the finest food. Full of joy, he said, "This my son was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found."

The course to be taken to obtain pardon of sin will be briefly explained.

1. Deep Sorrow for Sin.—This is essential. A father cannot be expected to forgive a disobedient, wicked son who is so hardened in crime as to feel no sorrow for his conduct. Much more is this needed in the case of our heavenly Father, who is also our King. Without it pardon is impossible.

2. Confession of Sin and prayer for Pardon.—This is the second step. A penitent child will not rest till he has humbly confessed his fault and obtained forgiveness.

A Rājārishi, in ancient times who had been guilty of a great sin, thus confessed it and asked pardon :

"Have mercy upon me, O God, according to Thy loving kindness according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. For I acknowledge my transgressions; and my sin is ever before me. Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me."

The Christian Veda says

"If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."†

A father may forgive his disobedient children when they are sorry for their conduct and try to be loving in future. It is different, however, with a king or judge. A criminal may be sorry for his conduct, and wish to reform, but he is not let off on that account. If this were done, men would be tempted to break the laws, hoping to be pardoned on their repentance.

The question is, How can God's justice and mercy be reconciled? how can we be forgiven and the honour of God's law maintained?

In all ages the hope has been more or less entertained that God would become incarnate to deliver man from the burden of sin and misery under which the world is groaning. The generations of men, weak and helpless in themselves, have ever more been looking after ONE in whom they may find all this look for vainly in themselves, and in those around them.

The incarnations of Vishnu, as described in the Hindu Sacred Books, has been noticed. Christianity also teaches that the Son of God became incarnate for our salvation. Taking refuge in Him, our sins are forgiven and through the spotless robe of His righteousness we are fit to enter heaven.

Christianity has neither the *cat-hold* theory, nor the *monkey hold* theory, but what may be called the *man-hold* theory. If we stretch out our arms to our heavenly Father, He embraces us, and we are safe.

3. **Reformation.**—This is also necessary. "Whoso confesseth and forsaketh his sins shall have mercy."

In trying to resist temptation to sin, we shall soon find that we need Divine help. Christianity meets this need. While declaring most strongly that God is one, it teaches that in some mysterious way there is a Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, who all unite for our salvation. The special work of the Holy Spirit is to sanctify, to enable us to overcome sin, and to become like our Father in heaven. His help is given in answer to prayer.

* Psalm, li.

† 1 John, i. 8, 9.

Besides prayer for the Holy Spirit, there should be watchfulness against temptation, association with good men, the reading of the Scriptures, and other good books, attendance at public worship, &c.

The Promises of Christianity.—Christianity teaches that our loving Father in heaven, if we will listen to His voice, will watch over us through life, cause all things to work together for our good, and will at last receive us into His heavenly palace, there to dwell for ever in conscious happiness. We need have no dread of suffering for sins in a supposed former birth, but may leave the world in peace

DUTY OF EARNEST RELIGIOUS INQUIRY.

The choice of a profession in life is important and deserves careful consideration; but our eternal welfare in a future world is vastly more important, and should receive most earnest attention.

As already stated, the child-like credulity of pandits should be avoided, and the laws of evidence should be kept in view. We should not accept statements which outrage our common sense

The reader, if a Vaishnava, should examine carefully the accounts given of Vishnu in the Sacred Books of the Hindus and see how far they are worthy of belief. If they teach false geography, false astronomy, false history, and make the most incredible statements can their teaching about God be accepted?

The reader should especially consider whether the Vaishnava means for the pardon of sin are sufficient—branding the body, repeating the name of Vishnu, listening to the *Rāmāyana*, &c. Contrast with these the way of salvation pointed out by Christianity, deep sorrow for sin, confession, prayer for forgiveness, taking refuge in the Saviour, reformation, &c

Study of Christianity.—The preceding pages have been chiefly occupied with an account of Vishnu. The great truths of Christianity have been only very briefly stated. The New Testament should receive special attention, but the following would be useful as affording some explanation. —

Short Papers for Seekers after Truth. 12mo. 112 pp. 1 An.

The Teaching of Jesus Christ in His own Words. 12mo 112 pp. 1 An

Jesus Christ. His Life and Times 8vo 176 pp. 3 As

The Founder of Christianity: an Introduction to the New Testament. 12mo 250 pp cloth 6 As.

APPENDIX.



Publications for Indian Readers.

The Religions of the World. An Illustrated Sketch of their History
8vo 208 pp. 6 As

The Great Religions of the World are described and contrasted. India is urged to prosecute vigorously the course of reform on which she has entered. Illustrative woodcuts

The Hindu Sacred Books Described and Examined.

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The Bhagavad Gita. 8vo. 108 pp. 3 As. Post-free, 5 As.

This work, supposed to represent the loftiest flight of Hindu philosophy, consists of a supposed dialogue between Arjuna and Krishna. It seeks to harmonise the Vedanta, Yoga, and Sankhya doctrines, combining with them faith (*bhakti*) in Krishna, and stern devotion to caste duties. Numerous explanatory notes are added

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Great Indian Questions of the Day. No. 4.

SIVA BHAKTI:

WITH

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AN APPEAL TO EDUCATED HINDUS.

"From the unreal lead me to the real.

From darkness lead me to light

From death lead me to immortality."

Brihad Aranya Upanishad

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1902.



PREFATORY NOTE.

The following remarks on the Siddhānta are tentative. Suggestions are invited from friends who have given special attention to the subject.

J. MURDOCH

MADRAS, *Sept. 14th, 1902*

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SIVA BHAKTI.

INTRODUCTION

Importance of Religion.—Religion has a most powerful influence upon a nation. Carlyle says "Of a man or of a nation we inquire first of all What religion they had" Answering this question is giving us the soul of the history of the man or of the nation The thoughts they had were the parents of the actions they did, their feelings were the parents of their thoughts it was the unseen and spiritual in them that determined the outward and the actual, their religion, as I say, was the great fact about them "

A well-known Indian proverb expresses the influence of religion, *Yatah Derah, tatha bhaktah*, As is the God, so is the worshipper. "Show me your gods," said an old writer, "and I will show you your men."

Duty of Religious Inquiry.—No people, perhaps, have felt the importance of religion more than the Hindus. In many cases, the whole of their conduct is regulated by their religious belief. It is not enough, however, to be religious There are many religions in the world exercising very different influences.

Most people, without inquiry, blindly follow the religion of their forefathers They act more wisely in worldly matters When a clerk receives his salary, he counts the rupees, and sees that they are all good. Even a woman when she goes to the bazaar to buy an earthen pot, taps it to find if it is sound before she gives the money In religion, people generally act like a flock of sheep, which, if the first leap over a bridge, the rest follow and are drowned

Bad money may be known from good by means of the touchstone. God has given us a touchstone to distinguish between true and false religions—our reason If we do not use it, we will suffer like those men who take bad rupees without examination.

"Invariably an increase of civilization implies a modification of belief." This remark of Lecky, the historian, may be illustrated by another quotation from his *Rationalism in Europe* —

"Any historical faith, as it is interpreted by fallible men, will contain some legends or doctrines that are contrary to our sense of right. For our highest conception of the Deity is moral excellence, and consequently men always embody their standard of perfection in their reli-

gious doctrines; and as that standard is at first extremely imperfect and confused, the early doctrines will exhibit a corresponding imperfection. These doctrines being stereotyped in received formularies for a time seriously obstruct the moral development of society, but at last the opposition to them becomes so strong that they must give way; they are then either violently subverted or permitted to become gradually obsolete." Vol. I. p. 306.

Tiele, another eminent European writer, says:—

"To dis sever religion from all other human development, to withdraw it from the influence of civilization, may serve to uphold a specific form of religion which is no longer in accordance with the altered conditions of civilization, but inevitably dooms it to stagnation."

"Those who are thoroughly imbued with civilization, who have marched with the development of the age, will be unable to rest satisfied with a religion which still occupies a much lower stage. It is impossible for them ever to tolerate the childish conceptions and unseemly observances which made up the religion of a former generation; and they feel the need of bringing their religion into accord with the civilization in which they have been brought up."

This is admitted by thoughtful, intelligent Indians. Some years ago, *The Hindu*, the leading Native paper in South India, had the following remarks —

"As in Christian countries, so in our country also our moral and religious ideas are derived from our theology. But this theology as well as these ideas must be explained away, modified, and reformed in certain aspects at least, to suit the changes that in course of time take place in the intelligence of the people. It is no longer possible to justify to the young educated Hindu apparently immoral and crude practices because they are sanctioned in certain Purānas. The Hindu mythology has to be purged of the absurdities that have overgrown it during centuries of ignorance and of superstitious and timid isolation. In the same manner, the moral ideas of our common people have to be improved. An orthodox Hindu would tolerate falsehood, cowardice and self-abasement, but would damn to perdition his neighbour who swerves the least from accepted conventions even in the details of personal habits. Such moral perversity does not indicate a healthy social condition. Similarly our ideas of charity, of social distinction, education, and social well-being in general have to be drawn out of the influence of an obsolete and backward civilization, and brought in harmony with the fresh spirit of the time." *June 24th, 1887*

"The writer cheerfully admits that Hinduism contains some great truths, more or less clearly expressed. Moral precepts of a high order may also be culled from some of its Sacred Books. But the confession has also to be made that the Hindu Sacred Books likewise contain much that is objectionable in every way

* Science of Religion, Vol. I.

intellectually, socially, morally, and religiously. The aim should be to retain what is true, reject what is false, and accept what is good from any source.

If an architect is employed to examine a large, old building, he goes over it carefully, pointing out what is necessary to be done in each part. He mentions *defects*: his survey would be useless if he omitted them. In like manner, if Hinduism is to be reformed, it is necessary to specify the corruptions from which it has to be purified.

The Maharaja of Benares has a noble family motto. "There is no Religion higher than Truth." The patriotism which seeks to defend every thing national, whether right or wrong, is as injurious as it is false. Simply to arrive at the truth should be the aim in the investigation.

The inquiry also should be thorough. An old insecure building may be whitewashed so as to look apparently strong; but it will bury in its ruins those who seek shelter in it during a storm.

DIVISIONS OF THE SUBJECT.

According to their religion, Hindus are mainly divided into three great classes—VAISHNAVAS, SAIVAS, and SAKTAS. The first are most numerous in the north, the second in the south, and the third in Bengal.

In the following pages the history of SIVA will first be traced through the principal Sacred Books of the Hindus, from the Vedas to the Purāṇas. An account will then be given of the Saiva Philosophy of Southern India, and, lastly, the whole will be reviewed in the light of the Twentieth Century.

SIVA AS RUDRA.

RIG-VEDA.

SIVA is not mentioned in the Vedas by his usual name at present; but he is generally identified with RUDRA.

Rudra means 'howler' or 'roarer.' Probably the first office connected with him was that of directing and controlling the rage of the howling storms. As god of gale and tempest, he is father of the destructive storm-winds, who are also called Rudras, and generally identified with the Maruts. In this character Rudra is closely connected with the Vedic Rain-god (Indra), and with Āgni, which, as a destroying agent, rages and crackles like the roaring tempest. He is also nearly related to Time (Kāla), the all-consumer, and indeed afterwards identified

with him. But he has also a more agreeable aspect even in the Veda. He is not merely the awful and inauspicious god whose thousand shafts bring death or disease on man or cattle. He is present in those health-giving winds which chase away noxious vapours. He is addressed as a healer, as a benefactor, as a benevolent and auspicious being, the epithet Siva (Auspicious) being applied to him in the Veda as a title rather than as a name.*

In a hymn of the Rig-Veda, Rudra is thus addressed

“This exhilarating hymn, sweeter than the sweetest, is uttered to Rudra, the father of the Maruts. Be gracious to ourselves, our children, and descendants. Slay neither our great, nor our small, neither our growing, nor our grown; injure not, Rudra, our dear selves. Injure us not in our children and descendants, nor in our men, nor in our cattle, nor in our horses.” I. 114.

Different accounts are given of Rudra's origin. One of them in the Satapatha Brāhmaṇa is as follows. The lord of beings was a householder, and Ushas (the Dawn) was his wife. A boy was born to them in a year. The boy wept. Prajāpati said to him, ‘Boy, why dost thou weep since thou hast been born after toil and austerity?’ The boy said, ‘My evil has not been taken away, and a name has not been given to me; give me a name.’ Prajāpati said, ‘Thou art Rudra.’ Inasmuch as he gave him that name, Agni became his form, for Rudra is Agni. He was called Rudra, because he wept (from *rud*, to weep). Rudra was not satisfied with one name, but continued begging till he obtained seven more.

Brahmā called him (besides Rudra) Bhava, Sarva, Isāna. Paśupati, Bhīma, Ugra, Mahādeva.¹

RUDRA IN THE WHITE YAJUR-VEDA.

In the later Vedic age, says Monier Williams, Rudra's personality becomes still more intensified, and his name, attributes and functions infinitely amplified varied, and extended. For example, in the Vājasaneyi Samhitā of the Yajur-Veda (XVI. 1. &c), there is a well known hymn or litany, called the *Satarudriya*, addressed to Rudra in his hundred aspects, and surrounded by his countless hosts of attendants. In this hymn,—a hymn which is of the greatest interest, because constantly used in the present day—he is described as possessing many contradictory, incongruous, and wholly ungodlike attributes; for example, he is a killer and destroyer; he is terrible, fierce (*ugra*), *inauspicious*; he is a deliverer and saviour; he causes happiness, and prevents disease; he has a healing and auspicious body; he

* Monier Williams, *Brāhmanism and Hinduism*, p. 76.

¹ Muir's *Sanskrit Texts*, Vol. IV. pp. 811, 343.

is yellow-haired, brown-coloured, copper-coloured, ruddy, tall, dwarfish; he has braided locks (kapardin), wears the sacred thread, and is clothed in a skin; he is blue-necked and thousand-eyed; he dwells in the mountains, and is the owner of troops (gana-pati) of servants who traverse the earth obeying his orders; he is ruler and controller of a thousand Rudras who are described as fierce and ill-formed (virūpa); he has a hundred bows and a thousand quivers; he is the general of vast armies, he is lord of ghosts, goblins, and spirits; he causes the fall of leaves, he is lord of the Soma-juice; he is patron of thieves and robbers, and is himself a thief, robber, and deceiver; he presides over carpenters, chariot-makers, blacksmiths, architects, huntsmen; he is present in towns and houses, in rivers and lakes, in woods and roads, in clouds and rain, in sunshine and lightning, in wind and storm, in stones, dust, and earth.*

Macdonell says that "in the Yajur-Veda the Rudra of the Rig-Veda has begun to appear on the scene as Siva, being several times mentioned by that name as well as by other epithets later peculiar to Siva, such as Sankara and Mahādeva."[†]

At present nearly all the degrading characteristics of the god have been transferred to the form of his consort, called Kālī. This goddess is to this day the patron of thieves, robbers, thugs, murderers, and every kind of infamous rascals.

Weber says, "At the period when the Satarudriya was composed, the blending of the two destructive deities (Storm and Fire) had evidently taken place, and the epithets which are there assigned to Rudra, lead us back partly to himself and partly to Agni."

SIVA IN THE MAHABHARATA AND RAMAYANA.

Daksha curses Siva.—Daksha gave Sati, one of his daughters, in marriage to Siva. When the gods were assembled at a sacrifice, all rose at the entrance of Daksha except Brahmā and Siva. Upon this Daksha complained as follows.

"This monkey-eyed (god) after having taken the hand of (my) fawn-eyed (daughter), has not even by word shown suitable respect to me when he ought to have risen and saluted. Though unwilling, I yet gave my daughter to this impure and proud abolisher of rites and demolisher of barriers, like the word of the Veda to a Sudra. He roams about the dreadful cemeteries, attended by hosts of ghosts and spirits, like a madman, naked, with dishevelled hair, laughing, weeping, bathed in the ashes of funeral piles, wearing a garland of dead men's (skulls) and

* *Brahmanism and Hinduism*, pp. 76, 77.

† *Sanskrit Literature*. pp. 131, 132.

ornaments of human bones, pretending to be Siva (auspicious), but in reality a-Siva."

After thus reviling Īrīsa (Siva), who did not oppose him, Daksha, having touched water, incensed, began to curse him, (thus). 'Let this Bhava (Siva), lowest of the gods, never at the worship of the gods, receive any portion along with the gods, Indra, Upendra (Vishnu) and others.' Having thus delivered his malediction, Daksha departed. A counter-malediction was then uttered by one of Siva's chief followers.*

Daksha's Sacrifice.—One day as Umā the wife of Siva, was sitting with her husband on Mount Kailāsa, she saw the gods passing by in their chariots. She was told that they were going at her father's invitation to a great sacrifice, which he was about to make. As Siva had offended Daksha, he was not invited. The Bhāgavata says that Umā was most anxious to attend the sacrifice, although Siva dissuaded her. Disregarding the warning, Umā went. Slighted by her father, she reproached him for his hostility to her husband, and ended by entering fire. Seeing this, Siva's attendants, who had followed her, rushed on Daksha to slay him. This was prevented, and Siva's followers were put to flight. When Siva heard of Umā's death as a Sati, he was greatly enraged. From a lock of his hair which he tore out, a gigantic demon arose (named Virabhadra), whom he commanded to destroy Daksha and his sacrifice. Along with him went hundreds and thousands of demi-gods whom Siva had created. A terrible catastrophe followed, the mountains tottered, the earth shook, the winds roared, the depths of the sea were disturbed. Virabhadra plucked out Bhṛigu's beard, tore out Bhaga's eyes, knocked out Pūshan's teeth, cut off Daksha's head and threw it into the sacrificial fire. In their distress the gods resort to Brahmā for advice, who advises them to propitiate Siva. For this purpose they go to Kailāsa, where they see Siva carrying the linga desired by devotees, ashes, a staff, a tuft of hair, an antelope's skin, and a finger's breadth of the moon, his body shining like an evening cloud. Siva relented. Daksha was restored to life, and as his head could not be found, it was replaced by that of a sheep. Daksha worshipped Siva, and Umā, who had given herself up to the flames, was reborn as Pārvatī, daughter of Himavat, the god of the Himmālayas.

The Vaishnavas give a different termination to the story. The Harivansa says that the sacrifice was destroyed and the gods fled in dismay, till Vishnu intervened, and seizing Siva by the throat compelled him to desist and acknowledge his master.

"This legend," says Wilson, "is obviously intended to intimate a struggle between the worshippers of Siva and Vishnu, in

* Muir's *Sanskrit Texts*, Vol. IV. pp. 379, 380.

which, at first the latter, but finally the former, acquired the ascendancy."

Origin of Siva's Third Eye.—The Anusāsana Parva of the Mahābhārata gives the following explanation :

"Mahādeva had been performing austerity (*tapas*) on the Himālaya mountain, where he was attended by his demons (*Bhūtas*) and by the Apsarases, &c. While he was sitting in that delightful region, clothed in tiger's and lion's skins, with a serpent for his sacrificial cord, his wife Umā comes up, clothed in the same style as her husband, with her attendant demonesses (*Bhūta-stri-gana*), and playfully puts her hands over his eyes. The effects of this are tremendous. Suddenly the world becomes darkened, lifeless, and destitute of oblations, &c. This gloom, however, is as suddenly dispelled by a great flame which bursts from Mahādeva's forehead, in which a third eye, luminous as the sun, was formed. By the fire of this eye the mountain was scorched and everything upon it cursed. Umā hereupon stands in a submissive attitude before her lord, when in a moment, her parent, the Himālaya, is restored to his former condition."

Siva receives the Ganges on his head.—The royal rishi Bhagīratha performed austerity in order that the Gangā might descend from heaven and purify the ashes of the sons of Sagara, who had been destroyed by Kapila, and might by this means elevate them to heaven. Brahmā appeared to the king and told him that he ought to propitiate Siva, who was the only being who could sustain the shock of the falling Gangā. Bhagīratha continued his austerities till Siva, the lord of Umā, the lord of animals (*Pasupati*), appeared to him, and said he would receive the Ganges on his head. He accordingly mounted the Himālaya, and called on Gangā to descend. Gangā was indignant at this summons, and came down in great volume and with great force on his head, seeking to sweep him down along with her into Pātāla. The god, however, determined to humble her pride, and she was compelled to circle for a long period of years in the labyrinth of his matted locks without being able to reach the earth. Being again propitiated by Bhagīratha, Siva at length allowed her to reach the lake Vindu, to flow into the sea, and eventually into Pātāla, where she purified the ashes of the sons of Sagar, and enabled them to ascend to heaven.†

Siva swallows the Poison.—The rival sons of Diti and Aditi churned the ocean of milk to obtain some specific which would render them immortal. In the first place, however, a fiery poison was vomited from the serpent Vāsuki, who was used as

* Muir's *Sanskrit Texts*, Vol. IV. pp. 269, 270.

† Abridged from the *Ramayana* in Muir's *Sanskrit Texts*, Vol. IV. p. 965.

the rope in the process of churning. The gods then resorted to Siva to deliver them from this portent.

"Then the deities, seeking as their refuge, Mahadeva, Sankara, went to Rudra Pasupati, and lauded him (calling out) 'deliver, deliver!' Then, being addressed by the gods, the lord of the gods, Hari, appeared on that very spot, bearing the shell and the discus, and smiling said to Rudra, the wielder of the trident, 'That which has first appeared when the ocean was being churned by the deities belongs to thee, most eminent of the gods, sure thou art at the head of them. Standing here, receive, lord, this poison as the earliest offering.' Having thus spoken the most eminent of the gods disappeared on the spot. Perceiving the alarm of the deities, and having heard the words of Vishnu, he (Siva) took the deadly poison as if it had been nectar. The divine Hari then dismissed the gods and departed."

Why called Mahadeva.—The Asuras built three castles from which they harassed the worlds, and destroyed the gardens of the gods. Indra attacked the castles with his thunderbolts, but all in vain. Siva was asked by the gods to destroy them. He replied that he could not do it alone. They proposed that he should undertake the work, aided by half of their strength. To this Mahadeva consented, and became stronger than all the gods, and was thenceforward called Mahadeva, or 'the great god.'

Fight between Siva and Vishnu.—Two celestial bows were made by Visvakarman, of which one was given by the gods to Mahadeva, the other to Vishnu.

"The gods then all made a request to Brahmá desiring to find out the strength and weakness of Sitikantha (Mahadeva) and Vishnu. Brahmá, most excellent of the two, learning the purpose of the gods, created enmity between the two. In this state of enmity a great and terrible fight ensued between Sitikantha and Vishnu, each of whom was eager to conquer the other. Siva's bow of dreadful power was then relaxed, and the three-eyed Mahadeva was arrested by a muttering. These two eminent deities being intreated by the assembled gods, rishis and charanas, then became pacified. Seeing that the bow of Siva had been relaxed by the prowess of Vishnu, the gods and rishis esteemed Vishnu to be superior."

Krishna acknowledges the greatness of Siva :

The righteous Vāsudeva, then, together with the son of Prithā (Arjuna), reciting the eternal Veda, bowed his head to the ground, beholding him, the source of the worlds, the maker of the universe, the unborn, the imperishable lord, the supreme source of mind, the sky, the wind, the abode of the luminaries, the creator of the oceans, the supreme substance of the earth, the framer of gods, Dānavas

* From the *Rāmāyana*, Muir's *Sanskrit Texts*, Vol. IV. pp. 366, 367.

† *Mahābhārata*, Karna Parva, Muir's *Sanskrit Texts*, Vol. IV. p. 225.

‡ From the *Rāmāyana*, Muir's *Sanskrit Texts*, Vol. IV. pp. 176, 177.

Yakshas, and men, the supreme Brahma of meditative systems, the satisfied, the treasure of those who know Brahmā, the creator of the world, and also its destroyer, the great impersonated destructive Wrath, the original of the attributes of Indra and Sūrya. Krishna then revered him with voice, mind, understanding, and act."

Siva worshipped by Krishna. Bhīṣma, in the Anusāsana Parva, says:

"I am unable to declare the attributes of the wise Mahādeva, who is the creator and lord of Brahmā, Vishnu, and Indra.

"This Mādhyava performed austerities for a full thousand years, propitiating Siva, the god who bestows boons, and the preceptor of the world. But in every *yuga* Mahesvara has been propitiated by Krishna, and has been gratified by the devotion of that great personage."

Siva acknowledges the greatness of Vishnu.—In the Anusāsana Parva, Siva says:

"Superior even to Pitāmaha (Brahmā) is Hari, the eternal Puruṣa, Krishna, brilliant as gold, like the sun in a cloudless sky, ten-armed, of mighty force, slayer of the foes of the gods, adored by all the gods. Brahmā is sprung from his belly, and I (Mahādeva) from his head, the luminaries from the hair of his head, the gods and Asuras from the arms of his body, as well as the everlasting worlds have been produced from his body. He is the creator of this entire earth, the lord of the three worlds, and the destroyer of creatures. He is manifestly the most eminent of the gods, the lord of the deities, the vexer of his foes. He is omniscient, intimately united (with all things), omnipresent, facing in every direction, the supreme Spirit, all-pervading, the mighty lord. There is no being superior to him in the three worlds."

The passages in the Mahābhārata in which Vishnu and Siva are acknowledged to be greatest were probably introduced into the poem by Vaishnavas and Saivas for the purpose of upholding the honour of their respective deities.

As a great part of the poem in its present form is devoted to the glorification of Krishna, the frequent adoration of Siva which is mentioned shows that his worship was widely diffused, if indeed it was not the predominant worship in India, at the period to which the action of the poem is referred.

The Mahābhārata contains several references to the *tirthas* where Siva was worshipped. The Vana Parva says:

"The holy river Vaitarant destroys sin. Having bathed there and worshipped the god who wields the trident, and whose ensign is the bull, he shall be purified from all sin, and attain the highest felicity."

* From the Mahābhārata, *Draṇa Parva*, Muir's *Sanskrit Texts*, Vol. iv, pp. 186

† Muir's *Sanskrit Texts*, Vol. IV, p. 188

‡ *Ibid.* Vol. IV, p. 273.

In the same Vana Parva it is said that Mahádeva was worshipped at Gokarna on the west coast of the Dekhan.

Vishnu and Siva claimed to be one.—In the Sánti Parva, Krishna explains why he worshipped Siva :

“ Rudra, with braided hair and matted locks, shaven, the frequenter of cemeteries, the performer of awful rites, the devotee, the very terrible, he who swept away Daksha's sacrifice, and put out Bhaga's eyes, is to be understood by thee to possess in every age the nature of Náráyana. For when that god of gods, Mahesvara, is worshipped, then, son of Prithá, the god Náráyana, the lord, will also be worshipped. I am the soul of all the worlds. It was therefore myself whom I formerly worshipped as Rudra.”

The Harivansa describes a terrible fight between Krishna and Siva, which causes the earth to tremble and throws the whole universe into disorder. Siva is at length paralysed by a weapon of his adversary which causes him to yawn incessantly. The earth is destroyed and appeals to Brahmá for assistance. Brahmá remonstrates with Siva against his conflict with Krishna, who, he says, is in reality one with himself. Siva, perceiving by Yoga the truth of what Brahmá had stated, says to Brahmá that he will no longer fight against Krishna, and the two combatants embrace +

Márkandeya even says that Brahmá, Vishnu, and Siva are one.

“ He who is Vishnu is Rudra, he who is Rudra is Pitámaha (Brahmá), the substance (*mūrti*) is one; the gods are three—Rudra, Vishnu, and Pitámaha.”

SIVA IN THE PURÁNAS.

Origin of the Puranas.—Monier Williams gives the following explanation

“ The period of the epic poems was not marked by much rivalry between the worship of the three members of the Tri-mūrti. Brahmá, Vishnu and Siva were at first regarded as different names for the one universal eternal essence, manifesting itself variously. Their attributes and functions were constantly interchanged without any necessary antagonism. After a time the doctrine of incarnation received definite shape, and the heroes of the Epic poems were deified as incarnations of Vishnu. It was not, however, till a comparatively recent period that strifes and jealousies arose between the followers of Vishnu and Siva, and of their incarnations and manifestations, each god being identified with the Supreme Being by his worshippers. The Puránas were then

* Muir's *Sanskrit Texts*, Vol. IV. p. 208.

† *Ibid.*, Vol. IV. p. 279.

‡ *Ibid.*, Vol. IV. p. 280.

written for the express purpose of exalting one deity or the other to the highest position, while other books, called Tantras, were composed to give prominence to the worship of the female counterpart of Siva. Moreover, the doctrine of *bhakti*, or 'salvation by faith,' which existed to a certain extent from the earliest times, and which was fully expounded in the Bhagavad Gītā, and reduced to a system by a writer called Sāṅdilya in his Bhakti-Sūtras—became in the Purānas and Tantras exaggerated and perverted. The most complete devotion to the personal deities, Kṛishna and Rāma, was enjoined by the Vaishnavas; while the Śāktas claimed the same for Durgā. Furthermore, an absolute belief in the most extravagant miracles, alleged to have been worked by these deities, and an unreasoning acceptance of every monstrous detail of their legendary history, were insisted on, while the relationship of the human soul to the divine was described in the language of human love, and illustrated with images, and allegories, suggestive of conjugal union, and even of sexual and adulterous passion.

"The Purānas and Tantras are the true exponents of these two last and most corrupt phases of popular Hinduism, on which account both sets of books are sometimes called a fifth Veda especially designed for the masses of the people and for women.

"In order to invest the former with a sacred character, a pretentious antiquity was given to them by naming them Purāna, 'ancient tradition,' and assigning their compilation to the ancient sage Vyāsa, the supposed arranger of the Vedas and Mahābhārata also, and founder of the Vedānta philosophy. The work called Vāyu Purāna is perhaps one of the oldest of this class of writings, but an earlier date can scarcely be assigned to it than the 6th century of our era.

"The Purānas, then, must be carefully distinguished from the Itihāsas, or Epic Poems. It is true that the latter furnish the raw material for the composition of the Purānas, but, notwithstanding this relationship, the two classes of works are very different. The Poems are the legendary histories of heroic men before they were actually deified, whereas the Purānas are properly the history of the same heroes converted into positive gods, and made to occupy the highest position in the Hindu pantheon."

The Purānas are all written in verse, and then invariable form is that of a dialogue between an exponent and an inquirer, interspersed with the dialogues and observations of other individuals. They vary greatly in length.

The Purānas are 18 in number, and in addition to these there are 18 Upa Purānas or subordinate works. Of most of the latter, little is known, the greater number are not procurable.

Most of the Purānas are Vaishnava, the following are Śaiva. The abridged account of them is from Wilson.

4. **Vāyu Purāna.**—The Purāna in which Vāyu has declared the laws of duty, in connection with the Sveta Kalpa, and which comprises the Mahātmya of Rudra, is the Vāyu Purāna. It is

devoted to the praise of Siva, and is sometimes called the Siva Purāna.

7. Markandeya Purana.—This Purāna is related in the first place by Mārkaṇḍeya, and in the second by certain fabulous birds profoundly versed in the Vedas, who show their knowledge in answer to the questions of the sage Jaimini. It consists chiefly of legends. In the Durgā Māhātmya section the victories of the goddess over Asuras are detailed. It is read daily in the temples of Durgā, especially at the great festival of Bengal, the Durgā Pūjā.

11. Linga Purana.—"Where Maheswara, present in the Agni Linga, explained virtue, wealth, pleasure, and final liberation at the end of the Agni Kalpa." The appearance of a great fiery Linga is described, and there are legends intended to do honour to Siva under various forms. All is mystical.

13. Skanda Purana.—"The Skanda Purāna is that in which the six-faced deity (Skanda) has related the events of the Tat-purusha Kalpa." It is said to contain 81,800 stanzas. In a collective form the work has no existence, there are only fragments. The Kāśī Khanda, containing 15,000 stanzas, gives a description of the temples of Siva in Benares, and contains numerous legends explanatory of their merits. The Utkala Khanda gives an account of the holiness of Orissa.

15. Kurma Purana.—This is said to contain the explanations which Vishnu gave in the form of the tortoise, but the contents do not agree with this description. The name being an Avatāra of Vishnu, it might be expected to be a Vaishnava work, but it is always classed as Siva.

The Saiva Purānas extol the pre-eminent greatness of their divinity.

The Purānas contain numerous stories about the gods. The following is a specimen.

The Linga Purana on the Inferiority of Brahma and Vishnu to Mahadeva.—This is supposed to be proved in the following way. Brahmā and Vishnu had a dispute about their respective greatness. To stay their contention, Mahādeva took the form of a luminary encircled with a thousand wreaths of flame, equal to a hundred mahā-pralayas. Vishnu proposed that they should examine the source of this flame, he going downwards and Brahmā upwards. Nārāyaṇa took the form of a boat as bulky as Mount Meru. Speeding downwards for a thousand years, he beheld no base at all of the Linga. Brahmā, in the form of a white swan, with wings on every side, for the same period went upward, with all his might, but without seeing its end.

A single illustration may be given of the filthy stories related even of the principal gods.

At the churning of the ocean Vishnu is said to have assumed a very beautiful female form, called Mohini, to fascinate the asuras while the gods drank the amrit. It is related in the Bhāgavata that Vishnu, at the request of Siva, again assumed the form of Mohini. Siva lusted after her, and from their union was born a son called Aiyanaṛ or Hari-hara putra.

SIVA'S CHARACTERS.

Siva's functions, as shown by his 1008 names, are innumerable, but Williams names the five following as the principal —

1. **The Destroyer.**—At the end of every Kalpa, Siva is supposed to annihilate, not merely men and all created things, but even the gods. He is then called Rudra, Mahā Kāla. One legend makes him wear the bones and skulls of the gods as ornaments and garlands. Another account says that when he burnt up the gods by a flash from his central eye, he rubbed their ashes upon his body, whence the use of ashes is considered of great importance in his worship.

Another legend accounts for the use of Rudrāksha berries in the rosaries of Siva by describing how he once let fall some tears of rage which became converted into these seeds. Their connexion with Siva worship is probably owing to their possessing five divisions, corresponding to the god's five faces.

As the god of destruction, he is called Smaśāna-vāsin, 'dweller in burial places.' Cemeteries and burning-grounds are his favourite haunts; bhūtas and piśāshas are his ready servants. In this character he is called Bhairava, 'the terrible,' Virabhadra being sometimes identified with him.

2. **The Reproductive Powers of Nature**—He is supposed to reproduce after destruction. Hence his names Pitri, Mātri, Sarva-bhāvakara, &c. It is especially in this personality that he is worshipped as if he were Brahmā, 'The Creator,' and called 'the causer of blessings,' Siva, Sadā-Siva, Sankara, and Sambhu. He is worshipped, not under the form of a man, but of the Linga.

3. **The Typical Ascetic.**—He is supposed to have attained the highest perfection in abstract meditation and austerity (whence his names Mahā-tapāh, Mahā-yogi). In this character he appears quite naked (Digambara), with only one face, like an ordinary human being, with ash-besmeared body and matted hair (whence his name Dhūrtjati) sitting in profound meditation under a banian tree, and often under a canopy formed by the head of a five-headed serpent. There he is supposed to remain passionless, motionless, immovable, as the trunk of a tree (sthānu), and perhaps rooted to the same spot for millions of years.

It is in his character of Yogi that Siva teaches men by his own example the power to be acquired by mortification of the

body, suppression of the passions and abstract contemplation, as leading to the loftiest spiritual knowledge and ultimately effecting union with himself in Kailāsa.

4. **The learned Sage** :—Siva is also described as the revealer of grammar to the greatest of Indian grammarians, Pāṇini. In this character he is represented as a Brahman wearing the Brahmanical thread, well skilled on the Veda, and especially conversant with the Krama arrangement of the text. Among his names are Mantra-vid, Brahma-vid, Brahmachāri, and Panditah. One form of Saivism is as much the peculiar system of Brahmans as Vaishnavism is of the men of the world. A verse from the ancient version of Manu is often quoted.—“Siva is the god of the Brahmans, Krishna (Vishnu) of the Kshatriya, Brahmā of the Vaisyas, and Ganesa of Sudras.”

5. **The “lord of dancers,”** Natesvara —In this character he is the opposite of an ascetic and philosopher: He is a wild and jovial mountaineer (Kīrāta), addicted to hunting and wine-drinking, fond of dancing (Nṛitya-priya) often dancing with his wife the Tāṇḍava dance. He is surrounded by dwarfish troops (gana) of attendants, who, like their master, are fond of good living, and occasionally inebriated by intoxicating liquors. The worshippers of Siva in this character usually (but not invariably) belong to the sect called Śāktas, who are devoted to the wife of the god, and are given to self-indulgence, and sensual gratification.

Siva is sometimes represented as half-male, half-female (Ardha-nārī). This symbolizes both the duality and unity of the generative act, and the production of the universe from the union of two eternal principles (Prakṛiti and Puruṣa, Māyā and Brahma) according to the Sāṅkhya and Vedānta systems.

In South India Siva is celebrated as the worker of 64 special miracles. He raised the dead, healed the blind, deaf, lame, etc., and gave similar powers to 63 of his saints. An account of these miracles is given in Sthala Purāṇas.

APPEARANCE OF SIVA.

The *Periya Purāṇa* of South India gives the following description of Siva enthroned on the Silver Mountain.

“Siva sat upon his throne and on his left side was with him his gracious energy, the world’s mother, the goddess Pārvatī. He is from eternity free from all impurity, the everlasting, the all-pervader, possessed of all wisdom, all-pre-eminence, and all-spontaneous grace. Through his infinite compassion towards souls, for which they can render him no return, he ever performs, without performance, the acts of creation, protection, destruction, veiling and dispensing grace. He is the first and only God, having one sacred face and three eyes, which



SIVA

are the glowing splendours of the sun, the moon, and the god of fire. His crest of matted hair is crowned with the Ganges, the crescent moon, and the cassia garland. His sacred ears are adorned with earrings of conchshell and flower-petals. His throat is black with the poison churned out from the milky sea. His sacred hands grasp, one the antelope, and one the axe, one gives the sign of safety, and the fourth assurance of gifts of grace. His body, ruddy like coral, is besmeared with sacred ashes. His breast is adorned with the white investing thread and necklaces consisting of the bones of innumerable Brahmás and Vishnus and the skulls of Brahmás of innumerable *Kalpas*. He has girt himself with the tiger's skin. His waist is resplendent with dagger and girdle. His feet, like red lotus flowers, tinkle with the heroic anklets and sounding bells. Such is the body that he wears as he of the auspicious throat. He sits on the silver hill of Kailása, whose innumerable white peaks are adorned with divers jewels... The heavenly musicians and choristers of every degree sing in sweet harmony. The leaders of his hosts were singing and dancing before his face. Brahmá, Vishnu, and Indra, with the other gods, stood afar off, kept back by the wand of the sacred

* Pope's *Tiruvvasagam*, pp. lxxii, lxxiv

Nandi, and, with hands upon their mouths, humbly made known their wants to him who sat upon the throne."

Origin of Five Faces.—Siva is sometimes represented with one face, four faces, or five faces (Panchanam). In the Mahābhārata he explains to Umā how he became four faced.

"The blessed and holy one said; In days of yore a blessed and foremost of women was created by Brahman, called Tilottamā, by culling grains of beauty from every beautiful object in the universe. One day that lady of beautiful face, unrivalled in the universe for beauty of form, came to me. O goddess, for circumambulating me, but really impelled by the desire of tempting me. In whatever direction that lady of beautiful teeth turned, a new face of mine instantly appeared (so eager did I become to see her.) All these faces of mine became agreeable to look at. Thus in consequence of my desire of beholding her, I became four-faced through Yoga puissance."

Origin of Third Eye.—Siva is represented sometimes with three eyes. The explanation of its origin has already been quoted (see page 7.)

Origin of Siva's Bull.—Siva rides on a white bull, called Nandi, images of which are often placed outside his shrine. In the Mahābhārata Siva explains to Umā how he got the bull.

"In days of yore, the Grandsire Brahmā created the celestial cow Surabhi, yielding abundant milk. After her creation there sprang from her a large number of kine, all of which yielded copious quantities of milk, sweet as nectar. Once on a time a quantity of froth fell from the mouth of one of her calves on my body. I was enraged at this, and my wrath scorching all the kine, which thereupon became diversified in hue. I was then pacified by the master of all worlds, viz., Brahmā, conversant with all topics. It was he who gave me this bull, both as a vehicle for bearing me and as a device on my banner."

Origin of the Tiger's Skin worn by Siva and of the Serpent round his neck.—Siva, as a mendicant with a bowl for the collection of alms, attended by Vishnu as his wife, went to a forest where a multitude of heretical Rishis were dwelling with their wives. The wives of the Rishis were filled with an unspeakable love for the false mendicant, while the Rishis themselves were equally infatuated by the false dame that followed him—Vishnu in disguise. The inhabitants of the forest soon perceived that the mendicant and his wife were other than they seemed. The 10,000 Rishis then pronounced fierce imprecations upon the disguised gods which their wives reiterated. But the gods were unharmed. The Rishis then dug a sacrificial pit and offered sacrifices for the destruction of the strangers. The result was that

* *Anuśāna Parva* p. 632 English translation.

† *Ibid.* pp. 632-633. English translation.

A fierce tiger was created in the sacrificial fire which rushed upon Siva. Smiling gently, he seized it, and with the nail of his little finger ripped off its skin, and wrapped it round himself as a soft silken garment. The Rishis renewed their offerings, from out of which came a monstrous serpent, which Siva seized and wreathed round his neck, where it ever hangs, and then began his mystic dance. And now came forth the last monster in the shape of a black dwarf, hideous and malignant, brandishing a club with eyes of fire. Upon him Siva pressed the tip of his foot and broke his back so that he writhed on the ground. Siva then resumed the dance of which all the gods were witnesses, while his hosts sang wild choruses. The figure of the prostrate foe writhing under the god's foot is reproduced in every Saiva shrine. The Rishis fell to the ground as dead, and then rising, worshipped the manifested god, acknowledging themselves his faithful devotees *

Origin of the Necklace of Bones and Skulls.—The Saiva Catechism gives the following explanation.

"Having caused Brahmá and Vishnu to come into existence, he created the world through the instrumentality of Brahmá, and preserves it through the instrumentality of Vishnu, and at the end of each appointed time, he destroys it. In the exercise of these three divine functions, in due course he destroyed Brahmá and Vishnu with the rest of creation, but it pleased him to wear their bones and skulls as garlands. And he did this out of kindness towards them and not from pride. P. 70.

The Origin of the Sacred Ashes.—The Saiva Catechism thus accounts for them.

"The sacred body of Saiva is covered with ashes naturally. In this form it is called 'The eternal ashes.' In the next place, after he has, by a spark emitted out of his central eye, reduced the gods together with all animate and inanimate things to ashes at the end of each Kalpa, he rubs their ashes upon his sacred body. In this form it is called 'the original ashes.' And since the god thus adorns his sacred body, they only can be the true servants of Siva who constantly wear the sacred ashes rubbed upon their person.

"The reward of so doing is declared in the Agamas to be the blotting out of all the greater sins. They also teach that the ashes to have this effect must be made of cow-dung and that there are three methods of preparing it, namely Kalpa, Anakalpa and Upakalpa, and that no other ashes but such as are made in one of these three ways must be rubbed on the body." pp. 73, 74.

* Pope's *Tiruvdsagam*, p. lxiii

THE LINGA.

It seems strange that an object which the sense of decency, even among savages, requires to be covered, should be chosen as an emblem of Siva. It is acknowledged that in the form in which it is represented there is nothing repulsive, and the learned may regard it simply as an emblem of the reproductive power of Nature. It will be shown, however, that many of the Saiva temples and cars represent it in other forms highly objectionable.

It is generally supposed, although the evidence is not complete, that the Linga was at first an object of veneration among the aborigines of India, and that it was subsequently adopted by the Brahmans from them, and associated with the worship of Rudra.

Upamanyu, in the Anusāsana Parva, thus shows the greatness of Siva

"Is Isa (Mahādeva) the Cause of causes for any other reasons? We have not heard that the linga of any other person is worshipped by the gods. Declare, if thou hast heard, what other being's linga except that of Mahesvara, is now worshipped, or has formerly been worshipped, by the gods? He whose linga Brahmā and Vishnu and thou (India) with the deities, continually worship, is therefore the most eminent. Since children bear neither the mark of the lotus (Brahma's), nor of the discus (Vishnu's) nor of the thunderbolt (Indra's), but are marked with the male and female organs—therefore offspring is derived from Mahesvara."*

Several legends are given to explain how it came to be the representative of Siva. The Padma Purāna says that it was the result of a curse pronounced by Bhrigu. When Bhrigu was sent by the Rishis to discover which of the three gods was the greatest, he came to Siva's abode. Wishing at once to enter, he was prevented by a doorkeeper, who informed him that as his master was with Devī his wife, it was impossible for him to enter at present. After waiting for some time, Bhrigu's patience being exhausted, he said "Since thou, O Sankara! hast treated me with contempt in preferring the embraces of Pārvatī, your forms of worship shall be the Linga and Yoni."

The Vamana Purāna gives a different account. After the death of Umā at Daksha's sacrifice, Siva wandered about like a madman. He travelled from hermitage to hermitage, but could find no rest. When the hermit's wives saw him, they fell in love with him, and followed him from place to place. Their husbands, enraged at this, cursed the god, and by this means deprived him of his manhood. A great commotion through the world followed,

* Muir's *Sanskrit Texts*, Vol. IV. pp. 192, 199.

so that Brahmā and Vishnu interceded with the hermits on Siva's behalf. They agreed to withdraw their curse on condition that Siva should be represented by the Linga; and thus it became an object of worship to gods and men.

In the Uttara Khanda of the Rāmāyana it is said, "Wherever Rāvana, lord of the Rākshasas went, a golden linga was carried thither. Placing that linga in the midst of a pedestal of sand, Rāvana worshipped it with incense and flowers, of ambrosial odour."

The worship of the linga was common in early times all over India. Twelve principal symbols were set up at widely distant places, which were objects of especial veneration. One was situated at Rāmeswaram in the extreme south. The idol destroyed at Somnath by Mahmud of Ghazni was a linga.

Certain small white pebbles, found in rivers, polished by the action of the water, called Bāna-linga or Vana-linga, are held to be of their own nature pervaded by the special presence of the deity, and need no consecration.

Any natural formation of stone or rock which approaches the linga in resemblance, is regarded with great veneration, and is called Svayambhu linga, and is consequently superior in sanctity to one formed by the hand of man.

Worship of the Linga.—As it is supposed to be in a state of continual heat and excitement, it requires to be cooled by the constant dropping of water and by bilva leaves.

Dr Rajendralala Mitra describes the ceremonies performed at the great Saiva temple of Bhuvanesvara in Orissa. Siva is there worshipped under the form of a large uncarved block of granite, about 8 feet long, partly buried in the ground, partly apparent above the soil to the height of about 8 inches. The block is believed to be a linga of the Svayambhu class.

The daily worship consists of no less than 22 ceremonial acts:

(1) At the first appearance of dawn bells are rung to rouse the deity from his slumbers, (2) a lamp with many wicks is waved in front of the stone; (3) the god's teeth are cleaned by pouring water and rubbing a stick about a foot long on the stone, (4) the deity is washed and bathed by emptying several pitchers of water on the stone, (5) the god is dressed by putting clothes on the stone, (6) the first breakfast is offered, consisting of grain, sweetmeats, curds, and cocoanuts, (7) the god has his principal breakfast, when cakes and more substantial viands are served, (8) a kind of little lunch is offered, (9) the god has his regular lunch; (10) the mid-day dinner is served, consisting of curry, rice, pastry, cakes, cream, &c, while a priest waves a many-flamed lamp and burns incense before the stone, (11) strains of noisy discordant music rouse the deity from his afternoon sleep at 4 P.M., the sanctuary having been closed for the preceding four hours; (12) sweet-

meats are offered, (13) the afternoon bath is administered; (14) the god is dressed as in the morning; (15) another meal is served; (16) another bath is administered; (17) the full dress ceremony takes place, when fine costly vestments, yellow flowers and perfumery are placed on the stone; (18) another offering of food follows, (19) after an hour's interval the regular supper is served; (20) five masks and a Damru, used in dancing, are brought in and oblations made to them, (21) waving of lights before bedtime, (22) a bedstead is brought into the sanctuary and the god composed to sleep."*

Lastly, the god is sometimes told, "Párvati awaits you."

Benefit of worshipping the Linga:—The Mahábhárata says

"The worshipper of the linga who shall adore the image (*vigraha*), or the Linga, of the great (god) enjoys continual prosperity. It is the linga, raised up, which the rishis, gods, gandharvas and apsaras worship."†

THE WIVES OF SIVA

The Hindus suppose that their gods, like themselves, require wives, so they are provided

The wives of Siva are described sometimes as the same though with different names and characters.

Uma.—The name means 'light.' Different accounts are given of her origin. According to the Bhágavata Purána she was one of Daksha's sixteen daughters. Overcome with grief because Siva was slighted at Daksha's sacrifice, she became a Sati, throwing herself into the fire. She was next born as the daughter of Himavat, and was hence called Himavatí. Through her austerities she obtained Siva for her husband.

Parvati.—The name means "mountaineer." In the Puránas she is described as the constant companion of Siva. Sometimes they are represented as making love to each other, sometimes as quarrelling. Once Siva reproached her for the blackness of her skin. This taunt so incensed her that she left him, and, repairing to a deep forest, performed a most severe course of austerities, until Brahmá granted her as a boon that her complexion should be golden, and from this circumstance she is known as Gauri‡.

The Skanda Purána tells the following story of Siva and Párvati gambling

Siva, having invited the discus-armed Vishnu to sit as a witness, proposed to the matchless Párvati to have a game at

* Quoted in *Religious Thought and Life in India*, pp. 93, 94.

† Muir's *Sanskrit Texts*, Vol. IV. pp. 403, 406.

‡ Kennedy's *Hindu Mythology*, p. 284.

dice. "If you lose," said he, "give me all the jewels you are wearing. If you win, you shall have the peerless Arddhachandra and all my other ornaments." The frontal-eyed Siva first cast the dice and Párvatī followed. He who would not have suffered defeat even with Vishnu and Brahmā as his antagonists, lost the game to Párvatī. Upon this Siva mockingly said to Párvatī, "Instead of conquering me, you are yourself beaten, give me now, according to agreement, your necklace and other jewels." The radiant Vishnu immediately chimed in, saying, the honour of winning the game belongs to Siva. Thereupon Párvatī, with cloud-like tresses, became enraged, and charged them with treachery.

Durgā, 'The inaccessible,' is represented as very different in character from Umā and Párvatī. She is described as having become incarnate under many names for the destruction of demons. The home life of Siva and his spouse does not appear to have been of the happiest. As they could each bestow gifts upon their worshippers, it sometimes happened that the one wanted to bless whom the other wished to curse. In the contest between Rāma and Rāvana, Siva favoured the former and Durgā the latter. Durgā poured forth a torrent of abuse, calling Siva a withered old man, who smoked intoxicating herbs, lived in cemeteries, and covered himself with ashes, and asked if he thought she would accompany him on such an errand. Siva now gets angry, and reminds his wife that she was only a woman, and therefore could know nothing, and further that she does not act like a woman because she wandered about from place to place, engaged in war, was a drunkard, spent her time in the company of degraded beings, killed giants, drank their blood, and hung their skulls around her neck. Durgā became so enraged at these reproaches, that the gods were frightened, and entreated Rāma to join them in supplication to her, or Rāvana would never be destroyed. He did so; she became propitious, and consented to the destruction of the demon. Durgā is represented in the Sivopākhyana as being exceedingly jealous because her husband, in his begging excursions, visited the quarters of the town inhabited by women of ill-fame."^{*}

Durgā is said to have assumed this name because she slew an Asura named Durga, the name of the goddess being the feminine form of the demon's name. The following account is given of the fight:—

An Asura, named Durga, through penance, became so mighty that he conquered the three worlds, and dethroned Indra and the other gods. The gods in distress appealed to Siva, who asked Párvatī to go and destroy the giant, to which she willingly agreed.

^{*} Wilkins' *Hindu Mythology*, pp. 226, 227.

Párvatī first sent Kálarátrī (Dark Night) ; but Durga sent 30,000 huge giants against her and she fled to Párvatī. Durga came with innumerable chariots, elephants, horsemen, and foot soldiers to fight Párvatī on the mountain Vindhya ; Párvatī then assumed 1000 arms and caused beings to issue from her body who destroyed all the soldiers of the giant.

The giant now assumed the shape of an elephant as large as a mountain, but she tied his legs, and with her nails, which were like swords, tore him in pieces. He then arose in the form of a buffalo, and with his horns cast stones, trees, and mountains. Párvatī next pierced him with her trident, upon which he assumed his original body with a thousand arms and weapons in each. Approaching Párvatī, she seized him by his thousand arms, and carried him into the air, whence she threw him to the ground with fearful force. As he was still alive, she pierced him in the breast with an arrow, when blood issued from his mouth in streams and he died.

Durgá is said to have assumed ten forms for the destruction of two giants, Sumbha and Nisumbha. The Márkandeya Purána describes them in the following order. 1. As Durgá she received the message of the giants. 2. As Dasabhujá (the ten armed) she slew part of their army. 3. As Singhaváhinī (seated on a lion) she fought with Raktavija ; 4. As Mahishámardini (destroyer of a buffalo) she slew Sumbha in the form of a buffalo. 5. As Jagaddhatri (the mother of the world) she overcame the army of the giants. 6. As Káli (the black woman) she slew Raktavija. 7. As Muktakesī (with flowing hair) she overcame another army of the giants. 8. As Tárá (the Saviour) she slew Sumbha in his own proper shape ; 9. As Chinnamustiká (the headless) she killed Nisumbha. 10. As Jagadgaurī (the golden coloured lady renowned through the world) she received the praises and thanks of the gods.*

The Durga Puja.—This is the chief festival in Bengal, while in South India it is scarcely known. It is intended to celebrate the victory over the Asura Sambha, who attacked Durgá under the form of a buffalo. Hence the goddess is called Mahisha-mardini.

The first part of the festival is the *bodhana* or the awaking of the goddess, who is supposed to have been sleeping for the past two months. She is invited to come to the house, and dwell in the image which has been prepared for her. After this the *prán pratishtha* ceremony is performed. For three days the worship is continued. Offerings and sacrifices are made. Kids are usually the victims, but, in some cases, buffaloes.

On the afternoon of the fourth day, the goddess is supposed to take leave of the image, with is afterwards thrown into the river.

* Wilkins' *Hindu Mythology*, pp. 251, 252.



KALI

Kali.—‘The Black,’ is often called Kālī Mā, the black mother. Her great achievement is slaying, with the aid of Chandī, Raktivija, the principal leader of the giant’s army. Seeing his men fall, he attacked the goddess in person, when for every drop of blood that fell from his body a thousand giants equal in power to himself arose. At this crisis another form of the goddess, named Chandī, came to the rescue. As Kālī drank the giant’s blood and prevented the formation of new giants, Chandī slew the monster herself.

Kālī is represented as a black woman with four arms; in one hand she has a sword, in another the head of the giant she has slain, with the other two she is encouraging her worshippers. For earrings she has two dead bodies, wears a necklace of skulls, her only clothing is a girdle made of dead men’s hands, and her tongue protrudes from her mouth. Her eyes are red as those of a drunkard, and her face and breast are besmeared with blood. She stands with one foot on the thigh, and another on the breast of her husband. When her victory over the giants was won, she danced for joy so furiously that the earth trembled beneath

her weight. At the request of the gods, Siva asked her to desist, but as, owing to her excitement, she did not notice him, he lay down among the slain. She continued dancing until she caught sight of her husband under her foot; immediately she thrust out her tongue with shame at the disrespect she had shown him.

The learned Jogendra Nath Bhattacharya, President of the College of Pandits, Naduja, says that the real meaning of Káli dancing is far worse. It is so filthy that it cannot be explained. It is found in the Dhyan or formula for contemplating the goddess Káli.*

In Vedic times sacrifice was considered so important that it was called "the navel of the world." Largely through the influence of Buddhism, animal sacrifices were discontinued. At present they are chiefly offered in connection with the worship of Káli. Human sacrifices were formerly offered, and it is believed that they have not yet entirely ceased. In the Kálika Purána, Siva, addressing his sons, says —

"The flesh of the antelope and the rhinoceros give my beloved (Káli) delight for 500 years. By a human sacrifice, attended by the forms laid down, Deví is pleased for a thousand years, and by the sacrifice of three men a lakh of years. An oblation of blood which has been rendered pure by holy texts, is equal to ambrosia. Blood drawn from the offerer's own body is looked upon as a proper oblation to the goddess Chandiká."

The following account is given of the origin of the temple at the Kálighat, Calcutta:—

Siva began to dance in a most frantic manner when he raised the dead body of Satí in his arms. The earth trembled beneath the weight of such a load, when Vishnu, finding there would be an utter destruction of the universe if this were allowed to continue, let fly his wonder-working discus, and cut the body into 51 pieces. These fell in different places, a leg here, a head there; but wherever a part touched the earth, the spot became sacred, an image of the goddess was set up and a temple erected to her honour, which pilgrims visit as shrines to this day. The renowned temple at Kálighat is said to possess the big toe of her left foot. †

The temple of Káli near Calcutta at great festivals almost swims with blood, and the smell is most sickening. The people bring their victims, pay the fee, and the priest puts a little red lead on its head. When their turn comes, the executioner takes the animal, fixes its head in a frame, and then beheads it. A little of the blood is placed in front of the idol, and the pilgrim takes away the headless body.

* *Hindu Castes and Sects*, p. 408

† Wilkins' *Hindu Mythology*. pp. 246, 247.

Dr. Rajendralala Mitra says, "There is scarcely a respectable house in all Bengal, the mistress of which has not at one time or other shed her own blood under the notion of satisfying the goddess by the operation."

Kālī was the patron goddess of the professional murderers, called Thugs. Divine sanction was claimed for their horrible trade. It was said that the goddess gave their ancestors waistbands, with which to destroy first demons, and then men, by strangulation. Before going on their expeditions, Thugs made offerings to the goddess, who, they believed, would not only shield them from harm, but visit with her wrath all who injured them.

SONS OF SIVA.

These are two, Ganesa, the elder, and Kartikeya, the younger.

Ganesa.—The name means Isa, leader of the ganas, attendants of Siva. Another form of the same meaning is Ganapati. Various accounts are given of his origin. The *Brahmavaivarta Purāna* describes him as the son of Siva and Pārvatī. Soon after his birth all the gods came to congratulate the parents and see the infant. Sani, or Saturn, held down his head, and would not look at the child, because his influence was so bad that it would reduce him to ashes. Pārvatī, proud of her first-born son, did not think of this, and scolded him an account of his conduct. Sani then looked up, and immediately Ganesa's head was destroyed. Pārvatī, seeing her child headless, was overwhelmed with grief, and would have killed Sani. Brahmā prevented her, and Vishnu, mounting Garuda, flew to the river Pushpabhadra, where finding an elephant asleep, he took off its head, and flying back placed it on the body of Ganesa. Pārvatī was but little soothed when she saw her son with an elephant's head; but to please her, Brahmā promised that Ganesa should be the first worshipped of all the gods.

The *Matsya Purāna* gives a different account of the origin of Ganesa. When Pārvatī was bathing, she took the oil and ointments used at the bath, together with the impurities that came from her body, and formed them into the figure of a man, to which she gave life by sprinkling it with the water of the Ganges. The *Siva Purāna* thus accounts for the elephant head. Pārvatī, after giving Ganesa life, placed him at her door to prevent intrusion while she was bathing. On his refusal to allow Siva to enter, a struggle ensued, in which that deity cut off Ganesa's head. When Pārvatī explained that Ganesa acted by her orders and wept over the loss of her son, Siva ordered the first head that could be found to be brought to him.

This happened to be an elephant's, which he fitted to the headless trunk.

The Varāha Purāna says that Ganesa was produced by Siva alone.

Ganesa is represented with only one tusk, and is hence called *Ekadanta*. One explanation of this is the following Parasu-rāma wished to visit Siva; but his entrance into the inner apartment was opposed by Ganesa, as his father was asleep. Parasu-rāma, nevertheless, tried to force his way inside. During the struggle, Parasu-rāma threw the axe, which he had obtained from Siva, at Ganesa, who, recognising his father's weapon, received it upon one of his tusks, which it immediately severed. Another account is, that Ganesa himself snapped off one of his tusks to hurl it at an adversary.

The large belly of Ganesa denotes his gluttony. He is said to be very fond of sweetmeats. School boys in South India praise him for being able to eat so many. The story is related that Siva was, at one time in deep distress, because one of the gods offered great sacrifices for his destruction. Siva told Ganesa how he might relieve him. The enemy of Siva delayed Ganesa by throwing down sweetmeats, which he waited to pick up and eat.

There is no god more frequently invoked in India than Ganesa. Being looked upon as the remover of obstacles, his assistance is considered necessary in every undertaking. An annual festival is held in his honour, called Ganesh Chaturthi. Many persons never commence a letter without paying to Ganesa

In South India he is generally called *Pulleiyar*.

There is a sect of Hindus, called Ganapatyas, who make Ganesa the supreme object of worship. He is thus addressed in the Ganapati Upanishad "Praise to thee, O Ganesa! Thou art undoubtedly the Creator, Preserver, and Destroyer, the Supreme Brahmā, the eternal Spirit. Thou art Brahmā, Vishnu, and Rudra. We acknowledge thy divinity, O Ekadanta! and meditate on thy countenance, enlighten, therefore, our understanding. He who continually meditates upon thy divine form becomes the most excellent of yogis."

Kartikeya, also called *Skanda*, is the god of war and generalissimo of the armies of the gods. Conflicting accounts are given of his origin. The Rāmāyana* says that the gods asked Brahmā for a competent leader of their forces as Siva was practising austerities. Brahmā said that in consequence of the curse of Umā, no son could be born to any of the wives of the gods; but that Agni would beget a son on the river Gangā, who should be the general of the gods. Agni impregnated the Gangā, who brought forth Kārtikeya, so called because he was nursed

* Muir's *Sanskrit Texts*, Vol. IV. 364.

by the Krittakás, the Pleiades. The Mahābhārata* says that Kārtikeya having been honored by Rudra, the deities call him the son of Rudra.

The Siva Purāna gives a different account of his origin, and says that he was born to effect the destruction of Tāraka, the demon king of Tripura. He forced Brahmā by his austerities to promise him any boon he should demand. He went through the following eleven series, each lasting 100 years. 1. He stood on one foot holding the other and both hands up towards heaven, with his eyes fixed on the sun. 2. He stood on one great toe. 3. He took only water for his sustenance. 4. He lived similarly on air. 5. He remained in water. 6. He was buried in the earth, but continued in incessant adoration. 7. The same in fire. 8. He stood on his head. 9. He hung on a tree by his hands. 10. He bore the weight of his body on one hand. 11. He hung on a tree with his head downwards.

The boon that Tāraka obtained was that he should be unrivalled in strength, and that no one should slay him but a son of Siva. As Tāraka then usurped the control of the universe, a son was born to Siva alone who, in course of time, slew Tāraka.

Still another account is given of the origin of Kārtikeya. Siva emitted sparks of fire from his eyes, which, being thrown into the lake Saravana, became six infants, who were nursed by the wives of the Rishis, who are seen in the sky as the Pleiades. When Pārvatī saw their children, she was transported with their beauty, and embraced all of them together so forcibly that their six bodies became one, while their six heads and twelve arms remained.

Kārtikeya is better known in South India under the name of Subrahmanya. The Skanda Purāna gives a full account of his war with Sura, and relates how he was sent by his father to interrupt Dakṣha's sacrifice. At the instigation of the latter, he was delayed on his journey by beautiful damsels, who entertained him with dance and song. Hence it is the practice for dancing girls who are attached to the temples to be married to him. Though allowed to prostitute themselves, they cannot remarry.

KAILASA.

Siva's heaven is called Kailāsa. It is supposed to be in the Himālayas. There he lives with his wife Pārvatī, also called Durgā, Kālī, Umā, Bhavānī, Sītā, etc., with the hero Virabhadra, a manifestation of his energy, and with his two sons, Skanda and Kārtikeya. The two latter control Siva's countless troops (ganas) of servants, leading some to battle against evil demons, and

* Muir's *Sanskrit Texts*, Vol. IV. 350

restraining others, who are themselves mischievous imps, and would turn the whole world into confusion unless kept in check. This probably is an expression of the idea inveterate in the Indian mind that all disease and destruction are the result of demoniacal agencies.

The faithful worshippers of Siva are supposed to be transported at death to Kailāsa.

INITIATION, ETC.

To mark devotion to Siva and bind his followers together by some common bond of union, a mantra is taught expressive of exclusive and absolute trust in the particular god worshipped. Its repetition every day is made a condition of salvation through him. Saivites are taught the five-syllabled mantra, *si-va-ya-na-ma*.

The privilege of imparting this secret mantra belongs to the gurus. The communication of it (usually in a whisper) is called initiation (*dīkshā*), and acquaintance with it is held to be essential to admission within the pale of the society.

The distinctive mark of the Saivas consists of three horizontal strokes (*tri-pundra*) made with the ashes of burnt cow-dung (*vibhūti*).

The rosary (*japa-mālā*) used by Saivas is a string of 32 rough berries (or that number doubled) of the *Rudrāksha* tree.

EXAMINATION OF POPULAR SAIVAISM.

Condition of the Hindu Intellect.—Hindus, in general, represent the childhood of humanity. "The idlest legend" says Professor Cowell, "passes current as readily as the most authentic fact, nay, more readily, because it is more likely to charm the imagination; and in this phase of mind, imagination and feeling supply the only proof which is needed to win the belief of the audience."

Sir Monier Williams thus describes the effect of Brahmanism:

"Its policy being to check the development of intellect and to keep the inferior castes in perpetual childhood, it encouraged an appetite for exaggeration more monstrous and absurd than would be tolerated in the most extravagant European fairy-tales. The more improbable the statement, the more childish delight it was calculated to awaken. . . . Time is measured by millions of years; space by millions of miles, and if a battle is to be described, nothing is thought of unless millions of soldiers, elephants, and horses are brought into the field."

A similar opinion is expressed by Macaulay. He says, "The Brahminical mythology is so absurd, that it necessarily debases every mind that receives it as truth."

Stricter Criteria of Truth the great Want of the Hindu Mind.—This is the opinion of Sir H. S. Maine, one of the ablest lawyers that ever came to this country. He says .

"Where the Indian intellect had been trained at all before the establishment of the British-Indian Empire, it stood in need, before every thing else, of stricter criteria of truth"

He describes the Indian intellect as "elaborately inaccurate ; it is supremely and deliberately careless of all precision in magnitude, number, and time."

The historical faculty has been wanting Not a single narrative that can properly be called *history* has ever been written by Hindus, except by those who have received an English education.

Another feature of the Hindu mind is to **accept illustration as argument**. One comparison may seem to prove one thing, while another may lead to an opposite conclusion ; *e g* , As there is only one sun in the sky, so there is only one God ." " As the stars are innumerable, so are the gods "

Contradictory Statements are all regarded as true.—Max Muller says. "That one statement should be contradicted by another, seems never to have been felt as a serious difficulty."[†]

This represents the general feeling, but the error was pointed out by Kapila, who says in the Sāṅkhya Aphorisms, Book I .

"There is no acceptance of the inconsistent, unless we come to the level of children, madmen, and the like."

Priests and pandits believe the most incredible statements in the Rāmāyana and the Mahābhārata, because the poets claimed that Brahmā promised that they should "not contain a single untruth." They also receive, with unhesitating faith, fourteen contradictory accounts of the origin of the Vedas :

The Twentieth Century is not satisfied with such child-like credulity. It demands that the laws of evidence and common sense shall be applied to statements. In the following pages an attempt is made to conduct such an examination.

* *Reign of Queen Victoria*, Vol. I. p 307

† *Ancient Sanskrit Literature*, p. 321.

‡ See *An Account of the Vedas*, in which they are quoted in Sanskrit and English, 8vo. 106 pp. 4½ As., with Postage 6 As.

PROOFS THAT SIVA, HIS WIVES, AND CHILDREN ARE ONLY IMAGINARY BEINGS.

The following are some of the reasons which may be mentioned

1. **The Contradictory Accounts of their Origin.**—One poet gives one account, another one quite different. Such evidence would not be received in a court of justice.

2 **The Stories told of them are utterly Incredible.**—Every educated, intelligent man must see that the churning of the milk sea and Siva drinking the poison, Siva receiving the Ganges on his head, the fights of Durgā and Kālī with giants and demons, &c., are only fictitious, the inventions of poets

3 **The degrading representations of Siva and his wives show that they are the inventions of an unenlightened age.**—Cicero, a celebrated Roman, says of his countrymen and the Greeks, "Instead of the transfer to men of that which is divine, they transferred human sins to their gods, and experienced again the necessary action."

Any books attributing evil passions to God show that they were not inspired by Him, but proceeded from the imagination of corrupt hearts

Siva is represented as telling lies, fighting with Vishnu, as frequenting the company of prostitutes, as intoxicated with bhang. The single story of Mohini is sufficient to prove that the accounts of him are fictions.

EXCUSES FOR THE EVIL ACTIONS OF THE GODS.

The following are brought forward

1. **The Gods are above all law and may do as they please.**—This is expressed in the Indian proverb, *Samarthi ko dosh nahin*, 'To the mighty is no sin.' The idea was taken from a Hindu despot, who could do anything he pleased without any one daring to find fault. When the Hindus framed their gods, they took their kings as models. Their gods were deified men, representing themselves

In a low state of civilisation, gods, like kings, are supposed not to be bound by the ordinary rules of morality.

The principle that the gods are not to be condemned for wrong-doing, is the opposite of the truth. If a child commit a fault, he is blamed; if an ordinary man do the same, his guilt is greater; if a king does it, the guilt and evil consequences would be still greater. The evil effect is incomparably greater when a being revered as a God himself sets a bad example,

It was sometimes said that the gods committed sin in "sport," or as a "divine amusement." This only makes matters worse. The idea is blasphemous.

2. Attempts are made to give bad actions a Spiritual Meaning.—For many centuries the actions attributed to the gods in the Purānas were accepted as literally true. The Bhāgavata Purāna, after describing those attributed to Krishna, only warns its readers that they are not to be imitated.

The religious condition of ancient Europe was very much like that of modern India. The gods of ancient Europe sometimes fought with each other like the gods of the Hindu pantheon. Jupiter was notorious for his adulteries. He assumed the form of a husband to seduce a faithful wife. Juno, his wife, bitterly complained of his misconduct, as Pārvatī complained of Siva.

Christianity taught higher conceptions of God. His most glorious attribute is His spotless holiness. To charge God with lying, theft, or adultery, was felt to be blasphemy.

Attempts were made in ancient Europe to purify the popular system. The immoral stories about Jupiter and other gods were treated as allegories, and spiritual meanings were given to disgraceful rites.

A similar movement is now going on in India. Men, partially enlightened through Christian morality, feel that the old explanations of the crimes of the gods cannot bear the fierce light of the twentieth century. As in ancient Europe, attempts are made to give a spiritual meaning to evil deeds.

Sir H. S. Maine, in his Calcutta Convocation Address in 1866, thus referred to such attempts

"If I had any complaint to make of the most highly educated class of Natives, . . . I should assuredly not complain of their mode of acquiring knowledge, or of the quality of that knowledge . . . I should rather venture to express disappointment at the use to which they sometimes put it. It seems to me that not seldom they employ it for what I can best describe as irrationally reactionary purposes. It is not to be concealed, and I see plainly that educated Natives do not conceal from themselves, that they have, by the fact of their education, broken for ever with much in their history, much in their customs, much in their creed. Yet I constantly read, and sometimes hear, elaborate attempts on their part to persuade themselves and others, that there is a sense in which these rejected portions of Native history, and usage and belief, are perfectly in harmony with the modern knowledge which the educated class has acquired, and with the modern civilization to which it aspires . . . Whatever the cause, there can be no greater mistake, and, under the circumstances of the country, no more destructive mistake."

The Indian Spectator, after quoting the above, remarks that these words are as true now as when they were spoken more than twenty years ago.

Falsehood is never beneficial in the end ; truth is always best. For educated men to employ sophistical arguments in support of what they know to be wrong, is duplicity most hurtful to themselves. Nor does the evil end there. As Sir H. S. Maine justly says. "*There can be under the circumstances of the country no more destructive mistake.*" It helps to perpetuate the reign of error and superstition.

EXCUSES FOR IDOLATRY.

Some educated Hindus deny that the Hindus are idolaters. Mr S. B. Thakur, at a meeting in England, said that idols are only like photographs, serving to remind us of those we loved. To this Mr. Desmukh well replied "It is true we like to retain photographs of people we love to remind us of their form and features ; but your blocks of stone or your deformed hideous brazen images, bought at a shop in the bazaar, of what sort of Divinity do they remind us ?"

Rammohun Roy explains how the above excuse for idolatry originated :—

"Some Europeans, imbued with high principles of liberality, but unacquainted with the ritual part of Hindu idolatry, are disposed to palliate it by an interpretation which, though plausible, is by no means well-founded. They are willing to imagine that the idols which the Hindus worship, are not viewed by them in the light of gods or as real personifications of the divine attributes, but merely as instruments for raising their minds to the contemplation of those attributes, which are respectively represented by different figures. I have frequently had occasion to remark that many Hindus also who are conversant with the English language, finding this interpretation a more plausible apology for idolatry than any with which they are furnished by their own guides, do not fail to avail themselves of it, though in repugnance both to their faith and to their practice. The declarations of this description of Hindus naturally tend to confirm the original idea of such Europeans who, from the extreme absurdity of pure unqualified idolatry, deduce an argument against its existence."

Rammohun Roy further shows the falsity of the excuse :

"Neither do they regard the images of these gods merely in the light of instruments for elevating the mind to the conception of those supposed beings ; they are simply in themselves made objects of worship. For whatever Hindu purchases an idol in the market, or constructs one with his own hands, or has one made under his own superintendence, it is his invariable practice to perform certain ceremonies, called *Pūjan Pratikshtha*, or the endowment of animation, by

which he believes that its nature is changed from that of the mere materials of which it is formed, and that it acquires not only life but supernatural powers. Shortly afterwards, if the idol be of the masculine gender, he marries it to a feminine one . with no less pomp and magnificence than he celebrates the nuptials of his own children. The mysterious process is now complete ; and the god and goddess are esteemed the arbiters of his destiny, and continually receive his most ardent adoration."

The life which by one ceremony has been brought into the idol, can by another ceremony be taken out.

The excuse is made that the poor and ignorant need images to remind them of God. They cannot understand His form for He has none. They can remember their parents when far distant , they can love a benefactor whom they have never seen , they can obey the authority of a King-Emperor though he never set foot on their soil. They can worship God who is a spirit in spirit and in truth. Idols are a hindrance—not a help to true worship. They give most degrading ideas of God. Would a father be pleased if a son kept a toad to remind him of his father in his absence ?

Folly of Idolatry.—Idolatry has been well compared to child's play. Little children talk to their dolls as if they had life. They dress them, pretend to give them food, put them to sleep, and so forth. Grown up people do just the same. They treat their idols as living beings. They offer them food, though they cannot eat ; they have different kinds of music before images that cannot hear ; they wave lights before what cannot see. In the cold season they furnish them with warm clothes , in the hot season they fan them ; and lest musquitoes should bite them, they place them within curtains at night.

Instead of the idols taking care of their worshippers, it is the latter who have to protect the former. They are constantly afraid lest the hands and feet of their gods should be broken. Robbers sometimes break into temples, and carry off the jewels. The gods cannot give even one good screech for help. Cock-roaches sometimes destroy the colour of images , rats make holes in them ; bats defile them , flies, after sitting upon various unclean things, alight on them. Where is their divinity, seeing they suffer themselves to be thus insulted ?

Nearly 3,000 years ago the folly of idolatry was thus shown in the Bible :—

Their idols are silver and gold,
The work of men's hands.
They have mouths, but they speak not,
Eyes have they, but they see not,
They have ears, but they hear not,

Noses have they, but they smell not;
 Feet have they, but they walk not,
 Neither speak they through their throat.
 They that make them are like unto them,
 So is every one that trusteth in them. *Psalms*. cxv, 4—8.

We are not to attempt to make images of God Himself. Can any goldsmith form an image of a man's soul? God is a spirit, and it is equally impossible to make an image of Him. "To whom will ye liken me or shall I be equal? saith the Holy One."

Degrading Effects of Idolatry.—Krishna says in the Bhagavad Gītā: "The mind by continually meditating on a material object becomes materialized." People who worship senseless images end by becoming like them. They are deceived and cheated by their religious teachers in every possible way, but they do not see through the fraud.

The debasing influence of idolatry is thus described by Ram-mohun Roy.—

"Idolatry, as now practised by our countrymen, must be looked upon with great horror by common sense, as leading directly to immorality and destructive of social comfort. For every Hindu who devotes himself to this absurd worship, constructs for that purpose a couple of male and female idols, sometimes indecent in form, as representatives of his favorite deities, he is taught and enjoined from his infancy to contemplate and repeat the history of these, as well as their fellow deities, though the actions ascribed to them be only a continued series of debauchery, sensuality, falsehood, ingratitude, breach of trust, and treachery to friends. There can be but one opinion respecting the moral character to be expected of a person, who has been brought up with sentiments of reverence to such beings, who refreshes his memory relative to them almost every day, and who has been persuaded to believe, that a repetition of the holy name of one of these deities, or a trifling present to his image or to his devotees, is sufficient not only to purify and free him from all crimes whatsoever, but to procure to him future beatitude."

SIN OF THE DURGA PUJA.

The following remarks on the Durgá Pújá are abridged from the *Indian Messenger* —

"It has features which at once command our sympathy. The resources of the poorest are now taxed to make little love-offerings to those to whom they are bound by social ties. Brothers hasten home from their distant places of business, once more lighting up with their countenances the long-deserted homes. But alas! there are other features as well which produce quite another impression upon the mind. This wave of national sentiment also covers an amount of self-indulgence and excess, which is quite appalling. This is also the period for

all the votaries of pleasure to run headlong into their vicious excesses." Sept. 25, 1887.

An article in a Calcutta paper, entitled "Blessed Durgā," begins as follow:—

"Mother Durgā comes down from her abode in the Himalayas to greet her children in the plains who have been anxious to see her smiling face after one full year. She brings joy, wisdom, peace and prosperity in her train, and her children are preparing to give her a right warm reception. They will lay down the year's trials, tribulations and sorrows at the feet of the Divine Mother, who will bless and buckle them on to fight the battle of life with renewed vigour for another twelve-month."

The festival is to celebrate a lie. No such being as Durgā ever existed. The story of her fight with a giant is just like the story of Jack-the-Giant-Killer with which English children are amused, but far more extravagant. To ascribe to an imaginary being the blessings we owe to God, is most blameworthy.

THE TANTRAS

The works, so called, represent the latest and most corrupt form of Hinduism. The most degraded savages upon earth are not guilty of the beastly practices enjoined in some of them.

An exclusive adoration of Siva's wife is inculcated as the source of every kind of supernatural power. They are believed to be a direct revelation from Siva to his wife Pārvatī.

Those who worship Energy or force as a female deity are called Śāktas. They are divided into two classes.

The *Dakṣināchārins*, 'right hand worshippers,' do not display undue preference for the female or left hand side of the deity, nor are they addicted to secret rites. The *Vāmāchārins*, 'left-hand worshippers,' devote themselves to the exclusive worship of the female side of Siva. These make the Tantras their Veda.

Kālī, the form under which the goddess is worshipped in Calcutta, is represented as having a necklace of skulls and standing on the breast of her husband Siva.

It is by offering to women the so-called homage of sensual love and carnal passion, and by yielding free course to all the grosser appetites, that the Śāktas seek to gratify the goddess, and through her aid to acquire supernatural faculties, and even ultimately to obtain union with the Supreme Being. Incredible as it may appear, these so-called worshippers pride themselves on their debasing doctrines maintaining that their creed is the grandest of all religions. All who are uninitiated are called *pasu*, 'beasts,' the initiated being called *Siddhas* 'the perfect ones.'

"The only salvation," says a Tantra, "is that which results from spirituous liquors, flesh, and cohabitation with women."

Another Tantra says:

"He who practises Yoni-Mudra is not polluted by sin, were he to murder a thousand Brahmans or kill all the inhabitants of the three worlds.

"Were he to kill his Guru or drink wine, or commit theft, or violate the bed of his Guru, he is not to suffer for any of these transgressions."

At their chief ceremony a circle is formed, composed of men and women, without respect of caste or relationship. The five *Makāras*, or *ms* are required, namely—1. *Madya*, wine; 2. *Māmsa*, flesh, 3. *Matsya*, fish; 4. *Mudrā*, parched grain; 5. *Maithuna*, sexual union. The object of the worshippers is not merely to break through the restraints of caste and give themselves to licentious practices. They also aim at acquiring magical and mystical powers by the use of Mantras and Yantras.

With the Śāktas a Mantra loses its character of a divinely inspired prayer addressed to a deity. It becomes a spell or charm, the very sound of which, if properly uttered and repeated, has, in itself, a mystical power for good or evil.

The Yantras are mystical diagrams,—generally combinations of triangular figures—supposed to possess occult powers. Each of the Śaktis has a Yantra assigned to her.

There are about 64 original Tantras, and a large number of other Tantrik works. None of the actual Tantras have as yet been printed or translated in Europe. They differ in character. They are not all equally vile. The worst are probably exceptional. The Rev. Dr. K. S. Macdonald, of Calcutta, is now engaged in their examination.

According to Hindu philosophy, the *extinction* of desire is the way to bliss. The general idea is that it is to be sought by the *suppression* of the passions. The Vāmācharin's idea is that it is to be attained by the *gratification* of the passions. If a man has wine and woman, what else does he want?

Jogendra Nath Bhattacharyu, President of the College of Pandits at Nadiya, says:

"Reverence ought to be by all means shown to persons and institutions that have a just claim to it. But nothing can, in my opinion, be more sinful than to speak respectfully of persons who are enemies of mankind, and to whitewash rotten institutions by esoteric explanations and fine phrases."

SAIVISM IN SOUTH INDIA.

This has some peculiar features, and a literature of its own. There are sacred writings, called Agamas, ascribed to Siva, and said to be of equal authority with the Vedas. They are probably like the Tantras of Bengal, and belong to the later class of sacred books.

Distinctive Features of Southern Saivism.—It is thus described by Dr G. U. Pope:—

"In preparing a work on the *Poets, Saints, and Sages of the Tamil-land*, I have had occasion to study much of the wonderful Saiva literature existing in Tamil. To European students this mixture of philosophy and religion presents an exceedingly interesting field of investigation, since no non-Christian system so nearly resembles Christianity in some of its aspects, and, certainly, none has departed so far, in other very important respects, from what Christians recognise as pure and holy. The constant mixture of loftiest aspirations, tenderest prayers, and sublimest adoration with wild legends, and symbolism much of which must seem to us uncouth, repellent, unworthy and degrading, makes this Siva Psalter* (the *Tiruvāsagam*) intensely fascinating. The Saiva Siddhānta system itself is the choicest (pure South Indian) product of Dravidian intellect, and ought to be studied by all who seek to influence the Tamil mind."

The editor remarks in a note that the *Saiva Siddhānta* is the *summa* of Saiva's law. It is expounded in fourteen treatises by the *Sankara Gurus* (Teachers of the succession).

Each of the great temples of South India has its *Purāna*. To entice pilgrims to visit it, each claims to be the place of greatest sanctity, proved by the miracles for which it is celebrated. But the best known and most esteemed work is the *Periya Purānam*, 'great legend'. In 72 cantos the lives of 63 devotees are given, full of wonders. Dr Pope remarks, . . . "It would seem that the Saiva Gurus had come to the conclusion that they could not retain their hold upon the people without something that should be equivalent to the Jātakas current among both Buddhists and Jains, and probably beginning then to be used by Vaishnavites also"†.

The Saiva Catechism thus records the miracles of Sundaramurthisvami, one of the 63 saints.

"At Tiru Pukalur he turned bricks into gold by singing an inspired hymn.

"He cast all the money which the god had given him at Vnuttachalam into the river Manimuttu, and took it out again of the lily tank of the temple of Tiru-arur.

* *The Light of Truth*, Vol. I p. 11.

† *Tiruvāsagam*, p. xc.

"When he was on his way to Tiru Vaiyaru in company with Cheraman Perumal, he saw the river Kaveri approaching, much swollen, and rolling downwards in a fierce torrent. He sang an inspired hymn, and thereby caused the torrent suddenly to stand still as if a dam had been thrown across its course.

"At Pukholiyur avenasi, a crocodile had eaten up a Brahmar boy some years before he visited that place of pilgrimage. The saint sang an inspired hymn, and compelled the crocodile to come forth together with the boy, who had now grown in proportion to the years that he had been missing." p 25

The last miracle is especially remarkable—that a boy should have lived and grown for years in the stomach of a crocodile! By the people generally such accounts are implicitly believed.

Mánikka Vásagar, although not one of the 63 saints, is recognised as their equal. His poetry contains the strange contrasts mentioned by Dr. Pope—devout aspirations, mixed with the grossest idolatry. He is said to have been the prime minister of the king of Madura. He was intrusted by his master with a large sum of money for the purchase of horses; but becoming a Siva devotee, he handed it all over to be distributed. When questioned by the king, he told him that the horses would be delivered in two days. Siva came to the rescue. Dr. Pope says

"The god gathers together a vast multitude of jackals from the forest around, converts them into magnificent chargers, gives them into the charge of all the inferior gods, who came disguised as grooms while he himself rides at the head of the troops, disguised as the merchant who has brought the horses for sale from a distant land. The king was delighted. The horses are delivered up to the king's grooms, the gods depart and darkness comes over the land. Before dawn the whole city is aroused by frightful howlings. The newly-arrived jackal horses have resumed their old forms, and even fall upon the real horses and devour them."

When the king handed over Mánikka Vásagar to the tormentors, Siva again appeared on his behalf, and the rest of his life was spent in going from shrine to shrine to sing his praises.

Devotion to Siva is expressed in the strongest terms. The following are examples.

"I ask not bliss of Indra, Mál, or Ayan,—though my house and home
Be run'd, friendship form I none save with thine own,—though hell's abyss
I enter, I unmurmuring go, if grace divine appoint my lot;—
O King, no other god save thee I ponder, ever Transcendent Good! P. 45.

That very day my soul, my body, all to me pertaining, dost Thou not take
as thine own,

Thou like a mountain strong! when me thou mad'st thy slave?

And this day is there any hindrance found in me?

Our Mighty One! Eight-arm'd and Triple-eyed!

Do thou to me what's good alone, or do thou ill,

To all resigned, I'm thine and wholly thine! PP. 275-6.

* *Tiruvásagam*. pp. xxv—vi abridged.

The following is the first verse of the morning hymn, "The rousing from the sacred couch," sung in every Saiva temple :

Hail! Being, source to me of all life's joys! 'Tis dawn; upon thy flower-like feet twin wreaths of blooms we lay,
And worship, 'neath the beauteous smile of grace benign that from thy sacred face beams on us. Siva Lord,
Who dwell'st in Perunturra!, girt with cool rice-fields, where 'mid the fertile soil the expanding lotus blooms!
Thou on whose lifted banner is the Bull, Master!
Our mighty Lord! FROM OFF THY COUCH IN GRACE ARISE! P. 207.

But along with lofty sentiments there are numerous allusions to the prevailing beliefs about Siva. He is thus described.

His the crescent; his the mystic word; Perunturra!'s king;
He wears the twisted thread; he rides the glorious bull;
Black is his throat; his body red; he smears the ashes white;
First in all worlds is he, the rapture without end
As in the days of yore to ancient saints, in grace he gives!
That all the worlds may wonder, SING 'AMMAN'Y REF' PP. 121, 122.

Thayumanavar's poems contain the same passionate longings after God as those of Mánikka Vásagar, and are even on a higher plane; but in both cases the popular mythology is accepted. Thayumanavar says:

"The Muktas who did realise this truth are Márkhandeya, Suka, and such like sages. Please do thou raise me to their level, O God of gods, who art adored by the Devas, Indra, &c., adored by the gods, Brahma, &c., adored by the Munis skilled in the Rig-Veda, &c., adored by the nine Siddhas, by the Gananáthas, by the Sun and the Moon, &c., by the Gandharvas, the Kinnaras, and the rest."

SOME REMARKS ON SOUTHERN POPULAR SAIVISM.

The most solemn act of our life, and that which ought to have the most beneficial effect upon it, is the worship of God. It is true that we are continually in His presence; but we are especially so in buildings dedicated to His service, and when professedly engaged in His adoration.

Hindu worship has been well compared to child's play. Little children talk to their dolls as if they had life. They dress them, pretend to give them food, put them to sleep, and so forth. Grown up people do just the same. They treat their idols as living beings. They offer them food, though they cannot eat; they have different kinds of music before images that cannot hear; they have lights before what cannot see.

The very idea is horrible that men should pretend to awake God in the morning and put Him to sleep as if He were a child.

everywhere. The temple of Venus at Corinth had more than a thousand prostitutes connected with it, called by a name equivalent to *devadāsi*. This led to the ruin of many strangers who frequented it from all parts of the earth.

The indignant words of Bishop Lightfoot, applied to ancient Greece, refer equally to India:—

“Imagine, if you can, this licensed shamelessness, this consecrated profligacy, carried on under the sanction of religion and in the full blaze of publicity, while statesmen and patriots, philosophers and men of letters, looked on unconcerned, not uttering one word and not raising one finger to put it down”

The Hindu has the following remarks on the Indian institution:

“The demoralisation it causes is immense. So long as we allow it to be associated with our temples and places of worship, we offend and degrade our religion and nationality. The loss and misery it has entailed on many a home is merely indescribable”

No intelligent man who uses his reason can believe that jackals were changed into horses, or that a boy lived and grew for years in the stomach of a crocodile. Such stories, with the mockery of religious worship, the obscene figures on temples and cars, the dancing-girls show that Saivism originated in a dark age of the world. It should, therefore, be given up for the worship of the one true God, “glorious in holiness,” the Creator of heaven and earth, our rightful Lord, to whom we owe every blessing that we enjoy.

HINDU BELIEF IN THE POWER OF TAPAS AND THE VIRTUE OF ASCETICISM.

TAPAS, austerity, means self-imposed bodily mortification. The theory is that a Hindu who aims at perfection ought to go through six courses of tapas for twelve years, each, rising by degrees up to the highest order of all—the *Parama-hansa*, who is supposed to be wholly absorbed in meditating on Brahma and to do nothing else whatever

The following is one course. The ascetic eats leaves and is clothed in grass. For one month he eats fruits every third day; for another month every sixth day; for another month every fortnight; and for the fourth month he lives on air, standing on tip-toe with arms stretched out. The usual object is to gain merit. The gods are supposed to owe their greatness to their austerities. An account has been given (see p. 27) of the astonishing austerities of the asura Tāraka, by which Brahmā was compelled to make him lord of the universe.

Siva is described as the typical ascetic. In this character he goes quite naked (digambara), with matted hair, and besmeared with ashes.

An abandoner of worldly concerns is called a *Sannyāsi*. There are various classes of Saiva ascetics. The *Urdhvabāhus* (up arms) raise their arms till they are unable to lower them. The *Akāsamuktis*, 'sky-facers' hold their faces towards the sky till the muscles stiffen and they live thus always. The *Nakhis*, (Nail) ascetics allow their nails to grow through their clenched hands which unfits them to work. The *Kapalikās*, (Skull men) use a skull as a drinking vessel. Some hang with their heads down, others have their legs up. A very meritorious act is to sit in the midday sun with fires blazing all around.



SAIVA ASCETICS

The *Aghorapanthas* are the most disgusting class. They propitiate Siva by feeding on filth of all kinds. It is asserted that some eat corpses stolen from Muhammadan burial grounds. The head of the *Aghoras* is said to subsist upon scorpions, lizards, and loathsome insects left to putrefy in a dead man's skull.

Examination of Hindu Asceticism.—The stories told in the Hindu sacred books of astonishing austerities are mere fables. No person but a child in intellect can believe that a man stood on tip-toe a hundred years living on air. What kind of god must he be who delights in his worshippers torturing themselves? There are no such beings; they are the inventions of men in the dark ages of the world.

Let the lives of *Sannyāsis* be examined.

What good does a *sannyāsi* do? Most men become *sannyāsis* because they are too lazy to work, and can get an easy living by preying upon the industrious. The withered arm, the row of

silence, &c., are merely devices to get more money. Such vows are sins—not acts of merit. Suppose a servant rendered useless some of the tools given to him to work with, would he be praised? God has given us arms to provide food for ourselves, our families and the poor; He has given us the gift of speech that we may comfort the sorrowful, instruct the ignorant. The withered arm and vow of silence defeat these ends. It would be noble for a man to venture into a burning house to rescue children; but it is worse than useless for a man to sit in the midst of blazing fires.

Hindus are generally cleanly, many of them bathe every day; yet, strange to say, matted hair, a filthy dress, and a body smeared with ashes, are considered some of the marks of a holy man. A natural sense of modesty leads certain parts of the body to be covered. Some sannyāsīs, however, as a token of superior sanctity, go about perfectly naked. A man of this description, who had also taken a vow of silence, made his way into Madras, where he was very properly taken up by the police.

Saiva sannyāsīs profess to be imitating Siva, one of whose epithets in *digambara*, clothed with space or perfectly naked. The matted hair and ash-besmeared body are also copied from Siva. Still worse, Siva is described as being reproved by Pārvatī for going among prostitutes. he is said to have been intoxicated with ganja and bhang. It is well known that many sannyāsīs imitate Siva also in these respects.

The wickedness of sannyāsīs is shown by their threatening to curse those who refuse to give them alms. A truly good man, would go away quietly; even if reviled, he would bless rather than curse.

Complaints are made of the increasing poverty of India, which is laid at the door of the British Government. How much better it would be both for the professed ascetics themselves and the country, if instead of being supported by worse than useless charity, they were made to work for their living.

The Hindu belief in the power of *tapas* is as baseless as its effects are pernicious.

THE SAIVA SIDDHANTA

OR

SAIVA PHILOSOPHY.

The Dravidians have framed a philosophy which, bears clear traces of Sanskrit influence, has some feat of its own. An account of it will now be given.

Sankara Achārya, the great advocate of the worst and the Vedānta philosophy, lived in the eighth and ninth

centuries of the Christian era.* He was a native of Malabar, and lived a wandering life, disputing with heretics and popularising the Vedānta philosophy. Siva was the special object of his worship. He established several maths, some of which still remain. His writings are numerous; chief among them are his *Bhāshyas*, or commentaries on the Sūtras of Vyāsa, the Bhagavad Gītā, and some of the Upanishads.

Sankara Achārya was a thorough-going Vedāntist. In the Bhagavad Gītā (VII. 1) when Krishna says, "these form the eightfold division of my Prakriti," Sankara Achārya thus explains it, "My Prakriti, the Māyā belonging to Ishvara."†

Vedāntic influence is more evident in Thayumānavar's poems than in those of Manikka-vāsagar. He repeatedly says that the Vedānta and Siddhānta are alike.‡

Before examining Saiva philosophy, some introductory remarks may be made.

SOME PECULIARITIES OF THE HINDU MIND.

Mr. Bose says of Hindu philosophers.

"They had an intellect keen and argumentative, and their writings are fitted to raise the puzzling question so well put by Lord Macaulay, viz, how men, who reason so closely and so consecutively from assumed premises, fail so miserably to see the utter groundlessness of the assumptions on which their ably conducted arguments are based"

The following are illustrations of these peculiarities

1. **A fondness for dealing with insoluble problems.**—Nehemiah Goreh says

"Such is the dispositions of the pandits that they refuse to consider what things are within the reach of our understanding and what things lie beyond. They would fain take the visible and the invisible, God and souls included, and measure them and turn them round and over, and pry into them, and at last get their complete quiddities (essence, nature) inside their fist."§

An example of this is afforded in the speculations about the size of the soul. In the Upanishads it is generally said to be of the size of a thumb, and to dwell in the heart. Thus the Katha Upanishad says:

"The soul, which, in the measure of a thumb, dwells in the middle of the body (in the ether of the heart)" (IV 12)

* Miss Duff's *Chronology of India* gives 788 and 820 as the years of his birth and death

† Translation by S Mahadeva Sastri, p. 116

‡ See translations in *Light of Truth*, Vol. I.

§ *Balwanath Rejulation of Hindu Philosophy*, p. 90.

It is elsewhere said to be both infinitely small and infinitely great. The Svetâswatara Upanishad says .

"The embodied soul is to be thought like the hundredth part of the point of a hair, divided into a hundred parts, he is considered to be infinite." (V. 9.)

The Chhândogya Upanishad says .

"Is the soul within me, it is lighter than a corn, or a barley, or a mustard, or a canary seed, or the substance within it. Such a soul is within me, as is greater than this earth, and greater than the sky, and greater than the heaven, and greater than all these regions [put together]" III. 14, 3.

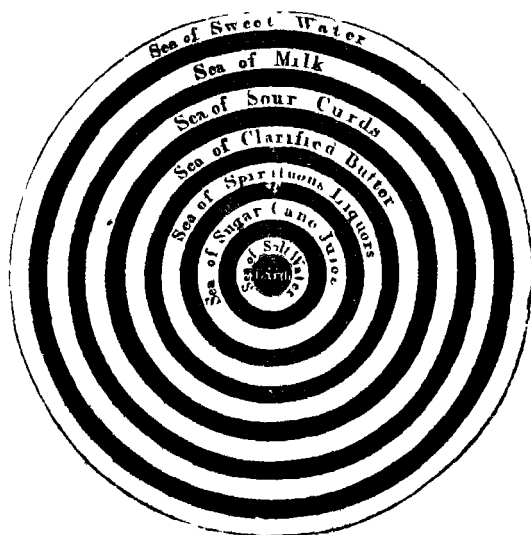
The Gîtâ agrees with the Vaiseshaka school. Krishna says that the soul is "all-pervading" (II. 24.)

This inclination is not peculiar to Hindus. Macaulay, referring to the ancient philosophers of Europe says, that "**they spent their lives in attempting to solve insoluble enigmas, and left the world as wicked and as ignorant as they found it.**"

2. A tendency to speculate instead of investigating.—Mr. Bose gives the following illustrations

"The Hindu geographer does not travel, does not explore, does not survey, he simply sits down and dreams of a central mountain and circular oceans of curd and clarified butter"

The result is the following picture of our universe



Such is the account given of our system in the Hindu sacred books. Every man who has had an English education knows that it is utterly wrong.

Mr. Bose gives another illustration :—

“ The Hindu does not dissect, does not anatomize, does not examine the contents of the human body, he simply dreams of component parts which have no existence, multiplies almost indefinitely the number of arteries and veins, and speaks coolly of a passage through which the atomic soul effects its ingress and egress.”*

The Chhándogya Upanishad makes the following statement

“ There are a hundred and one arteries issuing from the heart ; one of them penetrates the crown of the head. The man who departs this life through that artery, secures immortality. The rest of the arteries lead to various transitions,—they lead to various transitions.” VIII. 6, 6.

The Prasna Upanishad gives the following additional details

“ For the (ether of the) heart is verily that soul. There (arise) the hundred and one (principal) arteries, each of them is a hundred times divided, 72,000 are the branches of every branch artery within them moves the circulating air.” III. 6.

The whole number of arteries is therefore 727,200 000 !

The slightest examination of the heart shows that all this is purely imaginary. There are just two branches of a large artery from the heart, and two great veins carrying blood to the heart. The arteries do not contain air but blood.

This shows that the Upanishads are the speculations of men and not revelations from God.

THE AIM OF SIDDHANTA.

THIS is to enable the soul to get rid of the three fetters of *Anavá*, ignorance, *Máyá*, delusion, and *Karma*, which, it is supposed, bind it, leading to the round of births and re-births. This secured, the soul enjoys endless felicity with Siva.

The aim is very desirable, and Siddhántists are to be commended for keeping it in view, instead of living, like most around them, quite indifferent about their souls.

The hope of enjoying everlasting happiness with God is one of supreme importance. We ought, therefore, carefully to examine the means recommended to secure the end in view. How sad it would be at the close of our life to ascertain that all our labour had been in vain !

* *Heterodox Philosophy*, pp. 8-10.

CHIEF DOCTRINES OF THE SIDDHANTA.

TEACHING ABOUT THE BODY.

Hindu philosophers speculated about the body as well as about God and the Soul: A well-known Siddhantic work, *Siva-Prakāśha Kattalai*, 'Manifestation of Siva,' professes to give an account of the 36 primary substances and their development. The following are some extracts

The Ten Winds

2. "The ten winds of the human body are, the breath, the trunk wind, the chest wind, the universal wind, the central wind, the vomiting wind, the sneezing wind, the yawning wind, and the distending wind.

The Ten Tubes

3. The following are the ten tubes of the human body the first commences at the great toe of the right foot, and ends in the left nostril the second commences at the great toe of the left foot, and ends in the right nostril, the third commences at the extremity of the spine, and ends in the head, the fourth commences at the navel, and ends in the throat, the fifth commences at the extremity of the trunk, and ends in the left eye, the sixth commences at the same place, and ends in the right eye; the seventh has the same origin, and ends in the left ear, the eighth also commences at the extremity of the trunk, and ends in the right ear, the ninth commences at the navel, and ends in the pudenda and the tenth is the seminal duct'

Position of the Soul

In the state of *wakefulness*, the soul's seat is in the forehead. In the state of *sleep* the soul's seat is in the region of the throat. In the state of *abstraction* the soul is in the region of the chest. In the state of *oblivion* the soul's seat is in the umbilical (the navel) region pp. 10, 11

PATI, PASU, PĀSA.

These three Sanskrit words give, in brief, the three great doctrines of the Saiva philosophy. They mean literally LORD, ANIMAL, FETTER, expressing God, humanity by an animal, and in the rope that fastens it. The human race is also compared to a flock.

Pati, Pasu, and Pāsa are equally eternal, existing unchanged and undiminished through successive *kalpas*.

Each will be noticed in turn.

PATI.

Pati is thus described in the *Siva Pragāsam* :

"Pati is *Param*, Deity. The same is also called *Tat-Sivam*. This ty, the enlightened teacher, is neither purely spiritual nor embodied, is not possessed of any material organs; has neither qualities nor names, is ever free from *malam*, (impurity); is one and eternal; is the source of understanding to innumerable souls, is fixed in position, illimitable in its nature; exists in the form of *gnānam*, is the form of happiness, is difficult of access to unstable worshippers, but is easily approached by those who worship in the orderly course; and shines as the least of the little, and the greatest of the great."

The Rev A. C. Clayton quotes the following descriptions of Siva as given in the *Tiruvāsagam* :

"He is the rider on the great bull, he bears Gangā in his locks; he is the bridegroom, Lord of Kailāsam, the Father, the Owner, the Madman, the Wind, the Mendicant, the light, god of gods, the refuge of his slave tossed on the billows of sensuality, he is Siva who dwells in Tiru Perunturai, he is Ambrosia dancing in Ponnambalam, his land in which he manifested himself as sage and ascetic is aye the Southern Pandi land!"

Saivas, with a leaning to Vedāntism, distinguish between Sivan and Sivan, making the former the same as the Nirguna Brahma. This seems supported by the epithet *Tat-Sivam* in the *Siva Pragāsam*. Thāyumanavar calls him Parabrahmam. But, as Mr Clayton remarks on the *Tiruvāsagam* .

"It is not the unconditioned absolute passionless 'Parabrahmam' that attracts the devotion of the singer; but a deity having personal relationship with his universe, a god of grace and mercy, of personal affection who appeals to the 'helpless' dead heart!"

In the *Sivagnāna Botham* (Sūtra VIII) Siva is described as the Guru through whose instruction the soul becomes united to his feet. He appears as Guru both in his divine form and in human form. §

Worship of Siva.—As described by Mr. Clayton, this assumes various forms :

"At times the devotee worships only Sivan the Lord, the King, the Father. At other times it is some definite incarnation, e.g. Nadarājan at Chidambaram whom he seeks. The stories of the Nāyanārs represent these saints as worshipping definite *lingams* as the homes of special manifestations of Siva. At times the wild speculations of the Tantric Agamas seem to be all their religion, and again it is Siva the destroyer.

* Hoisington's translation.

† *Christian College Magazine*, May, 1902, pp. 577, 578

‡ Dr. Pope's translation.

§ Meikanda Deva's Translation, p. 89.

husband of Káit, naked, clothed in ashes wearing the *jada*, dweller in the burial-ground, who is the awful object of his awe-struck worshipper's adoration. More commonly it is Sivan who appears to the mind of the devout, making that heart his home, dispelling all illusion, enlightening the saint as to the one eternal reality, the existence of Sivan, and the possibility of union with the Lord, taking upon himself the task of eating the fruits of the actions of former births and nullifying by his grace the *Karma* that the saint has accumulated in this birth, and so saving the sinful soul from its past and present and assuring it of perfect union with its Lord for all its future."

PASU.

In the Siddhánta system individual souls are called Pasu, animal, or flock from their number.

They are said to be innumerable and eternal.

The Lord Pati is one, the flock is made up of innumerable souls. To show that they are countless, *Tiru arul payan* makes the following comparison:

"Days past and days to come are numberless. So is the company that have remained and hereafter will remain."

PASA.

As already explained, *Pása* means *fetter*. There are especially three fetters which bind the soul and prevent the attainment of *Mukti*. These are *Anarâ*, ignorance or darkness, *Mâyâ*, delusion, and *Karma*, deeds. The soul which is tainted by these three is in bondage to the round of births and rebirths.

The means of deliverance are said to be fourfold, rising in efficacy.

Sariya, religious services. The following are examples: sweeping the temple, cleansing it with cowdung, supplying it with lamps, hanging garlands on the image of the god, &c.

The performance of these religious services secures *Sâlokya*, "dwelling in the presence of God," dwelling in the heaven of Siva.

Kriya—These denote the worship of Siva, and singing his praise, &c.

The reward is, that future happiness which is called *Sânûpya*, near approach to God, dwelling in close intercourse with Siva.

Yoga.—This is thus explained, with its reward, in a Saiva Catechism by Sabhapati Mudaliyar:

"The withdrawal of the mind from its usual mode of communication with outward things through the five senses, and confining it to

* *Christian College Magazine*, May 1902, p. 580 abridged.

one single channel of communication; added to an ascetical course of life."

"The degree of future happiness attained by it is *Sārāṅya*, unity of form, consisting in being like great Śhaiva having clotted hair, a poison-blackened neck, four arms, and three eyes."

Gnana, Spiritual Knowledge. Its nature will afterwards be described. Its reward is *Sāyujya*, complete identity, perfect union with Siva.

HOW PÁSA IS DESTROYED

The Tenth Sūtra of the *Sivagāna Betham* thus explains "The Way of destroying Pása."

"Sūtra.—As the Lord becomes one with the Soul in its human condition, so let the Soul become one with Him, and perceive all its actions to be His. Then will it lose all its *Mala*, *Máyá*, and *Karma*.

"Commentary.—This Sūtra teaches of the way of destroying Pása and consists of two arguments. Become one with Him consider all your actions to be those of the Lord."

The Vedānta claims that through knowledge the soul becomes one with the Nirguna Brahman, losing its independent existence as rivers merge into the ocean

The Siddhānta acknowledges a Personal God, and, though united with Him, the soul retains conscious existence. Substantially, however, it agrees with Vedāntism in believing that it gets rid of all its actions by attributing them to God

EXAMINATION OF THE SIDDHANTA.

The chief Siddhānta doctrines have been stated. The treatises on the subject contain some curious speculations and attempts to solve the great mysteries of life.

Still more attractive and touching are the poetry of Manikka-vāsagar and Thayumānavar, who were true "seekers after God." One or two additional extracts may be given. Manikka-vāsagar confesses that in the early part of his life he had been enslaved by lust.

"In pleasures false I plunged and sank deep down
Each day of earthly prosperous joy, I thought it true,
And thus enslaved I lay." (*Pope*, p. 150.)

Siva came and thus delivered him :

"My Sire came, entered, made his own me who knew nought,
In mercy taught me all,
Caused me to know the higher path; he loosed my every bond
Despite the gain of changelings sweetest gifts of grace,—
thou'rt changed DEAD HEART!
Ruined by thee, to all that's false subjected, thus I RANDED IN
(*Pope*, p. 56.)

Still, the poet's conception of Siva was in his popular form :

"Ev'n faults that like a mountain rise, to virtue turn,
If Thou but say the word ! If Thou didn't take me once
For thine, why dost Thou not - though ruined—pity take
On me ? our Lord,—Thou of eight arms and triple eye !"

(*Pope*, p. 274)

We should imitate Manikka-vācagar and Thayumānavar in their devotion to God, but the object should be, not the fabulous lord of Kailāsa with eight arms and triple eyes, but the great Creator of heaven and earth, our Father in heaven.

"Invariably an increase of civilization implies a modification of belief," says Lecky, the historian. When a nation advances in civilization, it is not satisfied with the religion which it had when semi-civilised.

India furnishes examples

1. *Civilized nations reject the fables formerly believed.*—Intelligent Hindus do not now believe that jackals were changed into horses, or that a boy lived and grew for years in the stomach of a crocodile. They demand that statements be tested by the laws of evidence and common sense

2. *Civilized nations have higher ideas of morality.*—For centuries some Hindu temples and cars had obscene sculptures as well as dancing-girls, yet no voice was raised against them. They are now condemned by educated Hindus.

It is the duty of Siddhāntists to compare carefully their system with the results of modern thought. The investigation, in a candid spirit simply desirous of knowing the truth, would be most beneficial to themselves and their countrymen

REASONS FOR REJECTING THE SIDDHANTA.

The following are some which may be mentioned :

1. ITS ERRONEOUS STATEMENTS ABOUT THE BODY, THROW DISCREDIT UPON ITS SPECULATIONS ABOUT GOD AND THE SOUL.

If a traveller gives a wrong account of countries which we know, we distrust his accounts of other countries. The testimony of a witness who gives false evidence at the beginning of an enquiry, is rejected. Every medical student knows that the "ten winds" and "ten tubes" described in Vedānta philosophy have no more existence than the hundred arteries of the heart as claimed in the Upanishads. They were invented by men out of their own heads, who speculated without examination.

If what the Siddhānta says about the body is false, we cannot trust its statements about God and the Soul. Thus the whole system is untrustworthy.

2. ITS CONFLICTING STATEMENTS ABOUT GOD

In the quotations from the *Siva Pragāsam*, lofty epithets are applied to Siva. On the other hand, the sacred books of the Hindus contain statements most derogatory to his character.

The quotations from Manikka-vasagar and Thayumanāvay show that they believed in Siva as the lord of Kailāsa, the rider on the sacred bull, the husband of Pārvatī, the father of Gaṇeśa and Subramanya. The author of *Sivagnāna Botham* begins with an invocation to Gaṇeśa, acknowledged as a son of Siva.

The *Sivagnāna Botham* states that it is in union with his Gṇeśa Sakti that Siva causes the rebirth of souls (Sūtra II)

It is evident that Siddhāntists believe also in the popular account of Siva, though they may hold that this is only for the lower grade of worshippers

3. ITS STATEMENTS ABOUT THE SOUL

The speculations of the Upanishads about the *śūc* of the soul have been noticed. As already quoted, the Siddhānta professes to describe its *position* in the body at different periods. Truly wise men eschew such speculations as beyond the range of the human intellect.

Two Siddhānta doctrines regarding the soul will be examined.

1. THE ETERNITY OF SOULS

This is not peculiar to the Siddhānta, but is held by every system of Hindu philosophy.

To *create* is to call into existence what did not exist before. According to Hinduism, there is no creation in the strict sense of the word. This is the result of that fixed dogma of a Hindu philosopher's belief—*navastuno vastusiddhik*, nothing can be produced out of nothing.

Because man cannot create, it is supposed that God cannot create. Hence it is held that everything that exists has existed eternally.

According to Hinduism, souls may pass into gods, demons, beasts, birds, reptiles, fishes, insects, into plants, and even into inanimate objects. Who can estimate the number of these eternal *śayambhu* essences!

Dr. K. M. Banerjee thus shows the consequences to which the doctrine of the eternity of souls leads :

" If a man denied his earthly parents his conduct would be considered sufficiently heinous. If he denied that God was his Maker and heavenly Father, he would be regarded as impious

" If all souls are eternal, they must be uncreated ; and if uncreated, and yet in existence, they must be self-existent To say that they are self-existent as to say they have independent existence. they need not then acknowledge God as their Maker or heavenly Father If they are independent essences, possessed of absolute existence, they cannot be rightfully called upon to acknowledge a Supreme Being as the Moral Governor of the universe. They are themselves a sort of miniature gods. Nor can any Supreme Being be especially entitled to the epithet of *svayambhu*, or self-existent "

It is a pleasing sign of progress that the Fatherhood of God is beginning to be admitted by educated Hindus. Some even claim that this doctrine is taught in their own sacred books. In the Sāstras, Father may be one of the many names given to God ; but not as *the source of our existence* What particularly distinguishes an earthly father is, that, under God, he is the author of the child's existence This can be said of no other person. In that sense neither Brahmā, Siva, nor any Hindu deity can be called father. According to every system of Hindu philosophy souls are as eternal as Brahma himself. The Bible, on the other hand, says, that God is our Father by creation. " Have we not all one Father ? Hath not one God created us ? " Christianity teaches us to address God as our " Father in heaven " It is true that we have been disobedient, rebellious children, but we are earnestly invited to return, asking forgiveness.

As the Siddhānta *denies the Fatherhood of God*, so it follows that it also *denies the Brotherhood of Man* Brothers are sons of the same parent, but if we have no father, we are not brothers.

2 TRANSMIGRATION

An attempt is often made to support one error by another. If souls are eternal, what have they been doing during the past countless ages ? The explanation is that they have been continually passing from one body into another. This belief is universal among Hindus. Krishna says in the Bhagavad Gītā to Arjuna :—

" As a man, casting off old clothes, puts on others and new ones, so the embodied (self) casting off old bodies, goes to others and new ones." ii. 22.

The universe is, in Sanskrit, sometimes called *samsāra*, denoting motion. It is supposed to consist of innumerable souls and innumerable bodies. The bodies are of all kinds, mineral, vegetable, animal, human, divine, demoniac. Souls are supposed to be constantly leaving their bodies, and seeking other bodies, some rising, some falling, other stationary according to their *Karma*.

The doctrine of transmigration seems, to the Hindu, to explain the unequal distribution of happiness and misery in this world. If an infant agonize, it is supposed to arise from a great sin committed in a former birth. On the other hand, if a wicked man prospers, it is thought to be plainly the reward of meritorious actions in a previous state of existence.

Transmigration is not found in the Vedas, except a trace of it in one of the latest hymns. The early Aryans looked forward at death to living in happiness with the *pitris*. The doctrine arose at a later time, when gloomy views of life began to prevail.

It is admitted that there are certain truths underlying this strange belief. It witnesses to the continued existence of the soul in a future life. It also bears testimony to the great truth that sin is inevitably followed by suffering, although it may be long delayed.

Christianity also teaches "Whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap" (Galatians, VI. 17); but it differs from the Hindu doctrine in teaching that we shall reap only what we sow in the *present* life.

There is no doubt that the unequal distribution of happiness in this world is a problem which has exercised the minds of thinking men from the dawn of philosophy. On investigation, however, it will be seen that the doctrine of transmigration is attended with insuperable difficulties.

1. **It is contrary to our Experience.** -By transmigration is meant that the same soul in the course of time takes up its residence in different bodies. Only the *body is changed, the mind is the same mind*. The mind therefore being the same possesses the same faculties in its present and in its former births. A traveller who journeys through the earth from city to city carries with him the remembrance of his native place, the persons that he met, and other events that occurred. The soul ought to carry with it a complete remembrance of its past history; but no man has experienced anything of the kind. Any claims to its possession are just as false as those with regard to magical powers.

To explain why the soul does not remember and can pass into an animal, vegetable or mineral, it is reduced to a nonentity. During all its countless transmigrations it remains unconscious, like the *Nirguna Brahma*. The fiction of the *Antah-Karana* has been invented. It is the *Antah-Karana* which knows, acts, enjoys

suffers. All this is imaginary. It is the soul which acts, does right or wrong, enjoys or suffers either directly or through the body.

2. **It is contrary to Science.**—Science teaches that human beings, the lower animals, and plants reproduce exactly their kind. An animal never gives birth to a plant, nor a plant to an animal. The plant or mineral shows no sign that it possesses a soul. Nor do the lower animals show in any way that they have a *suffering* soul, undergoing penalty.

3. **It is Unjust.**—Should a son be hanged because his father committed murder? According to transmigration, people suffer, not on account of their own deeds, but for those of their ancestors of which they know nothing.

If a man is so changed at each birth as to forget all his previous history, he becomes virtually a new being. What he suffers now he suffers on account of sins committed by another; and these sufferings he has no choice but to endure. Even the very sins a man now commits are punishments of previous sins, and he cannot but commit them. Their punishment, again, he cannot bear in this life if he would, they must be borne by him in another birth, when the loss of all consciousness of the present has made him, in fact, another person. His present happiness is the reward of a previous person's good deeds, his present good deeds will be rewarded to some future person. In all this there is an absence of justice.*

4. **It denies the Divine Mercy.**—According to Hinduism, the fruit of every work must be eaten. The office of Isvara is to carry out strict unswerving *justice*. He has nothing whatever to do with *mercy*.

5. **Its Effects are Pernicious.**—We bring most evils upon ourselves by our own misconduct. The chief sufferings of men are caused by poverty and sickness. Poverty is often occasioned by laziness or want of thrift. One great reason why the people of India are poor is their extravagant expenditure on marriages. Most sickness is caused by bad water, filth, and unwholesome food. When people believe that their misfortunes arise from sins in a former birth, they rest contented, and make no efforts to remove them.

This superstitious belief is one great cause of the sufferings of the people of India, a great obstacle to their health and happiness.

There are other objections to the doctrine of transmigration.

(1) *Inequalities of happiness are less than is supposed.*—There are many poor men far happier than the rich. There is a proverb; "The fruit of austerities, a kingdom, the fruit of a

* Abridged from Robson's *Hinduism and Christianity*. 2nd Ed., pp. 191, 192.

kingdom, hell." Great men are tempted to vices from which the poor are free. Wealth and power are, not unfrequently, a curse rather than a blessing.

(2) *We can look forward as well as backward.*—This world is a state of preparation for the next. A child at school is placed under the discipline of a teacher to train him for the purposes of life. Notwithstanding all the pain and sorrow there is in the world, people are too much attached to it. Much more would this be the case if all went well with us. Sickness, as it were, says to us, "Arise, this is not your rest."

A dying Hindu, if thoughtful, must leave the world in despair, as he cannot tell what may next befall him. To expiate a sin committed thousands of years ago, he may require to pass into some dreadful hell.

Christianity, on the other hand, teaches that we did not exist before this present life, and we have to account only for actions during it.

The Siddhānta professes to deliver its followers from re-births, but these re-births are purely imaginary

4 THE INSUFFICIENCY OF ITS MEANS OF DELIVERANCE FROM PAPA.

The four means prescribed have already been mentioned, viz., **Sāriya, Kriya, Yoga, and Gnana.**

No intelligent man can believe that deliverance from sin can be effected by ceremonial acts, like sweeping temples, or mere acts of worship. Only Yoga and Gnāna will, therefore, be examined.

1. HINDU DELUSIONS ABOUT YOGA

There are two general beliefs about Yoga—that through it miraculous powers can be obtained and union with the deity. These beliefs will be examined.

The word *Yoga* now usually means *union*; and it is generally understood to teach how the human soul may attain complete union with the Supreme Soul. Such was not the object of Patanjali, author of the *Yoga Sastra*. Rajendralala Mitra says "The idea of absorption into the godhead forms no part of the Yoga theory."

Patanjali defines Yoga as "the suppression of the functions of the thinking principle." By a series of exercises the mind is made no longer to act. It is supposed that in consequence of this the union between *purusha* and *prakṛti* is dissolved, and there is liberation from future births. To get rid of the curse of existence was the great object of Patanjali.

It was at a later period that the doctrine of *union* arose. The following are the exercises to be employed.—

1. *Yama*, restraint. 2. *Niyama*, religious observances. 3. *Āsana*, postures. 4. *Prāṇāyāma*, regulation of the breath. 5. *Pratyāhara*, restraint of the senses. 6. *Dharana*, fixed attention. 7. *Dhyāna*, contemplation. 8. *Samādhi*, profound meditation.

All wandering thoughts are to be called in, and attention fixed on some one object. Any object will answer if it is thought of alone; other thoughts must be suppressed. At last there is profound meditation without any object.

Great importance is attached to *āsana*, or postures. At an early period they were fixed as 84, but of this number ten are specially recommended. The following directions are given regarding some of them.

The Lotus Posture—The right foot should be placed on the left thigh, and the left foot on the right thigh, the hands should be crossed, and the two great toes should be firmly held thereby, the chin should be bent down to the chest, and in this posture the eyes should be directed to the tip of the nose.

Gomukha or Cow's Mouth Posture—Put the right ankle on the left side of the chest, and similarly the left ankle on the right side.

Fowl Posture—Having established the lotus posture, if the hand be passed between the thigh and the knees, and placed on the earth so as to lift the body aloft, it will produce the fowl seat.

Bow Posture—Hold the great toes with the hands and draw them to the ears as in drawing a bowstring.

The regulation of the breath, *prāṇāyāma*, is likewise of great importance. "The usual mode is after assuming the posture prescribed, to place the ring finger of the right hand on the left nostril, pressing it so as to close it, and to expire with the right, then to press the right nostril with the thumb, and to inspire through the left nostril, and then to close the two nostrils with the ring finger and the thumb, and to stop all breathing. The order is reversed in the next operation, and in the third act the first time is required."^{*}

Marvellous powers are attributed to the man fully initiated in the Yoga. The past and present are unveiled to his gaze. He sees things invisible to others. He hears the sounds that are in distant worlds. He becomes stronger than the elephant, bolder than the lion, swifter than the wind. He mounts at pleasure into the air or dives into the depths of the earth and the ocean. He acquires mastery over all things, whether animate or inanimate.

The whole belief is a delusion. The brain is the organ of

* Quoted by Mr. R. C. Bose from the translation of the Yoga Shāstra by Dr. Rajendralala Mitra. *Hindu Philosophy*, pp. 177, 178, 180.

the mind. To enable it to act properly, it must have a good supply of pure blood. The blood is purified by fresh air entering into the lungs by breathing. From want of sufficient food and suppression of the breath, the blood of the Yogī is small in quantity and impure. The brain does not act properly. He may be in a dreamy, hypnotic condition or almost unconscious. Instead of union with God, he is simply losing his senses. Barth, a French writer, a distinguished Sanskrit scholar, says of the Yoga exercises: "Conscientiously observed, they can only issue in folly and idiocy."

The state produced by yoga exercises is well known to modern physicians. It is called *hypnotic* or *mesmeric*, and is a kind of dreamy sleep. Professor Huxley, distinguished for his knowledge of the human body, thus describes the effects of yoga exercises upon the man who fully observes them. He is reduced to a "*state of impassive quasi-somnambulism, which, but for its acknowledged holiness, might run the risk of being confounded with idiocy. All that remains of a man is the impassive extenuated mendicant monk, self-hypnotized into cataleptic trances which the deluded mystic takes for foretastes of final union with God.*"

India, instead of adopting the Fowl or Tortoise-upset Posture, and setting with her eye fixed on the tip of her nose, should seek to have body and mind, braced by vigorous exercise, and employed for the benefit of her numerous children.

YOGA SASTRA (2d As) contains a full account of the system, with numerous extracts from Patanjali's Sūtras.

2. THE INSUFFICIENCY OF GNANAM ACCORDING TO THE SIDDHANTA SYSTEM.

Of the means of obtaining Mukti, Gnānam is considered the highest.

The Tenth Sūtra of the *Svagnāna Botham* thus explains "The Way of destroying Pāsa"

"Sūtra.—As the Lord becomes one with the Soul in its human condition, so let the Soul become one with Him, and perceive all its actions to be His. Then will it lose all its *Mala*, *Māyā*, and *Karma*.

"Commentary.—This Sūtra teaches of the way of destroying Pāsa and consists of two arguments. Become one with Him. consider all your actions to be those of the Lord."

The Vedānta claims that through knowledge the soul becomes one with the Nirguna Brahman, losing its independent existence as rivers merge into the ocean.

The Siddhānta acknowledges a Personal God, and, though united with Him, the soul retains conscious existence. Substan-

trally, however, it agrees with Vedāntism in believing that it gets rid of all its actions by attributing them to God.

The following remarks may be offered on the Siddhānta system.

1. God and the Soul are not one and cannot become one.—

The wisest and best men in all ages have held the distinction between the Creator and his creatures. As Tennyson says—

“Eternal form shall still divide,
The eternal soul from all beside.”

Rāmānuja thus shows the distinction between *tat* and *tvam* :

“The word *tat* (it) stands for the ocean of immortality, full of supreme felicity. The word *tvam* (thou) stands for a miserable person, distracted through fear of the world. The two cannot therefore be one. They are substantially different. He is to be worshipped by the whole world. Thou art but His slave.”*

2. The Belief of what is not true cannot obtain the Pardon of Sin

Suppose a man believes that he can cross a deep and rapid river in a stone boat, will his belief take him across safely? A false belief is worthless.

3. To attribute our evil actions to God, so far from destroying them, only increases our guilt.

When a child has misbehaved towards his father, what is his duty? He should be sorry for his conduct, confess his fault, ask forgiveness, and try to be an obedient loving child in future.

On the other hand if the child said to his father, “You and I are one, you did what I did,” could he expect forgiveness?

To obtain the pardon of sin we should act in the same way towards God our heavenly Father.

The TRUE GNANAM is, not that we are God, or one with Him, but that we have been disobedient, rebellious children, and that it is our duty, with deep sorrow, to confess our sinfulness, to ask pardon, to seek to avoid sin in future, and try to love and obey our heavenly Father.

SUMMARY.

The foregoing arguments may be briefly recapitulated.

1. The false statements of the Siddhānta about the body prove that it is a human speculation and not a divine Revelation.

It has been shown that the Siddhānta speculations about the “ten winds” and “the ten tubes” in the body are baseless.

* Banerjee's *Dialogues*, p. 408.

If what is said about our body is known to be false, discredit is thrown upon what is said of the soul.

To intelligent men this argument alone is sufficient to disprove the Siddhānta system.

2. **Siddhāntism denies the Fatherhood of God and Brotherhood of Man.**—*Paśu* is said to be as eternal as *Pati*. If so, Siddhāntists claim that they have no Creator, and are as eternal as Siva himself.

3. **Siddhāntism teaches deliverance from Re-births, which do not exist.**—It has been shown that the dogma of transmigration was adopted to account for the eternity of souls. Reasons have been given showing that it is a mere fiction.

4. **Yoga exercises tend only to weaken body and mind, reducing the person who fully observes them to a state of semi-idiotcy.**

5. **Religion and Morality are divorced.**—Bishop Caldwell says,

"The duties of life are never inculcated in any Hindu temple. The discharge of those duties is never represented as enjoined by the gods, nor are any prayers ever offered in any temple for help to enable the worshippers to discharge those duties aright. Hence we often see religion going in the one direction and morality in another. We meet with a moral Hindu who has broken altogether away from religion; and what is still more common, yet still more extraordinary, we meet with a devout Hindu who lives a flagrantly immoral life. In the latter case, no person sees any inconsistency between the immorality and the devoutness."

Mere ceremonial acts, as in *Sariya* and *Kriya* secure admission to heaven irrespective of moral conduct. In *Yoga* nothing is said about the necessity of leading a holy life. It consists in regulating the breath and fixing the eye on the tip of the nose. Neither is holiness a condition of *Gñānam*.

6. **Sin cannot be destroyed by blasphemously claiming that we are one with God, and attributing to Him all our actions.** This only increases our guilt.

7. **Instead of Siva, an imaginary being, we should worship the great Creator and Lord of heaven and earth our Father in heaven to whom we owe our existence and every blessing we possess.**

8. **The true Gñānam is to know that we are sinners, and that, with deep sorrow, we should seek forgiveness.**

The objection is often made that in religion "*Where there is faith, there is God.*"

This means that a man receives simply according to his faith. This saying is considered sufficient, and saves the trouble of all inquiry as to the real value of the object of faith. Let it be examined.

A man's faith may arise from ignorance as well as from knowledge. If a man believes that jewels are gold while they are only brass, will his faith have any effect? If a man intrust his property to a thief believing him to be an honest man, will his faith save his money? If a man take a cooly to be the king, will he be really such? If a man, wishing to cross a deep and rapid river, goes into a leaky boat saying that faith is the chief thing, will this save him from being drowned?

In like manner, if a man worship an idol believing it to be God, will his faith make it God? If a man believes that bathing in the Ganges will wash away his sins, he believes what is untrue and his sin remains.

In worldly matters men are not such fools as to believe that faith is sufficient. A banker does not say this when asked for the loan of money, nor a father when the marriage of his daughter is proposed. Faith placed on a false object is worthless, and simply ruins the man who trusts to it. Our first inquiry should therefore be, Is our faith placed on a proper object?

For the above and other reasons the Siddhānta cannot be accepted as a revelation from God, but as the invention of men in an unenlightened age.

THE TRUE GURU

One of the characters of Siva is that of Guru. This is so far true that it acknowledges our need of divine instruction. Coleridge, referring to Hindu ideas of man's sinfulness and the Kalki Avatār, says "The deep sense of this fact, and the doctrines grounded on obscure traditions of the promised remedy, are seen struggling, and now gleaming, now flashing, through the mist of pantheism, and producing the incongruities and gross contradictions of the Brahman mythology."

"No thoughtful student of the past records of man," says Trench, "can refuse to acknowledge that through all its history there has run the hope of a redemption from the evil which oppresses it, and as little can deny that this hope has continually attached itself to some single man. The help that is coming to the world, it has seen incorporated in a person. The generations of men, weak and helpless in themselves, have evermore been looking after ONE in whom they may find all they look for vainly in themselves and in those around them."

The Hindu ideas with regard to incarnations, though defective in many respects, recognise, says Hardwick, the idea of God descending to the level of the fallen creature and becoming man to lighten the burden of pain and misery under which the universe is groaning. They show a struggling to become conscious of the

personality of God, and a panting for complete communion with Him.

The name of the *Sadguru*, the true divine Teacher, is JESU CHRIST. JESUS means 'Saviour;' CHRIST means 'anointed. Kings and priests were set apart for their office by anointing them with oil. Jesus Christ means 'the appointed Saviour.'

He was born about 19 centuries ago in Palestine, a country on the eastern shore of the Mediterranean, about midway between India and England.

A full account of His wonderful life and teaching will be found in the books of the New Testament, called Gospels which should be carefully studied. Attention is also invited to a little volume, compiled for the people of India, by the Earl of Northbrook some time Viceroy of India, entitled '*The Teaching of Jesus Christ in His own words.*'* *Jesus Christ: His Life and Times*† gives some useful explanations to Indian Readers.

His enemies confessed His unique teaching, "Never man spake like this man." He made the promise never made before "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Referring to His death on the cross, He triumphantly said, "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me."

Here a short account can only be given of two great Doctrines and two great Duties taught by Jesus Christ.

THE FATHERHOOD OF GOD.

The fundamental error of Hinduism is to judge God by our own standard. A carpenter cannot work without materials, in like manner it is supposed that God must have formed all things from eternally existing matter.

God is often called *Sarvashakti*, that is Almighty, in Hindu books, but this is not true in the proper sense of the word. He cannot create anything. All other beings are supposed to be *svayambhu*, self-existent, independent of God's will and power.

"Ye do err, not knowing the power of God," applies to Hindus as well as those to whom the words were addressed by the great Teacher. Even the *Brahmavadin* makes the acknowledgment.

"He, in whom all things in the universe live and move and have their being, possesses potentialities inscrutable to human wisdom and capable of infinite and very wonderful manifestations." Aug 29, 1897.

Whether is it more rational to suppose the eternal existence of one Being, the Creator of all things by His omnipotent power.

* Price 1 Anna. † Price 3 Annas. Sold by Mr. A. T. Scott, Tract Depot Madras.

or to imagine that innumerable unintelligent atoms, gods, spirits, animals, and plants have existed from all eternity? Besides the latter, an eternal intelligent arranger is also required.

As already mentioned, God is called our Father in heaven *because He gave us being.*

Our own consciousness tells us that we had no existence before this present life. Our earthly parents were the instruments, but the one true God is our Maker, our Father in heaven.

God may be called our Father in heaven *because He supplies all our wants.*

A father provides his children with food, clothing, and every thing they need. He does not do so on account of any service they have rendered to him, but from pure love. What has our Father in heaven done for us? He not only gave us life, but He keeps us in life. We are dependent upon Him for every breath we draw, we live upon His earth, it is His sun that shines upon us. Every thing we have is His gift. This is the teaching of Christianity, and Christians therefore praise and thank God for His goodness.

In the above respect Hinduism does not acknowledge the Fatherhood of God. According to it, every thing that happens to a person is determined by his *karma*. Every thing that God does to souls He does with reference to their good and evil deeds only, in order that they may receive reward for good deeds, and suffer for evil deeds. The blessings we receive have their source, not in God's benevolence, but in our own good deeds in a previous birth. Why should we be grateful to Him? True religion is thus destroyed.

The Character of our Father in Heaven. He is described in the older books of the Christian Veda, but He is especially made known by the Great Teacher, Jesus Christ.

He is the "I AM," the self-existent, "without beginning of days or end of years." "From everlasting to everlasting, Thou art God." He is unchanging, "the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever." He is the Almighty God. He called the universe into existence, and His government extends over all. He is never unconscious. He never slumbers nor sleeps. "The Creator of the ends of the earth fainteth not, neither is weary. He knows everything that takes place throughout His vast dominions. Not a hair of our head can fall to the ground without His knowledge, every thought of our heart is known to Him. His ear is ever open to the cry of His children.

The one true God is a God of truth, He is light, and in Him, is no darkness at all. His most glorious attribute is His spotless holiness. Sin is that abominable thing which He hates. "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God of hosts."

The Christian conception of God is briefly expressed in the

words, "Thou art good, and doest good." God is holy and loving, and it is His delight to do good. This represents the Christian ideal. Though infinitely higher in every respect, Christians should try to imitate Him, as a little mirror seeks to reflect the glorious sun.

Our great Creator and Father in heaven is the true and rightful PATI; we are his PASU, flock.

The BROTHERHOOD OF MAN follows from the Fatherhood of God, Brothers are sons of the same parent. "Have we not all one Father? Hath not our God created us?" We should, therefore, treat each other as brethren

OUR DUTY TO OUR HEAVENLY FATHER

Jesus Christ summed this up in one word, LOVE. He said "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind." This is the first and great commandment."

We may learn, in some measure, our duty to our Heavenly Father from the duty of children to their earthly father.

A loving child delights to be near his father. He is sorry to leave him and glad to return. So should we feel towards God.

A loving child likes to speak to his father. Prayer is speaking to our heavenly Father. If we love Him, we shall delight to tell Him all our joys and sorrows.

A loving child tries to please his father. So should we feel towards our heavenly Father, not doing the things which He forbids and trying to do whatever He wishes.

A loving child tries to be like his father. Children often resemble their parents in their outward looks, they catch the tone of their voice, and often copy them in their conduct. Jesus Christ sets before us our heavenly Father as our example. "Be ye therefore perfect as your Father in heaven is perfect."

Our Sinfulness.—Have we, thus loved our heavenly Father and tried to please Him? Alas no

God thus complains of our conduct, contrasting the gratitude of the very beasts with the regardlessness of man: "Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth. I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me. The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib; but my people doth not know, doth not consider."

Instead of loving, obeying and worshipping their heavenly Father to whom they owe every blessing they enjoy, most of the people of this country have given the honour due to Him to idols or imaginary beings. They are thus guilty of rebellion against the rightful Lord of the Universe.

We have also sinned against our heavenly Father in many other ways. Every evil thought, every evil word, every evil deed, is a sin. Who can reckon the number we have committed in our lives!

Hindus believe that their sins can be washed away simply by bathing in the Ganges or other supposed sacred waters.

Apply this to an earthly father. Suppose a son has dishonoured and disobeyed his father in every way; would it be sufficient for him to say to his father, "I have bathed in the Ganges?" Would his father not justly expect him to be very sorry for his conduct, to confess his fault, ask pardon, and try to be loving and obedient in future?

We should act in like manner for our many sins against our heavenly Father. Jesus Christ taught this in a beautiful parable.

A certain man had two sons. The younger of them said to his father, "Father, give me the portion of goods that falleth to me." The father then divided all he had between his two sons. A few days after, his younger son went away to a far country, where he soon spent all his property among bad companions. He was now so poor that he went into the fields to feed swine, and he was so hungry, that he would gladly have taken some of the food that the swine did eat.

Afterwards, the younger son thought that, while he was starving, his father's servants had more than they could eat. Then he said, "I will arise and go to my father, and will say to him, Father, I have sinned against heaven and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son." As soon as his father saw him coming, he ran, fell on his neck, and kissed him. He told the servants to bring the best robe, and make ready the finest food. Full of joy, he said, "This my son was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found."

When we have done wrong, we should, with heart-felt sorrow, confess our sins to God and ask forgiveness.

But Christianity teaches that this is not enough. Man is so deeply plunged in sin and his guilt is so great, that a Divine incarnation was necessary for his deliverance. This is dimly shadowed forth in Siva drinking the poison which would destroy the world. Jesus Christ, by His death on the cross, offered Himself as a sacrifice for our salvation.

Christians do not hope to merit heaven by their own good works. Their feeling is, "In my hand no price I bring." Trusting in Jesus Christ, they look to Him alone for salvation.

It is not sufficient for a disobedient son to feel sorry for his conduct and to ask forgiveness. He must show that his sorrow is sincere by being obedient and affectionate in future.

God's experience will teach us that we need Divine help to resist temptation and overcome sin. Here the Christian doctrine

of the Trinity is felt to be adapted to our needs. Although Christians firmly hold God's unity, yet in some mysterious way there is a Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, who all unite for man's redemption. The peculiar office of the Holy Spirit is to sanctify, to enable us to overcome sin, and to be adorned with all the beauties of holiness. His help is given in answer to prayer. The promise is, "If ye being evil know how to give good gifts unto your children; how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him?"

Besides prayer for the Holy Spirit, there must be watchfulness against sin, avoidance of temptation, study of the scriptures and other good books, observance of the Lord's day, attendance at public worship, association with good men, etc.

FOUR STAGES OF UNION.

There is very much to admire in the stages which have been named; as *sālokya*, dwelling in the same abode with God; *sāmi-
pya*, nearness to Him, *sārūpya*, assimilation to His likeness, *Sāyujya*, union with Him. While the Saiva methods of realizing them have been shown to be inadequate, as applied to our heavenly Father they may express great truths.

Sālokya.—This denotes dwelling in the same world with God.

Although we are continually in God's presence, and indebted to Him for every breath we draw, the great majority of men never think of Him, ignore His existence, and if His name is mentioned, it is only an idle exclamation.

There have, however, been a few who have felt that God is ever with them. It is said of a good man, in very early times, called Enoch, that he "walked with God." He lived as if God were by his side. Another good man said, "I am continually with Thee." We live in God's world. Of the objects around us, we may say, "My Father made them all." We should constantly realize God's presence. This is the true *Sālokya*, begun on earth, and continued in heaven.

**Sāmi-
pya**, nearness to God.—This denotes increasing love and admiration, accompanied by a desire for closer intercourse, like the warmest feeling between father and son. The child says, "My father." The reply is, "Son, thou art ever with me." The son delights in his father's presence; he tells him all his joys and sorrows; he constantly seeks his help and guidance. Tennyson says:

"Speak, thou, to Him for He hears, and spirit with Spirit may meet,
Closer is He than breathing, nearer than hands and feet.

Sārūpya, assimilation to God's likeness. This does not refer to His bodily form, for He has none; but to His character. A child naturally imitates his father in disposition and conduct.

The Lord Jesus Christ holds up our heavenly Father as our model. He explained it by His own conduct, "leaving us an example that we should follow His steps."

Sayujya.—This is commonly understood as meaning absorption into the Supreme Spirit. The illustrations, a river emptying itself into the ocean or a drop uniting with the ocean, are accepted as proofs. The hollowness of such reasoning has already been shown. Another illustration proves the contrary; as oil and water cannot unite, so the soul cannot be absorbed in God.

The Creator and the creature must for ever remain distinct. But there may be the closest union. This union begun on earth is perfected in heaven. It is a state of conscious happy existence in God's presence, never to have an end. What a glorious prospect! How well worthy of our most strenuous efforts to attain it!

CONCLUDING APPEAL TO EDUCATED SAIVAS.

The obscene sculptures on Saiva temples and cars and their dancing-girls have been described. As an illustration of what the people are taught to believe, a short account may be given of the *Tiruvilayadal Purānam*, the *Stalla Purānam* of the great temple at Madura. The name means 'Sacred Amusement.' An abstract of it is given by the Rev. W. Taylor in *Oriental Historical Manuscripts*.

"The opening scene is laid in Kailāsa, the paradise of Siva. Here, while *rishis* are conversing together, an enquiry is made as to the holiest and most celebrated stations on earth where their god is worshipped. Suthu-rishi, one among them, in reply states, 'That once on a time when he was at Kāsi he heard the Sage Agastya relate accounts concerning a very eminent *Siva-stallam*, calculated to produce the impression that it was chief of all others' " Vol. I. p. 117.

The "Sacred Amusements" of Siva are described. One of them was converting twelve young pigs into ministers of state; another the impalement of the Jainas. Persons who hear the narrative will obtain all manner of happiness.

By the common people, and even pundits, such statements are accepted as literally true, instead of being fictions, devised by Brahmans to bring worshippers to the temple.

The reader, if an educated Saiva, may say that he does not believe in such fables, and that the Being whom he worships is not the lord of Kailāsa, but the great Lord of the universe. His ignorant countrymen, however, do not distinguish between the two, and they are kept in their present degraded position largely from the supposed countenance of educated Saivas, who thus prove traitors to the cause of truth and civilization.

The reader has not existed from eternity passing through endless transmigrations. He did not exist before his present birth, and there are no future rebirths from which he can be delivered by Siddhantism.

There is no such being as Siva described in the Sacred Books of the Hindus. He is only an invention by men in an unenlightened age of the world.

The reader obtained his life and every blessing which he enjoys from the one true God, the great Creator of the universe, his Father in heaven. It is his duty to worship and honour Him alone. To worship any other is to be guilty of rebellion, deserving severe punishment.

Our duty as disobedient children to our heavenly Father has been pointed out, and the reader is earnestly invited to follow the course recommended. Thus only can he obtain true relief from the burden of sin, and enter without fear an unknown eternity.

A desire is expressed by some educated Hindus for a *National* religion. It is thought degrading to India to have any other religion than her own.

Keshab Chunder Sen, thus shows that there is no *national science* :

"Is there one astronomy for the East and another for the West? Is there an Asiatic optics as distinguished from European optics? Science is one, the same in the East and the West, the same in the first and the nineteenth century. It is God's science, the eternal verity of things."

As with science, so with religion.

If each country had its own God, there might be different religions, but all enlightened men are now agreed that there is only one God, the Creator, Preserver, and Governor of the Universe. Since God is one and all men are alike His children it is reasonable to suppose that He has given only one religion.

The most enlightened countries in Europe and America accepted a religion first made known to them by Asiatics, and did not reject it from false patriotism, saying, "We must have national religions."

The greatest Dravidian poet says. "Disease born with you will destroy you the medicine which is in the lofty mountain, not born with you, will expel the disorder."

The ancestors of the Hindus, the English, and other Aryan nations, says Max Muller, "had once the same faith, and worshipped for a time the same supreme Deity under exactly the same name—a name which meant Heaven Father." The time will yet come when they will again recognise each other as brethren, kneel together at the same footstool, and offer the same grand old prayer, beginning, "Our Father which art in heaven."

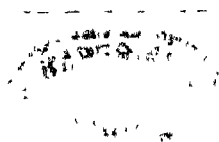
Instead of thinking of God as having four arms and three eyes or an elephant's head, how incomparably higher is it to look up to Him as the great Creator of the universe, our loving Father in heaven! If Indian mothers taught this to their children instead of leading them to bow down to idols or filling their minds with dread of evil spirits which cling to them all their lives, how much would it raise the country in the scale of civilization and promote the happiness of its people! Let the reader do what he can to bring about this glorious change from falsehood to truth.

Prayer for Divine Help.—It is the custom of many Hindus never to begin anything—even writing a letter—without asking the help of Pilleiyai. Seeking Divine help is to be commended, but it should be sought—not from an unimaginary being,—but from our Father in heaven. Let the reader ask to be led into all truth, and to be enabled to follow the convictions of his conscience.

In religious enquiry we ought especially to seek Divine guidance. The following prayer for light is attributed to the most famous Christian convert of early times, and may be fittingly used

“O Lord, who art the Light, the Way, the Truth, the Life, in whom there is no darkness, error, vanity, nor death; the light, without which there is darkness, the way, without which there is wandering; the truth, without which there is error, the life, without which there is death, say, Lord, ‘Let there be light,’ and I shall see light and eschew darkness, I shall see the way, and avoid wandering, I shall see the truth, and shun error, I shall see life, and escape death. Illuminate, O illuminate my blind soul, which sitteth in darkness, and the shadow of death, and direct my feet in the way of peace.”

May the reader, instead of confirming by his example, his ignorant countrymen in their degraded superstitions, take part in the glorious work of turning them to the worship of the one true God, their rightful Lord, their Father in heaven!



APPENDIX

Publications for Indian Readers.

The Religions of the World. An Illustrated Sketch of their History.
8vo. 208 pp. 6 As.

The Great Religions of the World are described and contrasted. India is urged to prosecute vigorously the course of reform on which she has entered. Illustrative woodcuts.

The Hindu Sacred Books Described and Examined.

VOLUME I.

VEDAS AND BRAHMANAS.

An Account of the Vedas, with Illustrative Extracts from the Rig-Veda. 8vo. 166 pp. 4½ As. Post-free, 6 As.

The principal divisions of the Vedas are described; with life in Vedic times, the gods of the Vedas, the offerings and sacrifices. Translations of some of the most important hymns in the Rig-Veda are quoted in full.

The Atharva-Veda. 8vo. 76 pp. 2½ As. Post-free, 3 As.

This is the Veda of Prayers, Charms, and Spells. A classified selection of the Hymns is given, including charms to cure diseases, expel demons, secure success in life, destroy enemies, &c., with a review of the whole.

The Brahmanas of the Vedas. 8vo. 232 pp. By THE REV. K. S. MACDONALD, M.A., D.D., Author of *The Vedic Religion*. 8 As. Post-free, 10 As.

Accounts are given of the Brāhmanas of the Rig-Veda, Sāma Veda, Black and White Yajur-Vedas, and the Atharva-Veda, showing the development of Hinduism. The state of society, the human, horse, and other sacrifices, the gods and religion of the Brāhmanas are described, with many interesting details.

VOLUME II.

PHILOSOPHICAL WORKS AND LAW BOOKS.

Selections from the Upanishads. 8vo. 120 pp. 4 As. Post-free, 5 As.

The Katha, Isa, and Svetāsvatara, as translated into English by Dr. Roer, are quoted in full, with the notes of Sankara Achārya and others, and there are copious extracts from the Brihad Aranya and Chhāndogya Upanishads; with an examination of their teaching.

The Bhagavad Gita. 8vo. 108 pp. 3 As. Post-free, 5 As.

This work, supposed to represent the loftiest flight of Hindu Philosophy, consists of a supposed dialogue between Arjuna and Krishna. It seeks to harmonise the Vedānta, Yoga, and Sāṅkhya doctrines, combining with them faith (*bhakti*) in Krishna and stern devotion to caste duties. Numerous explanatory notes are added.

Vedānta Sara. 8vo. 143 pp. 4 As. Post-free, 5 As.

This celebrated treatise, by Sadānanda, is considered the best popular exposition of the Vedānta philosophy.

Yoga Sastra. 8vo. 78 pp. 2½ As. Post-free, 3 As.

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VEDANTISM EXAMINED

COMPILED

BY

JOHN MURDOCH LL D

"The conception of an impersonal and unapproachable Being is ineffectual, and ethically pernicious."

St. Alfred C. Lyall.

"The Vedanta, the highest conclusion of Indian thought, is based on a mistaken and pessimistic view of life, on a formulated dogma unsupported by any evidence and untaught in the hymns of the Rig-Veda: the whole an elaborate and subtle process of false reasoning."—*Rev T F Slater*

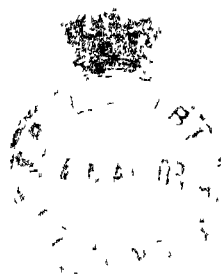
"From the unreal lead me to the real,
From darkness lead me to light
From death lead me to immortality."

Brihad Aranya Upanishad.

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CHRISTIAN LITERATURE SOCIETY FOR INDIA:
LONDON AND MADRAS.

1902.



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VEDANTISM EXAMINED.

INTRODUCTION

The Hindu Mind.—Mr. S. Saththianadhan, M.A., LL.M., Professor of Mental and Moral Science, Presidency College, Madras, has the following remarks on this point —

"The Hindu mind, dreamy, mystical, and speculative, with the imaginative side more highly developed than the active, has taken a delight in abstract thought from the very dawn of intellectual consciousness."

"Indian philosophical literature, moreover, is replete to saturation with the theory of the misery of life. This also is, to a great extent, the outcome of national character. The dark side of human life, the vicissitudes of fortune, the inexplicable dissonance in existence—all these intrude themselves on the notice of the Indian, and hence his pessimism."

"No nation, no people under the sun has had the future after death so constantly before their mind, has been so little wedded to this life and so intent on their emancipation from it as the Indian, and it is this expectation of a renewal of a life of misery, in body after body, in age after age, and æon after æon, and the feverish yearning after some means of extrication from this black prospect that is the first motive to Indian speculation. 'The sum and substance, it may almost be said, of Indian philosophy,' writes Mr Gough, 'is, from first to last, the misery of metempsychosis (transmigration) and the mode of extrication from it.'"

Intellectual Growth.—"The life of a nation," says Morell, "bears an obvious analogy to that of the individual."

The child gives life to every object around it. Whatever strikes the imagination affords delight, the most extravagant tales are accepted as true.

"The severing of imagination on the one hand from abstract principles on the other, marks the rise of another era in a nation's development,—that, namely, which corresponds with the sphere of thought, properly so called. The separation is effected by the understanding, and is marked by a decided tendency to metaphysical speculations."

* *Lecture on Indian and Greek Systems of Philosophy.*

"When these periods have run their rounds, then the age of positive science commences,—that in which the reason gathers up all the results of the other faculties, and employs them for the direct investigation of truth."*

The Hindus, in general, represent the childhood of humanity. Every thing around them is instinct with life. "The idlest legend," says Professor Cowell, "passes current as readily as the most authentic fact, nay, more readily, because it is more likely to charm the imagination, and in this phase of mind, imagination and feeling supply the only proof which is needed to win the belief of the audience."

The tendency to metaphysical thought, the speculative stage of the human intellect, is shown in the Upanishads, the Darsanas, and Bhagavad Gītā.

There is no sharp line of demarcation between popular and philosophic Hinduism. They blend into each other. Some combine the two. Even the common people are leavened, more or less, with some of the notions of philosophic Hinduism.

The "Age of Positive Science" has, as yet, only a few representatives in India, but the minority will grow.

ORIGIN OF HINDU PHILOSOPHY

Course of Hindu Thought.—India was first occupied by non-Aryan races, generally like the wild tribes still found in various parts of the country, although some had attained an elementary civilisation. Their religion apparently consisted in propitiating demons and tutelary gods, and this, to the present day, forms the actual cult of the masses.

The Aryans poured in from Central Asia through the western passes, and spread over the great river-basins of the Indus and Ganges, where they gradually became mingled with the pre-existing population, the two races mutually acting upon each other.

In later Vedic times the Indian tribes were gathered together in farms, in huts of sun-dried mud, in houses of stone, in hamlets, and in fenced towns, under village chiefs and Rajas. The outward aspects of their life were not unlike those of rural India of to-day. The Indians of the Vedic age tilled their rice and barley, irrigated their fields with water courses, watched the increase of their flocks and herds, and made a hard or easy livelihood as blacksmiths, wheelwrights, boat-builders, weavers, doctors, soldiers, poets, priests. They lived upon the produce of their cattle and their fields, drank wine and soma juice, and exercised their leisure in sacrificial feasts, in games, and spectacles.

* Morell's *Elements of Psychology*, pp. 263, 264.

The powers of nature present themselves to them as so many personal objects. The child personifies the stone that hurts him ; the child of superstition personifies the laws of nature as gods. Sky and Earth are the father and mother of gods and men. Mitra, presiding over the day, wakes men, and bids them bestir themselves betimes, and stands watching all things with unwinking eye. Varuna, ruling the night, prepares a cool place of rest for all that move, fashions a pathway for the sun, knows every wink of men's eyes, cherishes truth, seizes the evil-doer with his noose, and is prayed to have mercy on the sinful. Agni, the fire-god, bears the oblation aloft to the gods. Indra, ruling the firmament, overthrows Vritra ; Soma invigorates the gods, and cheers mankind.

The gods require to be flattered with hymns, to be fed with butter, to be refreshed with soma juice, that they may send rain, food, cattle, children, and length of days to their worshippers. Life is as yet no burden, there is nothing of the blank despair that came in later with the tenet of transmigration, and the misery of every form of sentient life. Pleasures are looked for in this world, their harvests are enough for the wants of all ; their flocks and herds are many, and pleasures are looked for again in the after-life in the body in the kingdom of Yama.

So far from life being regarded as a curse, " May you live a hundred winters " was looked upon as a benediction.

This worship of the personified powers of nature with a view to material benefits gradually hardened into a series of rites to be performed by the priesthood. In course of time it came to be held that the sacrifices performed without knowledge of their import produced their desired effect,—some material good, the birth of children, long life, or future happiness. This later form of Vedic religion received the name of the *Karmakāṇḍa*, or ritual department of the Vedas.

But in the midst of this life of the primitive Hindu, there are discernible the first stirrings of reflection. Questions began to be raised in the hymns of the Rishis in regard to the origin of earth and sky. One of them asks, " Which of them was first and which was later ? You wise, which of you knows ? " Another asks, " What was the fruit, what the tree, out of which they cut the sky and earth ? " In one hymn earth and sky are the work of Visvakarman. In another it is Hiranyagarbha, the golden Germ, that arose in the beginning ; in another it is Varuna. Agni is sometimes the son of Earth and Sky ; at other times he is said to have stretched out the earth and sky. In a few of the later hymns there are touching confessions of ignorance ; such as, " Who truly knows or who has told what path leads to the gods ? "

"This creation, whether any made it, or any made it not. He that is the overseer in the highest heaven, he indeed knows, or haply he knows not."

The period of the hymns was followed by that of the ritual and legendary compilations known as the *Brāhmanas*. Of these *Brāhmanas*, particular portions, to be repeated only by the hermits of the forests, were styled *Aranyakas*, and to the *Aranyakas* were attached the treatises setting forth as a hidden wisdom the fictitious nature of the religion of rites, and the sole reality of the all-pervading and all-animating self, or Brahman. This hidden wisdom, the philosophy of the *Upanishads*, in contradistinction from the *Karmakāṇḍa*, or ritual portion, received the name of *Jñānakāṇḍa*, or knowledge portion of the *Sruti*, or everlasting revelation. There were now virtually two religions, the *Karmamārga*, or path of rites, for the people of the villages, living as it life with its pleasures were real, and the *Jñānamārga*, or path of knowledge, for the sages that had quitted the world, and sought the quiet of the jungle, renouncing the false ends and empty fictions of common life, and intent upon reunion with the sole reality, the Self that is one in all things living *

Rise of Hindu Pessimism.—Dr. Murray Mitchell says :

"With them (the *Upanishads*) commences that great wail of sorrow which, for countless ages, has in India been rising up to heaven. All the earlier Vedic hymns take a cheerful view of life; but with the *Upanishads* we see the beginning of that despondency which, as time goes on, will deepen almost into despair." †

Three causes may be assigned for this.

1. After the Aryans had settled in India for some time, they began to feel the influence of the hot, enervating climate. Labour was a burden, undisturbed repose seemed the highest bliss.

2. "The unhappiness of the environment. Warfare was almost the normal state of Indian society;—war with the aborigines; war of one Aryan tribe with another, a long struggle between princes and priests, and steady exaltation of the latter, the rise and rapid progress of Buddhism; war with Scythian hordes;—in all this there was undoubtedly enough to distract and depress the Indian mind." ‡

3. Chiefly, the belief in transmigration. Of this there are only the faintest traces, if any, in the *Vedas*. It is uncertain whether the idea sprang up in the Hindu mind, or was derived from the aborigines.

The pessimistic feeling was intensified by Buddha. The first of the "four noble truths" which he professed to have

* Abridged from Gough's *Philosophy of the Upanishads*, pp. 7-17.

† *Hinduism Past and Present*, p. 48.

discovered is that "EXISTENCE IS SUFFERING." As a devout Buddhist counts his beads, he mutters *Anitya, Dukha, Anatta*, "Transience, Sorrow, Unreality."

Prince Mahanama thus describes to his brother Anuradha the alternate happiness and misery of life :

"The being who is still subject to birth may at one time sport in the beautiful garden of a dewa-loka, and at another be cut to a thousand pieces in hell ; at one time he may be Mahā Brahmā, and at another a degraded outcaste ; at one time he may eat the food of the devas, and at another he may have molten lead poured down his throat ; at one time he may sip nectar, and at another he may be made to drink blood. Alternately, he may repose on a couch with the devas, and writhe on a bed of red-hot iron ; enjoy the society of the dewas, and be dragged through a thicket of thorns ; bathe in a celestial river, and be plunged in the briny ocean of hell, become wild with pleasure, and then mad with pain ; reside in a mansion of gold, and be exposed on a burning mountain ; sit on the throne of the dewas, and be impaled with hungry dogs around ; drawn in a chariot of the dewas, and dragged in a chariot of fire, he may now be a king who can receive countless gems by the mere clapping of his hands, and now a mendicant, taking a skull from door to door to seek alms."

Monier Williams says .

"Transmigration is the great bugbear, the terrible nightmare and daymare of Indian philosophers and metaphysicians. All their efforts are directed to getting rid of this oppressive scare. The question is not, What is truth ? Nor is it the soul's desire to be released from the burden of sin. The one engrossing problem is, How is a man to break this iron chain of repeated existences ? How is he to shake off all personality ?"

All systems of Hindu Philosophy are pessimistic. The *Brahmavādin* says .

"Every system of Hindu philosophy starts with the conviction that individual existence is a journey full of torments from death to death, that the individual soul is tossed about, as result of its errors, ignorances, and sins, from life to life, from billow to billow in the great ocean of transmigration, that desire is the motive power that makes for the eternal continuance of life, that this desire has its root in ignorance or the non-discrimination of the true nature and value of things, that the law which fetters living beings to the existence in the world can be broken and that salvation from *samsāra*, or the cycle of life and death, can be attained by spiritual knowledge of the eternal verities. These great ideas form the woof and the warp of Indian thought, permeating its whole outlook, its attitude towards life, its most sacred aspirations and its most cherished wishes and hopes." May 22, 1897.

The popular feeling is the same. In every Indian bazar the expression may be heard almost daily, "This is the Kali Yuga,"

the Iron Age. The venerable Vedic Rishi, Parásara, in the Vishnu Purana, thus describes some of its evils :

"The observance of caste, order, and institutes will not prevail in the Kali Age . . . Men of all degrees will conceit themselves to be equal with Brahmans, cows will be held in esteem only as they supply milk. The people will be almost always in dread of dearth, and apprehensive of scarcity, they will all live, like anchorets, upon leaves, and roots, and fruits, and put a period to their lives through fear of famine and want . . . Princes, instead of protecting, will plunder their subjects . . . women will bear children at the age of 5, 6, or 7 years, and men beget them when they are 8, 9, or 10. A man will be grey when he is 12; and no one will exceed 20 years of life."

What a sad contrast to the Krita (Golden) Age, when the fruits of the earth were obtained by the mere wish, and men lived four thousand years !

THE SIX SCHOOLS OF HINDU PHILOSOPHY.

"The Upanishads contain the first attempts to comprehend the mysteries of existence, and their teachings cannot be gathered up into an harmonious system. But as time went on, a desire was felt to expand, classify, and arrange these earlier utterances—to make them more definite and more consistent. Hence gradually arose what we may call the official philosophy of India, which is comprised in a number of methodical treatises. These are generally called the six *Darsanas* or 'exhibitions.'⁴ No doubt it was only by degrees that they assumed their present elaborated shape, which cannot be much older than the Christian era." They consist of the following

1. The *Nyāya*, founded by Gotama.
2. The *Vaisesika*, by Kanāda.
3. The *Sāṅkhya*, by Kapila
4. The *Yoga*, by Patanjali.
5. The *Mīmāṃsa*, by Jaimini.
6. The *Vedānta*, by Badarāyana or Vyāsa.

The original text-books of the various systems consist of *Sūtras*, which are held to be the basis of all subsequent teaching. The word properly signifies 'a string.' We may understand it to denote a string of rules, or rather aphorisms. "They are expressed with extreme conciseness—doubtless for the purpose of being committed to memory; and without a commentary they are exceedingly obscure."

* Wilson's Translation of the *Vishnu Purāna*, pp. 622, 624.

† Or "Demonstrations of Truth." Sir Monier Williams,

The date of the composition of these aphorisms cannot be settled with certainty. Nor is it possible to decide when the six schools were finally systematised, nor which of the six preceded the others.

The Darsanas belong to the division of Hindu books, called *Smṛiti*. They are therefore authoritative; but not to the same extent as the Vedas and Upanishads.

"None of the six systems professedly attack, or deny, the authority of the Vedas: on the contrary, they all profess the profoundest reverence for the sacred books. It is difficult to see how the authors of some of the systems could do this with sincerity. Yet the Hindu mind has long surpassed all other minds in the ability to hold, or believe itself to hold, at the same time, two or more opinions which appear to be wholly irreconcilable—indeed an acknowledged note of the Hindu mind is 'eclecticism issuing in confusion,' it has been said to be 'the very method of Hindu thought.' But the contradictions among the philosophical systems were too glaring to escape the notice of men capable of reflection; and accordingly the author of one Darsana and his followers frequently attack the supporters of the others. Thus the great controversialist Sankara denounces a follower of the Nyāya philosophy as a bullock *minus* the horns and tail—implying, we suppose, that he had all a bullock's stupidity without his power of fighting. The author of the Sāṅkhya charges the followers of the Vedānta with 'babbling like children or madmen.' The Mīmāṃsa accuses the Vedānta of being disguised Buddhism. The Padma Purāna maintains that four of the six systems are simply atheism.

"But while thus radically opposed to each other, the six official systems of philosophy are all held to be orthodox."

DOCTRINES HELD BY THE SIX SCHOOLS.

Monier Williams enumerates these as follows —

1. The eternity of the soul, both retrospectively and prospectively. It never began to be and will never cease to exist

2. The eternity of the matter or substance out of which the universe has been evolved.

All Hindu Schools deny the possibility of *creation*, bringing into being out of nothing.

3. The soul, though itself abstract thought and knowledge, can only exercise thought, and can only act and will when invested with some bodily form, and joined to mind (*manas*). The mind belongs only to the body, and is quite distinct from the soul.

4. The union of soul and body is productive of bondage, and, in the case of human souls, of misery.

The union leads to action; but all action, good or bad, leads to bondage, for its fruit must be eaten.

* Dr. Murray Mitchell, *Hinduism Past and Present*.

5. For the ripening of acts (*karma-vipāka*), the soul must be removed to a place of reward or punishment, which however is neither full nor final.

6. The transmigration of the soul, through an innumerable succession of bodies, is the true explanation of the existence of evil in the world.

Misery and happiness are simply the consequences of acts done by each soul in former births.

A very brief account will now be given of the six Philosophical Schools.

1. THE NYAYA.

The word Nyāya signifies "going into a subject," taking it, as it were, to pieces. The system was intended to furnish a correct method of philosophical inquiry into *all the objects and subjects* of human knowledge, including, *amongst others* the process of reasoning and laws of thought. It is mainly a system of logic. Gotama shows how false notions are at the root of all misery. For from false notions comes the fault of liking or disliking, or being indifferent to anything; from that fault proceed activity; from this mistaken activity proceed actions, involving either merit or demerit, which merit or demerit forces a man to pass through repeated births for the sake of its rewards or punishments. From these births proceeds misery, and it is the aim of philosophy to correct the false notions at the root of this misery. *

The name Iswara occurs once in the Sūtras of Gotama, the founder of the Nyāya, but they say nothing of moral attributes as belonging to God, nor is His Government of the world recognized. Nor can the system be said to believe in creation, inasmuch as it holds matter to be composed of eternal atoms. Confluent atoms, in themselves uncreated, composed the world. Soul, or rather spirit, is represented as multitudinous, and (like atoms) eternal. It is distinct from mind. †

2. THE VAISESHIKA.

The Vaiseshika may be called a supplement of the Nyāya. It is attributed to a sage, nicknamed Kanāda (atom-eater). Colebrooke explains Vaiseshika as meaning "particular," as dealing with "particulars" or sensible objects. It begins by arranging its inquiries under seven *Padarthas*, or certain general properties or attributes that may be predicated of existing things.

The Vaiseshika Sūtras do not mention God. They go very fully into the doctrine of atoms—which, like the Nyāya, they declare to be uncaused and eternal. An atom is thus defined by

* Monier Williams. † Dr. Murray Mitchell, *Hinduism Past and Present*.

Kanāda: "Something existing, without a cause, without beginning and end. It is contrary to what has a measure." Atoms are so exceedingly small that it requires three of them to be perceptible like a mote in a sunbeam.

It is held that the living individual souls of men (*jīvātman*) are eternal, manifold, and *diffused everywhere throughout space*; so that a man's soul is as much in England as in Calcutta, though it can apprehend and feel and act only where the body happens to be.

The Vaiseshika is dualistic in the sense of assuming the existence of *eternal atoms*, side by side either with *eternal souls*, or with the Supreme Soul of the universe.

3 THE SANKHYA.

Unlike the Nyāya, this is a *synthetic* system, as it were, placing things together. It is essentially dualistic. It holds that there are two primary eternal agencies. There is an eternally existing essence, called *Prakṛiti*, "that which produces or brings forth every thing else." This is sometimes, not very accurately, rendered by "*Nature*." "From the absence of a root in the root, the root of all things is rootless."

Prakṛiti is supposed to be made up of three principles, called *Guṇas*, or cords, supposed to bind the soul. They are *Sattva*, *Rajas*, *Tamas*; or Truth, Passion, and Darkness. These principles enter into all things; and on the relative quantity of each in any object depends the quality of the object.

Souls (*Puruṣa*) are countless in number; individual, sensitive, eternal, unchangeable. All that is done by Prakṛiti is done on behalf of soul. In its own nature soul is without qualities, until united with Prakṛiti. The union of the two is compared to a lame man mounted on a blind man's shoulders, the pair are then both (as it were) capable of perception and movement.

Beginning from the original rootless germ Prakṛiti, the Sāṅkhya counts up (*san-khyāti*) synthetically (whence its name of 'synthetic enumeration') twenty-three other Tattvas or entities—all productions of the first, and evolving themselves spontaneously out of it, as cream out of milk, or milk out of a cow,—while it carefully distinguishes them all from a twenty-fifth, *Puruṣa*, the soul, which is wholly in its own nature destitute of *Guṇas*, though liable to be bound by the *Guṇas* of Prakṛiti.

The process is thus stated in the Sāṅkhya-karika: "The root and substance of all things (except soul) is Prakṛiti. It is no production. Seven things produced by it are also producers. Thence come sixteen productions (*vikāra*). Soul, the twenty-fifth essence, is neither a production nor producer."

According to the Sāṅkhya system, the five grosser elements (*mahābhūta*) with their distinguishing properties and corresponding organs of sense, are the following :

	Distinguishing Property.	Organ of Sense.
1. <i>Akāśa</i> , ether,	Sound	The Ear
2. <i>Vāyu</i> , air,	Tangibility	The Skin
3. <i>Tejas</i> , fire, light,	Colour	The Eye
4. <i>Apas</i> , water,	Taste	The Tongue
5. <i>Prithvi</i> , earth,	Smell	The Nose.

In the Sāṅkhya there is no place for God ; and accordingly it is known among Hindus by the name of Niriswara Sāṅkhya, or *the Sāṅkhya without the Lord*. Yet all the original text asserts is that this existence is "not proved" Kapila, then, was an agnostic rather than atheist.*

Notwithstanding these atheistical tendencies, the charge of unorthodoxy is evaded by a confession of faith in the Veda.

"In the Purāṇas and Tantras, Prakṛiti becomes the real mother of the universe, taking the form of female personifications, who are regarded as the wives or female energies and capacities (*Sakti*) of the principal male deities, to whom, on the other hand, the name Puruṣa, in the sense of the Supreme Soul, or primeval male is sometimes applied"

4. THE YOGA.

This system, founded by Patanjali, is often styled the Theistic Sāṅkhya. It agrees in its general principles with the Sāṅkhya proper, but claims greater orthodoxy by directly acknowledging the existence of God. The Supreme Being of the Yoga is a soul distinct from other souls, unaffected by the ills with which they are beset, unconcerned with good or bad deeds and their consequences. Practically he is a nonentity, introduced to satisfy popular feeling, prejudiced against the Sāṅkhya as atheistic.

The word *Yoga* means union. The great end of the Yoga is to obtain union with the Supreme Being, but Patanjali defines Yoga as "the suppression of the functions of the thinking principle." The following are the exercises to be employed :—

1. *Yama*, restraint 2. *Niyama*, religious observances 3. *Āsana*, postures 4. *Prāṇāyāma*, regulation of the breath. 5. *Pratyāhāra*, restraint of the senses. 6. *Dhāraṇa*, fixed attention 7. *Dhyāna*, contemplation. 8. *Samādhi*, profound meditation

* An *agnostic* professes not to know whether there is a God ; an *atheist* denies his existence.

† Sir Monier Williams.

All wandering thoughts are to be called in, and attention fixed on some one object. Any object will answer if it is thought of alone; other thoughts must be suppressed. At last there is profound meditation without any object.

Great importance is attached to *āsana*, or postures. At an early period they were fixed as 84, but of this number ten are specially recommended. The following directions are given regarding some of them.

The Lotus Posture.—The right foot should be placed on the left thigh, and the left foot on the right thigh, the hands should be crossed, and the two great toes should be firmly held thereby; the chin should be bent down to the chest, and in this posture the eyes should be directed to the tip of the nose.

Gomukha, or Cow's Mouth Posture.—Put the right ankle on the left side of the chest, and similarly the left ankle on the right side.

Fowl Posture.—Having established the lotus posture, if the hand be passed between the thigh and the knees and placed on the earth so as to lift the body aloft, it will produce the fowl seat.

Bow Posture.—Hold the great toes with the hands and draw them to the ears as in drawing a bowstring.

The regulation of the breath, *prāṇāyama*, is likewise of great importance. "The usual mode is after assuming the posture prescribed, to place the ring finger of the right hand on the left nostril, pressing it so as to close it, and to expire with the right, then to press the right nostril with the thumb, and to inspire through the left nostril, and then to close the two nostrils with the ring finger and the thumb, and to stop all breathing. The order is reversed in the next operation, and in the third act the first form is required."

Marvellous powers are attributed to the man fully initiated in the Yoga. The past and present are unveiled to his gaze. He sees things invisible to others. He hears the sounds that are in distant worlds. He becomes stronger than the elephant, bolder than the lion, swifter than the wind. He mounts at pleasure into the air or dives into the depths of the earth and the ocean. He acquires mastery over all things, whether animated or inanimate.

The whole belief is a delusion. The brain is the organ of the mind. To enable it to act properly, it must have a good supply of pure blood. The blood is purified by fresh air entering into the lungs by breathing. From want of sufficient food and suppression of the breath, the blood of the Yogī is small in quantity and impure. The brain does not act properly. He may be in a dreamy condition or almost unconscious. Barth, a French writer, a distinguished Sanskrit scholar, says of the Yoga exercises: "Conscientiously observed, they can only issue in folly and idiocy."

Union with the Supreme Being and the acquisition of super-human powers are the objects of Yoga exercises. Instead of attaining these objects, the Yogi reduces himself to a state well known to modern physicians. It is called hypnotic or mesmeric, and is a kind of dreamy sleep. Professor Huxley, distinguished for his knowledge of the human body, thus describes the effects of Yoga exercises on the man who fully observes them : He is reduced to "a state of impassive, quasi-somnambulism, which, but for its acknowledged holiness, might run the risk of being confounded with idiocy. . . . All that remain of a man is an impassive extenuated mendicant monk, self-hypnotized into cataleptic trances, which the deluded mystic takes for foretastes of final union with Brahma."* The subject will be considered at greater length under another head

YOGA SASTRA (2½ As.) contains a full account of the system, with numerous extracts from Patanjali's Sūtras.

5. MIMANSA.

This is sometimes called Pūrva-Mimāṃsa, because founded on the Vedas. It is not a branch of any philosophical system, but rather one of Vedic interpretation, thrown into a kind of scientific form.

Jaimini, its founder, did not deny the existence of God, but practically he makes the Veda the only God. The Veda, he says, is itself authority, and has no need of an authorizer. *Dharma* consists in the performance of the rites and sacrifices prescribed in the Veda, because they are so prescribed, without reference to the will or approval of any personal god, for *Dharma* is itself the bestower of reward.

Jaimini asserts the absolute eternity of the Veda, and he declares that only eternally pre-existing objects are mentioned in it. Another doctrine maintained by him is that sound is eternal, or rather, that an eternal sound underlies all temporary sound.†

6. THE VEDANTA.

This system, though described last, has long been the chief philosophy of India. It is the truest exponent of the habits of thought of the Hindu mind. The outline of its pantheistic creed is traceable in the Rig-Veda, and it conforms more closely than any other system to the doctrines propounded in the Upanishads, on which treatises, indeed, as forming the end of the Veda, it professes to be founded.

Vyāsa, or Bādarāyana, is said to be the founder of the Vedānta. He is commonly supposed also to have arranged

* *Evolution and Ethics*, p. 65. † Abridged from Monier Williams.

the Vedas, to have compiled the Mahābhārata, as well as to have written some of the Purāṇas. One theory is that there were several persons of the same name. The most probable explanation is that the writer, according to a common practice among the Hindus, claimed the celebrated name of Vyāsa to gain more respect for his work. In South India, several books, quite modern, are attributed to the Rishi Agastya.

Vyāsa is said to have composed the Sārīraka Sūtras, containing 555 aphorisms. They are very obscure, and numerous commentaries have been written upon them. The most celebrated is that of Sankar Achārya. Another Commentary by Rāmānuja explains them differently.

The first aphorism states the object of the whole system in one word, viz., *Brahma-jyñāsā*, "The desire of knowing Brahma." In the second aphorism this Brahma is defined to mean "that from which the production of this universe results."

The *Vedānta Sūtra*, of much later date than the Sārīraka Sūtras, is a good compendium of Vedāntic principles. There is a translation of it, with some valuable notes, by Colonel Jacob.

A Vedāntist's creed is comprised in the well-known formula of three words from the Chhāndogya Upanishad (*ekam evādvitīyam*, One only without a Second). This does not mean that there is no second God, but that there is no second anything. Rāmānand Roy and Keshab Chunder Sen understood it to mean monotheism, but it is pantheism.

The following are other statements: "Brahma exists truly, the world falsely, the soul is only Brahma and no other."* "All this universe indeed is Brahma, from him does it proceed, into him is it dissolved, in him it breathes. So let every one adore him calmly."

Nothing really exists but the one impersonal spirit, called Atma, or Brahma (Purusha). Hence the doctrine of the Vedānta is called *Advaita*, non-dualism. The Sāṅkhya has two—*Prakriti* and *Purusha*, and is therefore called *Dvaita*, dualism.

This eternal impersonal spirit is itself Existence, Knowledge, Joy (*sat, cit, ananda*). But this existence is without consciousness; a kind of dreamless sleep, the joy is only freedom from the miseries of transmigration. This pure Being is almost identical with pure Nothing.

According to Vedāntism, there are three kinds of existence. 1. True existence (*pāramārthika*). Of this Brahma is the sole representative. 2. Practical (*vyavahārika*). This includes Isvara, souls, heaven, hell, the world. Such objects are to be dealt with practically as if they were really what they appear to be. A man is practically a man; a beast, a beast. 3. Apparent existence

* *Brahma satyam Jagan mithya jiva Brahmaiva naapara.*

(*prátibhāsika*). Among this class are things seen in dreams, a bright shell mistaken for silver, &c.

The Supreme Spirit is represented as ignoring himself by a sort of self-imposed ignorance, in order to draw out from himself, for his own amusement, the separate individual souls and various appearances, which, although really parts of his own essence, constitute the apparent phenomena of the universe. Hence the external world, individual souls, and even Isvara, the personal God, are all described as created by a power which the Vedāntist is obliged for want of a better solution of his difficulty to call *Avidyā*, generally translated 'Ignorance,' but perhaps better rendered by 'False Knowledge,' or 'False Notion.'

Avidyā is possessed of two powers—*avarana*, envelopment (or concealing), which hides from the soul its identity with God, and *vikshepa*, projection, which causes the appearance of an external world.

Avidyā is held to have an eternal existence equally with *Brahma*. It is the same as *Māyā*, illusion.

By reason of *Avidyā*, then, the *Jīvātman*, or living soul of every individual, mistakes the world as well as its own body and mind for realities, just as a rope in a dark night might be mistaken for a snake. The moment the personal soul is set free from this self-imposed ignorance by a proper understanding of the truth through the Vedānta philosophy, all the illusion vanishes, and the identity of the *Jīvātman* and of the whole phenomenal universe with the *Paramātman*, or Supreme Soul, is re-established. The "great sentence" is *Tat tvam asi*, "That (*Brahma*) art Thou," or *Aham Brahma* "I am God." A man persuaded of this obtains *mukti*, or liberation.

The following illustration is used. The world is just like a dream. We fall asleep; we imagine things to be about us which are only the creations of the brain, but which have for us all the value of realities. We wake up, and find that they are all a delusion. So shall we one day wake up and find that all the external universe has been but the play of our spirit.*

It is believed by many good authorities that there are two schools of Vedāntists—an earlier and later. Colonel Jacob says, "The writers of the Upanishads, *i.e.*, the Vedāntists of the old school, were undoubtedly *paranirvāḍins*, or believers in the reality of the world of perception; and, with them, *Brahma* was not its substitute or illusory-material cause, but the material from which it was evolved or developed." The *Munduka Upanishads* says, "As a spider throws out and retracts (its web), as herbs spring up in the ground, and as hair is produced on the living person, so is the universe derived from the undecaying One." Professor

* Dr. Robson, *Modern Hinduism*.

Cowell says: "There can hardly be a question as to the fact that the original Vedānta of the earlier *Upanishads* and of the *Sūtras* did not recognise the doctrine of *Māyā*. The earliest school seems to have held Brahma to be the material cause of the world in a grosser sense."^{*}

The idea of *Māyā* was not fully developed till after the time of Buddha, about the sixth century, B.C. Those who held it were called *Māyāvādins*, or Illusionists. Vedāntism, in its maturity, is found in the *Vedānta Sāra* and in a still later work, called *Vedānta Paribhāṣā*. Both are comparatively modern.

Max Muller's Summary of Vedantism.—In his *Six Systems of Indian Philosophy* he says:

"If we ask for the fundamental doctrines of the Vedānta, the Hindus themselves have helped us, and give in a few words what they themselves consider as the quintessence of that system of thought.

"In one half verse I shall tell you what has been taught in thousands of volumes. Brahma is true, the world is false, the soul is Brahma and nothing else."

"And again —

"There is nothing worth gaining, there is nothing worth enjoying, there is nothing worth knowing but Brahma alone, for he who knows Brahma, is Brahma."

"We have another and still shorter abstract of the Vedānta in the famous words addressed by Uddālaka Aruni to his son Svetaketu (*Chhând Up. VI. 8*) namely 'Tat tvam asi,' 'Thou art that.'"

LEADING VEDANTIC DOCTRINES EXAMINED.

1 THE NIRGUṆA BRAHMA.

The Nirguna Brahma is the highest Vedāntic conception of God. There is what is called the Saguna Brahma, but his position is inferior. The former is unbound, the latter bound by the Gunas.

Ideas of God vary with the Civilization and Condition of a People.—"Show me your gods," said an old Greek writer, "and I will show you your men." Long ago Aristotle remarked: "Men create the gods after their own image, not only with regard to their form, but also with regard to their manner of life." Cicero said of his countrymen and the Greeks, "Instead of the transfer to man of that which is Divine, they transferred human sins to their gods and experienced again the necessary action."

Savages, in all parts of the world, worship demons or evil spirits. As among the savages themselves there is no regular

^{*} Quoted by Col. Jacob, p. 8. † *Six Systems of Indian Philosophy*, pp. 168, 169.

government, it is supposed to be the same with the demons. As nations advance in civilization, some of their gods are considered higher than others. The ideal of a god is one of their kings, but endowed with superhuman powers. As despotic kings are above all law, so the gods are not bound by the ordinary rules of morality. Higher ideas of morality are a later development.

The history of India affords illustrations of the above changes.

The aborigines, like their descendants, were demon worshippers. The Aryans, in their original home, worshipped Dyaus Pitar, the Heaven Father. The fertility of the soil does not depend upon the *sky that shines*, but on the *sky that rains*. Hence Indra, 'the rainer,' became the chief of the Aryan gods. He was also supposed to assist the Aryans in their contests with the aborigines.

While the Aryans were engaged in a fierce struggle with the aborigines, Indra was worshipped as the martial god who fought their battles. When the aborigines were reduced to subjection and the Aryans were settled in India, Mr. R. C. Dutt says, "Pauranik Indra is a gorgeous king of a luxurious and somewhat voluptuous court, where dance and music occupy most of his time."*

The popular Hindu idea of a god is a typical Raja. Indra has his Apsarases, or dancing-girls, and Gandharvas, singers and musicians like an earthly king.

The Nirguna Brahma.†—While the common people had then Puranic gods, a very different conception arose among the Hindu philosophers, who also imagined a god after their own heart. As already described, a pessimistic view was taken of life. In a hot climate labour was a burden; undisturbed repose seemed the highest bliss. How to get rid of the curse of existence was the great object. This was sought to be attained by retirement to the forest and Yoga exercises.

Their deity was supposed to possess their ideal of happiness—dreamless sleep—and their great aim was to secure it by union with him.

Disparity between Hindu and European Ideas of the Soul.—Crozier says:

"When we Europeans, speak of soul and when the Hindus speak of it, we mean two quite different and indeed opposite things. With us soul is a principle of self-conscious intelligence and will; with the Hindus it is a mere vague diffused essence pervading Nature, the distinctive quality of which is that it is without thought, emotion, will, self-

* *Ancient India*, Vol. III. p. 278.

† By Brahma (neuter) is meant the Nirguna Brahma; by Brahman (masculine) the Saguna Brahma.

consciousness, or, indeed, any other quality whatever except that of extension and life.”*

According to Hindu philosophy, the same soul may, in different births, be connected with a human being, a beast, fish, insect or even attached to a vegetable or mineral, all the time remaining unconscious. The European idea is that the soul is the great animating and directing principle, the internal ruler, though, alas, it often yields to the bodily appetites

ATTRIBUTES OF THE NIRGUNA BRAHMA.

Contradictions of the Upanishads.—Deussen says :—

“ Taking the Upanishads, as Sankara does, for revealed truth with absolute authority, it was no easy task to build out of their materials a consistent philosophical system, for the Upanishads are full of the hardest contradictions. So in many passages the nature of Brahma is painted out in various and luxuriant colours, and again we read, that the nature of Brahma is quite unattainable to human words, to human understanding ;—so we meet sometimes longer reports explaining how the world has been created by Brahma and again we are told that there is no world besides Brahma, and all variety of things is mere error and illusion—so we have fanciful descriptions of the Samsāra, the way of the wandering soul up to heaven and back to the earth, and again read that there is no Samsāra, no variety of souls at all, but only one Atman, who is fully and totally residing in every being.”†

The following remarks refer only to the Vedānta of Sankara. Rāmānuja held very different views on several points, but his system is the *Visishta Advaita*, “ qualified nonduality,” which is not here considered.

The Bhagavad Gītā seeks to harmonize the doctrines of the Yoga, the Sāṅkhya, and the Vedānta. Its system is considered in *The Religious and Moral Teaching of the Bhagavad Gītā Examined*. (Price 2 As)

Dreamless Sleep the condition of the Nirguna Brahma.—

Ballantyne, an eminent oriental scholar who lived many years at Benares, says :

“ A person wide awake in the full possession of all his faculties is considered as being furthest removed from Brahma, being enveloped in the densest investment of *Avidyā*. This is said to be the first quarter. During dreamy sleep, he is considered to have shuffled off the outermost coil, and so far resembles Brahma. This is called the second quarter. Dreamless sleep is the third quarter. The *ātman* is then supposed to be united with Brahma. For the time being the *ātman* is now

* *History of Intellectual Development*, &c p 86.

† *Philosophy of the Vedānta*, Bombay Address, pp. 4, 5.

'pre-eminent in being as no longer exposed to the varied miseries that arise from the fictitious semblances of duality.' On awaking it returns to the first quarter."

The Vedānta-Sūtras thus explain what takes place in a swoon :

"In him who is senseless (in a swoon, &c) there is half-union, on account of this remaining (as the only possible hypothesis)."

Sankara, after a long commentary, comes to the conclusion "Therefore those who know Brahman declare a swoon and the like to be a half-union."

Sat, Chit, Ananda.—These three attributes are applied to Brahman. The sense in which they are used requires to be understood

Sat denotes only *pure existence* as opposed to *non-existence*
Chit.—Intelligence, Gough thus explains the term :

"If we are to use the language of European philosophy, we must pronounce the Brahman of the Upanishads to be *unconscious*, for consciousness begins where duality begins

"Brahma is not intelligence in our sense of the word. The Indian philosophers everywhere affirm that Brahman is knowledge, not that Brahman *has* knowledge, that this knowledge is without an object known, and that omniscience is predicable of Brahman only by a metaphor. If we were to misinterpret such knowledge by the word 'consciousness,' we should still have to say that Brahman is conscious, not that Brahman *has* consciousness or is a conscious spirit. Brahman is the pure light of characterless knowledge."

"Intelligence or thought," says Thibaut, "is not to be predicated of Brahman as its attribute, but constitutes its substance. Brahman is not a thinking being, but thought itself."

Nehemiah Goreh says, "The so-called knowledge of Brahman is *nirvishaya*, objectless, that is, it is not a knowledge of anything, and is therefore no knowledge at all."

"In Brahman there is no consciousness such as is denoted by 'I,' 'thou,' and 'it.' It apprehends no person or thing nor is apprehended by any." "If Brahman were conscious, there would be objects of consciousness, which would involve dualism; for 'wherever there is consciousness there is relation, and wherever there is relation there is dualism.'"

Nehemiah Goreh says :

"The Vedāntists do not hold that the pure spirit, Brahman, really cognizes objects; that is to say, they do not allege that the pure spirit, cognizes objects in this manner 'This is a jar,' 'This is a web,' &c. For if they allowed this sort of cognition to him, they would have to allow to him will, activity, happiness, misery, and so forth; and as a

consequence, he would be a doer of good and of evil works, an heir of Elysium or of Hell, and a partaker of three-fold pain."

Ananda.—Gough describes it as "Bliss without self-gratulation, bliss in which there is nothing that rejoices and nothing rejoiced at; the unspeakable blessedness of exemption from vicissitude and misery."†

"Bliss," says Deussen, "is only a negative quality, and is regarded simply as absence of pain which alone befits Brahma, for, what is different from Him is full of pain."

Col. Jacob says.

"This has been characterised as 'a bliss without the fruition of happiness,' and rightly so. For absorption into Brahma is described as a permanent state, 'resembling precisely that of deep sleep,'—'a condition of insensibility,'—in which the emancipated spirit is without a body, mind, or cognition. Where is there any room in such a state for joy? 'But what, in that case,' says the author of the *Sankhya-pravachana-bhāṣya*, 'becomes of the scripture which lays down that the soul is happiness?' The answer is, Because of there being cessation of misery, only in a loose acceptation does the term happiness denote soul. To move ambition in the dull or ignorant, the emancipated state, which really is *stoppage of misery*, Soul itself, is lauded to them by the Vedas as happiness. Brahma, then, as joy, is wholly a product of the imagination."§

Besides *Sat*, *Chit*, *Ananda*, two other attributes of Brahma may be noticed.

Indivisibility.—The common idea is that individual souls are parts of Brahma and that to him they return.

The Mundaka Upanishad, II. 1, says

"This is the truth. As its kindred sparks fly out in thousands from a blazing fire, so the various living souls proceed out of that imperishable principle, and return into it again."

On the other hand Deussen maintains that "the soul of each one of us is not a part, an emanation of Brahma, but fully and wholly the eternal, indivisible Brahman itself." His reasoning is as follows:

"(1) The soul cannot be different from Brahman, because besides Brahman there is no being, (2) it cannot be regarded as a transformation of Brahman because Brahman is unchangeable, (3) and still less is it a part of Brahman because Brahman has no parts. Nothing remains than but to conclude that the soul is identical with Brahman, that each one of us is the all-unchangeable Brahman, without parts and comprehending in itself all being."†

* *Rational Refutation*, &c. p. 154.

† *Short Account*, &c. p. 5.

‡ *Philosophy of the Upanishads*, pp. 36, 37.
§ *Hindu Pantheism*, pp. 5, 6.

If this is correct, the number of Brahmas must be far beyond computation! The meanest insect is identical with Brahma. Sankara explains that the apparent division of Brahma is only a mere fiction of Ignorance. Individual souls are only like the reflections of the sun seen in pots of water; they have no real existence.

Unchangeableness.—This is implied in the epithets *nirvikāra*, *kūṭastha*. The Rev. Lal Behari Day has the following remarks on this point.

“The Vedantic writings assert that Brahma exists in two states, *Saguna* and *Nirguna*, that it is, *with* qualities, and *without* qualities. At the termination of every kalpa he remains somnolescent on a fig leaf, floating on the illimitable ocean. When he wishes to create, he becomes possessed of three qualities,—*sattva*, *rajas*, *tamas*, that is, *reality*, *passion* and *darkness*. The qualityless state is therefore Brahma's natural state.

Vedāntists hold that this opinion is wrong. Sankara says on the *Vedānta Sūtras*

“A number of scriptural passages by denying all modifications of Brahma teach it to be absolutely changeless, (*Kūṭastha*) . . . To the one Brahman the two qualities of being subject to modification and of being free from it cannot both be ascribed. But if you say, ‘Why should they not be both predicated of Brahma (the former during the time of the subsistence of the world, the latter during the period of re-absorption) just as rest and motion may be predicated (of one body at different times)?’ We remark that the qualification ‘absolutely changeless’ (*Kūṭastha*) precludes this. For the changeless Brahma cannot be the substratum of varying attributes.

MORAL AND RELIGIOUS OBJECTIONS TO THE VEDANTIC BRAHMA.

1 Utter Selfishness is the highest Vedantic Ideal.—Crozier, in his *History of Intellectual Development*, has the following remarks on this point

“Hinduism represents the extreme of Individualism. The one object of its votaries is to save their own souls, not by working for the welfare of others, but by attending solely to their own salvation, not by following through love the footsteps of a high personal exemplar wherever they may lead, but by practising a low and selfish asceticism, and by keeping a profit and loss account of merit and demerit. It has no regard therefore for the welfare of the family, let alone for that of the State, or the world at large; and to this disregard, the doctrine of re-incarnations, which means the incarnation in their children, not of their own souls, but of the souls of other men, still further lends itself.

“Indeed neither Hinduism nor Buddhism, being based, the one on the doctrine of Soul as the Supreme Cause of things and the other on



its mere denial, can find support in their systems for any doctrine of love among men; for that sentiment can only get inspiration from an intelligent loving First Cause, and not from a mere blind Vital Principle or Soul." pp. 116, 117.

The *prayojana*, or end, set forth in the Vedānta is *liberation*, freedom from the miseries of *samsāra*, the attainment of a state of dreamless sleep. The last stage prescribed by Hinduism is to retire to the desert. The hermit is to care only for himself. He is not to give the young the benefit of his experience, he is not to feed the hungry, instruct the ignorant, visit the sick, comfort the sorrowing, extend a helping hand to those struggling in the ocean of life; he is to care only for himself. It must be confessed that in this he is simply imitating Brahma, in whom the doctrine reaches its full development.

The rise of Hindu Pessimism has been described (p. 5). Labour was a burden in a hot climate, and undisturbed repose seemed the highest bliss. This feeling was intensified by the wars that prevailed, but chiefly by the belief in transmigration. The Jews of old were thus addressed by God, "Thou thoughtest that I was altogether such an one as thyself." The Hindus imagined a Brahma after their own heart. He may be compared to a Hindu Raja, who spends his life in sloth within his palace, heedless of what is going on throughout his dominions, and leaving everything to his ministers.

"Unencumbered by the cares of empire," says Dr. Duff, "or the functions of a superintending providence, he effectuates no good, inflicts no evil, suffers no pain. He exists in a state of undisturbed repose—a sleep so deep as never to be disturbed by a dream—even without any consciousness of his own existence."

The more a man resembles Brahma, the more selfish and useless he becomes.

2. Vedantism discourages Civilization and Progress.—Crozier may again be quoted.

"The object of Hinduism being to attain to bliss by the direct suppression of all forms of desire, all the great work of secular life which springs from the stimulus of one or other form of desire—of wealth, of power, of fame, of applause—is directly repressed, and life itself, with nothing on which to exercise itself, must become a weariness, and re-birth therefore a misery and sorrow. It is obvious, then, that Civilization, which is the record of the achievements of man when pushed on by the desire to satisfy his wants,—his want of what is good to eat, good to wear, good to ease the friction of life and of society, good for peace of mind, good for the satisfaction of the eye and heart, and the like,—it is obvious that Civilization to men who can live on a little rice, and with whom the satisfaction of these desires could only serve to lay up a store of future demerit, must be an anomaly; and, since for the same reasons, science, in the modern sense of the term,

and in its application to the arts of life, has made no advance; must remain stagnant and unprogressive.' "•

The Vedāntists considered existence a curse, and their great object was to get rid of re-births. Everything else was unimportant in comparison. Besides, all was Māyā. It is not surprising therefore that no interest was taken in the progress of Civilization. Hence India does not possess a single historical work, properly so called.

The Twentieth Century demands that India, instead of sitting with her eye fixed on the tip of her nose, reducing herself to a state of semi-idiotcy, should be wide awake straining every nerve to benefit her numerous children.

The Vedantic Conception of Brahma stifles Religion.—Love, prayer, worship are three great elements of religion. Vedāntism destroys them all.

Miss Waldo, a lecturer on Vedāntism in America, admits that "Brahman is too much of an abstraction to be thought of—far more to be loved" "The Vedāntic God," says *The Hindu*, "is a cold dreary philosophic conception which the Hindu masses have never cared for, which the vast majority of mankind can never be brought to reverence, and which is quite incapable of influencing them in the formation of life and character."†

Thibaut says.

"The only religious books of wide-spread influence are such as the Rāmāyan of Tulsidās, which lay no stress on the distinction between an absolute Brahman inaccessible to all human wants and sympathies, and a shadowy Lord whose very conception depends on the illusory principle of Māyā, but love to dwell on the delights of devotion to one all-wise and merciful Ruler, who is able and willing to lend a gracious ear to the supplication of the worshipper."

Love to God is the very essence of religion. This feeling cannot exist towards a being like Brahma.

"If Vedāntism be true," says the Rev T. F. Slater, "then prayer—the universal religion, where men of every creed can meet at the feet of a heavenly Father—and worship—the noblest activities of the soul must be abandoned." Tennyson well says.

"For what are men better than sheep or goats
That nourish a blind life within the brain,
If, knowing God, they lift not hands of prayer
Both for themselves and those who call them friend?"

* *History of Intellectual Development*, p. 117.

† *Brahmavādin*. Vol. II p. 141

‡ Introduction to *Vedānta-Sūtras*, p. cxxviii.

It is ~~useless~~ to address in prayer or worship a God unconscious even of its own existence. The same truths are thus set forth by Professor Flint :

"Religion supposes faith, love, hope, but pantheism when it denies the personality of God refuses to these affections an appropriate object. It withholds from the view of the spirit what can alone satisfy its best and deepest feelings. The less of determinate personal character God is regarded as having, the less is it possible to love or trust Him.

"The mystical piety of India, when strictly pantheistic, knows nothing of the gratitude for Divine mercy and the trust in Divine righteousness which characterise evangelical piety. Instead of love and communion in love, it can only commend to us the contemplation of an object which is incomprehensible, devoid of all affections, and indifferent to all actions. When feelings like love, gratitude, and trust are expressed in the hymns and prayers of Hindu worship, it is in consequence of a virtual denial of the principles of pantheism, it is because the mind has consented to regard as real what it had previously pronounced illusory, and to personify what it had declared to be impersonal. Hinduism holds it to be a fundamental truth that the absolute Being can have no personal attributes, and yet it has not only to allow but to encourage its adherents to invest that Being with these attributes, in order that by thus temporarily deluding themselves they may evoke in their hearts at least a feeble and transient glow of devotion. It has even been forced, by its inability to elicit and sustain a religious life by what is strictly pantheistic in its doctrine, to crave the help of polytheism, and to treat the foulest orgies and cruellest rites of idolatry as acts of reasonable worship paid indirectly to the sole and supreme Being. It finds polytheism to be the indispensable supplement of its pantheism. It is the personal gods of Hindu polytheism, and not the impersonal principle of Hindu pantheism, that the Hindu people worship. No people can worship what they believe to be entirely impersonal. Even in the so-called religions of nature the deified natural powers are always personified. It is only as persons that they are offered prayers and sacrifices."

The pernicious effects of pantheism on Indian polytheism are thus shown by Professor Flint

"I have said that the ability of pantheism to ally itself with polytheism accounts for its prevalence in certain lands, but I must add that although a power, this ability is not a merit. It is a power for evil—power which sustains superstition, corrupts the system which possesses it, deludes and degrades the human mind and heart, and arrests social progress. Educated Hindus are often found to represent it as an excellence of Brahmanism, that it not only tolerates but embraces and incorporates the lower phases of religion. They contend that it thereby elevates and purifies polytheism, and helps the mind of men to pass from the lowest stage of religious development gradually up to the highest. The opinion may seem plausible, but neither reason nor experience confirms it. Pantheism can give support to polytheism and

receive support from it, but only at the cost of sacrificing all its claims to be a rational system, and of losing such moral virtue as it possesses. If it look upon the popular deities as mere fictions of the popular mind, its association with polytheism can only mean a conscious alliance with falsehood, the deliberate propagation of lies, a persistent career of hypocrisy . . . India alone is surely sufficient proof that the union of pantheism with polytheism does not correct but stimulate the extravagances of the latter. Pantheism, instead of elevating and purifying Hindu polytheism, has contributed to increase the number, the absurdity, and the foulness of its superstitions."

The Vedānta, says Professor Flint

"Would divest God of character—it denies to Him self-consciousness, fatherly love, providential care, redeeming mercy—under pretence of exalting Him above all categories of thought and existence, it reduces Him to the level of dead things, of necessary processes, of abstract ideas, or even to the still lower level of the unknowable and non-existent; and it thereby leaves no room for that union with God in rational, pure, and holy love, which is the only basis, the grand distinction, the power, and the glory of true religion."

Vedāntists admit that the common people cannot form any idea of the Nirguna Brahma. They are therefore recommended to worship the Purānic deities. As already quoted, Flint thus characterise this recommendation.

"If it look upon the popular deities as mere fictions of the popular mind, its association with polytheism can only mean a conscious alliance with falsehood, the deliberate propagation of lies, a persistent career of hypocrisy."

CONCLUSIONS.

The Puranic Brahma an imaginary Being.—He is represented with four heads, the origin of which is thus explained:

Beholding his daughter Satarūpā, he lusted after her. As she tried to escape, four heads were formed to look at her. When she sprang into the sky, a fifth head was immediately formed. Siva is said to have afterwards cut off the fifth head with the nail of his left hand.

No intelligent man in the Twentieth Century can accept such a story. It is a fiction, invented in a dark age of the world. Such a being as the four headed Brahma does not exist and never existed.

The Nirguna Brahma is a similar fiction, and has no existence.—The Puranic Brahmā was invented for men who enjoyed life and wished a continuance of its blessing both in this world and the next. The Nirguna Brahma, on the contrary, was the

* *Anti-Theistic Theories*, pp. 386-391 abridged.

invention of Hindu pessimists, who regarded life as a curse, and freedom from rebirths the greatest blessing. Hence the conception of the Nirguna Brahma was the opposite of the Puranic Brahmá.

The Hindu philosophers who, two thousand years ago, sought by yoga exercises to obtain union with Brahma, were purely selfish. They thought nothing of their duty to their fellow-men. There was no desire to become wiser and more useful; no aspirations for deliverance from the burden of sin, and for a purer and higher character; but only a yearning for release from the miseries of life. Their highest ideal of God was one utterly selfish like themselves, existing in a state of dreamless sleep. Western ideas of God in the Twentieth Century differ widely from those of Vedántism. To conceive of Him as existing eternally in a state of dreamless sleep is felt to be a most degrading conception. "As is the god, so is the worshipper." The believer in a Nirguna Brahma would tend to become as selfish and as useless as his god. Even for a man to act like the Nirguna Brahma would now be condemned by enlightened public opinion; much more would it be considered degrading for the Supreme Deity to act in such a way. The conclusion is that there is no such being as the Nirguna Brahma; he is merely the invention of Hindu philosophers who took a pessimistic view of life, and did not realize their duty to their fellow-men.

The Nirguna Brahma is not so gross as supposing the gods to marry and have children, to fight with each other, and to be guilty of vile actions, but it is equally unreal.

Well might the one true God say to a Hindu philosopher, "Thou thoughtest that I was altogether such an one as Thyself."

If there is no such Being as the Nirguna Brahma, the whole system of Vedánta collapses.

THE CHRISTIAN CONCEPTION OF GOD

This differs very widely from that of the Nirguna Brahma.

He is the self-existent, the unchanging God, "the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever." He called the universe into being, and His government extends over all creation. He is never unconscious. He never slumbers nor sleeps. "The Creator of the ends of the earth fainteth not, nor is weary." He knows everything that takes place throughout His vast dominions. Every thought of our heart is known to Him. His ear is ever open to the cry of His children. His character is expressed in the words, "Thou art good and doest good," "God is love." Still, it is not the feeling which looks upon good and evil with

equal eye. "Thou lovest righteousness and hatest wickedness. God's holiness is His crowning attribute."

He is our Father in heaven, watching over us with a Father's eye. Our duty is to love, worship, and obey Him. We are to look upon all men as children of the same great Father, whom we should love as brothers. The Lord Jesus Christ said to His followers: "Be ye perfect even as your Father in heaven is perfect." Though infinitely higher in every respect, Christians should try to imitate Him, as a little mirror seeks to reflect the glorious sun.

Jesus Christ is the Christian pattern, of whom it is said, "He went about doing good."

Under another head further remarks will be offered on the above points

II. "ONE ONLY WITHOUT A SECOND."

This is briefly stated in two celebrated formulas

'Ekam evadvitīyam, "ONE ONLY WITHOUT A SECOND."

Sarvam Khalvidam Brahma, "ALL THIS (UNIVERSE) IS BRAHMA"

As already mentioned, Rammohun Roy and Keshub Chunder Sen interpreted the first to signify that there is only one God; but the real meaning is that nothing exists but God—a very different doctrine. The second formula expresses it clearly. It declares that all that exists is Brahma.

THE FOUNDATION OF ADVAITISM.

In the twilight a rope is mistaken for a serpent.

Mother-of-pearl is mistaken for silver

A thousand suns may be seen in a thousand pots of water.

Conclusion.

The universe, supposed to be real, is only imaginary, like the serpent or mother-of-pearl.

Our souls are only like the reflection of the sun in the pots of water: Brahma is the only real existence.

On this very slender basis the lofty superstructure of Advaitism has been reared.

Grand Defect of Hindu Reasoning.—This is to *accept illustration as argument*. That there may be several roads to the same city is regarded as proving that all religions lead to God. Rama-krishna, the guru of Swami Vivekananda, expressed it thus

"As one may ascend to the top of a house by means of a ladder or a bambóo or a staircase or a rope, so divers are the ways and means to

approach God, and every religion in the world shows one of these ways."

Ramakrishna's argument amounts to this: "As there are several ways of getting to the top of a house, so atheism and polytheism, pantheism and monotheism are all true." Swami Vivekananda, with logic equal to that of his Guru, said at Chicago, "We accept all religions to be true."

One illustration may appear to prove one thing, but another may be adduced leading to an opposite conclusion. It is sometimes said, "As there is only one sun in the sky, so there is only one God." This is a great truth, but the reasoning is no better than the following, "As there are innumerable stars in the sky, so the number of gods is countless."

Kapila justly says: "There is no acceptance of the inconsistent, else we come to the level of children, madmen, and the like."

Advaitism is based on "ILLUSORY ANALOGIES OR DEDUCTIONS FROM FALSE PREMISES."

Before considering at length the formula, "One only without a Second," some account will be given of *Máyá*, invented to explain away the apparent reality of the Universe.

MAYA.

When a man makes one false statement, he is often obliged to invent others for its support. Advaitists, starting with the false assumption that nothing exists but Brahma, are forced to devise another to account for what is so opposite to the evidence of our senses. The result is the figment of *Máyá*.

Meaning of Maya.—The Brahnavádin says that Sáyana invariably interprets *Máyá* in the Veda to mean *prágná* (intelligence.)

The word *Máyá* scarcely occurs in the principal Upanishads. But where it does occur it seems to be used mostly in the old Vedic sense. The only two Upanishads where this word may be taken to be used in a new sense are the *Svetásvatara* and *Maitráyani*.

"The import of *Máyá* as matured by Sankara in his Advaita system is partly an internal growth of the Upanishads and partly due to the *Máyá* theory of the Buddhists against whom Sankara mainly contended."

In the Vedas the reality of the external world is recognised. In the Upanishads generally Brahma is the *material* cause of the world as well as its *efficient* cause. He is compared to a spider, weaving its web out of its own body. The supposed illusory nature of external objects was a later development.

* *Sāṅkhya Aphorisms*, Book I.

† *Brahnavádin*, Vol. I, pp. 295, 296.

Máyá now generally means 'illusion' or 'power of illusion.' Gough says:

"The world, with its apparent duality of subject and object, of external and internal orders, is the figment of *Máyá*, the imagination of illusion. . . . All the stir of daily life, all the feverish pleasures and pains of life, after life, are the phantasmagory of a waking dream. For the soul that wakes to its own nature these things cease to be, and, what is more, have never so much as been."

Maya charges God with Deception — Deussen says:

"The whole world is illusion (*máyá*) which Brahman, as a magician (*máyárin*), draws out of himself, and by which as magician he is in no way affected, or by another turn of the picture Brahman becomes through Ignorance (*avidyá*), as the magician by his magic, indistinctly seen. He is the cause of the world as the magician of his magic, the cause of the withdrawal of the world into his own self, like as the earth draws into itself all living beings."

The whole universe is a gigantic lie, and the Lord is the Supreme Brahman!

To the above Dr. K. Mohun Banerjya replies

"You say the world is a *máyá*, an illusion, and that God is the *magi*, the conjurer who thus deceives you. Is it not grossly revolting to our moral feelings to say that God has deliberately projected a false appearance with a view to beguile rational minds of His own creation?"

"We are all agreed that religious errors are the most serious of all errors, and of all religious errors the greatest must be that which consists in a false notion of Divine Attributes. Is it possible to believe that God would deliberately produce such an error in His creatures?"

Realities.—Mr. Slater well says

"The God who made us, made us *real*, and real we must remain for all eternity. God is real, the world is real, self is real, sin is real, and judgment real enough to make men tremble. There is no *Máyá* but what man cheats himself to imagine. Some day the awful reality of everything will be brought home to us in such force that escape will be impossible. To grasp reality now is the only way to avoid being grasped by it hereafter."

The question of *Máyá* is also discussed under the next head.

* *Philosophy of the Upanishads*, p. 43.

† *Short Account of Vedānta Philosophy*, p. 13, Madras Ed.

‡ *Dialogues*, pp. 398 and 406, 407. § *Studies in the Upanishads*, p. 56.

OBJECTIONS TO ADVAITISM.

The leading doctrine of Vedāntism "ONE ONLY WITHOUT A SECOND" will now be considered.

1. **It is a dogma unsupported by proof—a mere assumption.**—As already mentioned, its only basis is that in the twilight a rope may be mistaken for a serpent, mother-of-pearl for silver.

2. **It is contradicted by the evidence of all our senses under the most favourable circumstances for forming a correct judgment.**—Kānāda has well said that it is only when the senses are unsound or defective, or when some bad habit is contracted that a person may be deceived. Even if one sense is deceived, the other senses disabuse the mind. The rope can easily be found by the touch not to be a serpent. All our senses at noonday, when we are in the enjoyment of perfect health, testify to the real existence of the external world.

Sankara himself, when arguing with Buddhists, admitted the evidence of the senses.

"To all this we reply that external things do exist. It is impossible to judge that external things have no existence, and why? because we are conscious of them. In every act of perception some or other outward thing is presented to the consciousness, be it post or wall, or cloth or jar, or whatever else it may be, and that of which we are conscious cannot but exist. If a man, at the very moment he is conscious of outward things through his senses, tells us that he is not conscious of them, and that they have no existence, why should we listen to him, any more than we should listen to a man who in the moment of eating and enjoying told us that he was not eating and was not enjoying what he ate."

Nehemiah Gorch argues similarly

"I demand of the Vedāntins, How is that you assert falseness of the world, which is certified to us, by senses, &c., to be true?" Since you thus despise those proofs, what credit can be attached to anything that you advance? Proceeding in this way, you unsettle the foundations of everything, whether as regards this world, or as regards the next. And on your own grounds, how can you refute the doctrines of others, or establish your own?

"Perhaps you will urge, that, since the senses, &c. often deceive us, they are totally unreliable. For instance, we are sure, that we see chariots, elephants, and other things, in our dreams, and yet they are proved to be false. I reply, that, if a seeming proof is made out, by a real proof, to be faulty, we reject it. But how can we condemn a proof which cannot be shown to be faulty?" As for the things that we see in dreams, we call them false, because, on awaking, we find them to be so; and their falsity, as being matter of every-day experience, is indubitable.

* Quoted by Gough, *Philosophy of the Upanishads*, pp. 192, 193.

But who has ever found the external objects of nature to be false? Has not every man of all generations borne evidence to their truth?

"If you say, that, to a man in dreamless sleep, the world disappears, and that his experience goes to disapprove the truth of the world, I demur to the conclusion; since, a man's cognition being then suspended, he cannot be brought forward as witness for anything that then had place. It is the belief of the Vedāntins, that, even in dreamless sleep, there subsists a sort of cognition: Let this be granted: still, external things are not proved, thereby, to be false. To form any judgment whatever about them is not competent to this cognition; and therefore, it cannot conclude their falsity. In like manner, a blind man is able to appreciate sound, touch, &c., but not colours; and so he can be no witness of their truth, or of their falseness."

3. **It is refuted by our Natural Convictions.**—"An English philosopher says that while man has the exclusive privilege of forming general theorems, he has also a monopoly of the *privilege of absurdity*; to which no other living creature is subject. *And of men*," he adds, "those are of all most subject to it that profess philosophy." Cicero had the same opinion "There is nothing so absurd," says he, "which has not been held by some philosopher." To none does this apply more than to Hindu philosophers. As Monier Williams remarks, "The more evidently physical and metaphysical speculations are opposed to common sense, the more favour do they find with some Hindu thinkers."† Mr. Slater says

"A system, however logical, condemns itself, when it contradicts any of those natural convictions which are intended, as Dr. Thomas Brown says, to save us from the folly of our own ratiocinations"‡

The Latin for 'I' is *ego*, and *non* means, 'not.' 'We naturally distinguish between the *ego*, and the *non-ego*, the 'I' and the 'not I,' the subject and the object, ourselves and things around us. No one but a learned fool need ask, like Ribhu in the Vishnu Purāṇa (II. 16), "which is *you* and which is *I*?" The doctrine of non-duality is therefore refuted by our natural convictions.

4. **It is contradicted by Reason.**—This is shown in different ways. Flint says

"Vedāntism admits that besides the one real being there are appearances or illusions. But even appearances or illusions are phenomena which require to be explained. And they cannot be explained on the hypothesis of absolute unity. They imply that besides the absolute being there are minds which can be haunted by appearances, which can be deluded into believing that these appearances are realities."§

The universe contains countless objects differing widely from each other—mineral, vegetable, and animal. Among the last

* *Rational Refutation*, pp. 170, 171.

† *Brahmanism and Hinduism*, p. 87.

‡ *Studies in the Upanishads*, pp. 47-50.

§ *Anti-Theistic Theories*, pp. 419, 420.

some are constantly engaged in devouring one another With what reason can it be alleged that only one being exists ?

Lastly, it leads to the blasphemous assertion, Brahmasmi, 'I am Brahma.' This will be noticed at length under another head.

5. **Vedantism cuts at the roots of Morality.**—A writer in *Awakened India* makes an opposite claim :

"The Vedānta philosophy shows that the relation between man and God is far closer and more intimate than that set forth by any other system. It establishes the identity of the human soul with the Supreme Soul, and thus inculcates a higher morality " Sept. 1897

If the human soul and the Supreme Soul are identical, then the latter is responsible for every action of the former As He is the sole Being, every action that is performed is an action of God. The most wicked deeds which men vainly fancying themselves free agents are tempted to perform, are actually perpetrated by God. Flint says

"The worst passions and vilest actions of humanity are states and operations of the One Absolute Being. Man cannot be justly held responsible for what truly belongs to God—for affections or deeds which are necessarily manifestations of the Divine nature " *

According to Vedāntism, "The distinctions of right and wrong are mere appearances which will vanish as soon as the dream state of life is dispelled." The *Brahmavādīn* says

"If we know that there is nothing else but the Atman, that everything else is but a dream, that the world's poverties, its miseries, its wickedness and goodness are mere delusions and hallucinations, then we become Jñāna Yogins " June 5, 1897

"Wickedness and goodness mere delusions and hallucinations !" Prahlāda says to Vishnu, "Thou art knowledge and ignorance, thou art truth and falsehood, thou art poison and nectar." † The eternal distinction between right and wrong is thus blotted out.

According to Swami Vivekananda, Vedāntism says "Our evil is of no more value than our good, and our good of no more value than our evil." ‡

Man feels himself a free agent and responsible for his conduct. Conscience is the highest principle of the human spirit. Vedāntism contradicts its most sacred and certain convictions, and directly tends to deaden and destroy it.

Flint says :

"Right and wrong are absolutely exclusive of each other. There can be no compromise between them, or reconciliation of them. They

* *Anti-Theistic Theories*, p. 395

† *Vishnu Purāna*, I 19,

‡ *Brahmavādīn*, Jan, 19th, 1897.

cannot blend and merge into any common higher result. The one can only be satisfied by the annihilation of the other. All this pantheism is logically necessitated to deny, but in so doing dashes itself against a rock."

It has been shown that the dogma of non-duality, "One only without a second," is

1. A mere Assumption, unsupported by proof.
2. That it is contradicted by the Evidence of all our Senses, under the most favourable circumstances for forming a correct judgment.
3. That it is refuted by our Natural Convictions
4. That it is contradicted by Reason
5. That it cuts at the roots of Morality, making God the author of every crime perpetrated.

For the reasons given, it is evident that the Advaita theory is a mere fiction, invented by a few so-called philosophers. The great bulk of mankind, including the wisest and best that have ever lived, have always held the distinction between the Creator and His creatures. As Tennyson says

"Eternal form shall still divide
The eternal Soul from all beside

III. THE GREAT SENTENCES.

TAT TWAM ASI, 'That thou art'

BRAHMASMI, 'I am Brahma'

SOHAM, 'I am it' is another formula often repeated by sannyāsīs.

The assertions are that Brahma and the Soul are identical, that the soul may say, "I am Brahma."

With regard to the first text, Gough remarks

"In the view of the Indian schoolmen, the greatest of all the texts of the Upanishads is the text, That art thou, in the sixth Lecture of the Chhândogya Upanishad. This is pre-eminently the Mahāvākya, the supreme announcement. It is on the comprehension of this text that spiritual intuition (*samyagdarśana*) or ecstatic vision rises in the purified intelligence of the aspirant to extrication from metempsychosis" (*samsāra*).

"The sense is this the individual soul is one with the universal Soul, and the universal Soul is one with the one and only Self."

* *Anti-Theistic Theories*, p. 403.

† *Banerjea's Dialogues*, p. 378.

The Prabuddha Bhārata says :

Vedānta "is the one philosophy which dares to call man God Himself, not merely the son of God or His servant." Vol. I p. 75.

The Brahmasiddhi (Oct. 12, 1895, p. 30) makes the same claim in terms equally blasphemous.

"Man is not the mere creature of a God ; he is God himself. He has not simply the image impressed upon him of his Creator. He is himself the Creator."

After comparing the attributes of *Tat* and *Twam*, let it be decided whether they are the same

<i>Tat</i> , God.	<i>Twam</i> , Man
The Creator	A Creature.
Eternal	Began to be.
Omnipresent	Confined to a small space
Omniscient	Parviscient
Omnipotent	Parvipotent.
Unchangeable	Subject to change.
Infinitely Holy	Sinful
Infinitely Happy	Subject to misery.

If two beings with attributes so different are the same, so are light and darkness, knowledge and ignorance, virtue and vice
Gaudapūrṇānanda thus contrasts the two

"Thou art verily rified, O thou animal soul, of thy understanding, by this dark theory of Māyā, because like a maniac, thou constantly ravest, 'I am Brahma' Where is thy divinity, thy sovereignty, thy omniscience ? On thou animal soul ! thou art as different from Brahma as is a mustard seed from Mount Meru. Thou art a finite soul, He is infinite. Thou canst occupy but one space at a time, He is always everywhere. Thou art momentarily happy or miserable, He is happy at all times How canst thou say 'I am He' ? Hast thou no shame ?"

Rāmānuja, another celebrated Hindu writer, argues against it similarly

"The word *tat* (It) stands for the ocean of immortality, full of supreme felicity. The word *twam* (thou) stands for a miserable person, distracted through fear of the world The two cannot therefore be one They are substantially different He is to be worshipped by the whole world. Thou art but His slave. How could there be an image or reflection of the infinite and spotless One ? There may be a reflection of a finite substance ; how could there be such a thing of the Infinite ? How canst thou, oh slow of thought ! say 'I am He, who has set up this immense sphere of the universe in its fulness' By the mercy of the most High a little understanding has been committed to thee, it is not for thee, oh perverse one, to say, therefore I am God"

Taking the words in their plain meaning, the climax of Hindu philosophy is a blasphemous falsehood, too horrible almost to mention—for a puny, ignorant, proud, sinful mortal to say “I am God!” Such assertions can be compared only to the ravings of a madman in a lunatic asylum who fancies himself a king. Yet, according to Hindu philosophy, he is the only wise man!

IV. THE ETERNITY OF SOULS.

This dogma is not peculiar to Vedāntism, but is held by all the Six Schools of Philosophy.

It is based on two assumptions—

1. *That God cannot create*
2. *Whatever exists has always existed*

By *creation* Christians understand calling into being what did not exist before. Hindus of all schools deny that this is possible. A carpenter cannot work without materials; in like manner it is supposed that God must have formed all things from eternally existing matter.

“Ye do err, not knowing the power of God,” applies to Hindus as well as those to whom the words were addressed by the Great Teacher. Even the *Brahmavādin* makes the acknowledgment.

“He, in whom all things in the universe live and move and have their being, possesses potentialities inscrutable to human wisdom and capable of infinite and very wonderful manifestations” Aug 29, 1897.

The great Hindu problem is to account for the inequalities of life. The solution given is that they arise from merit and demerit in a former birth. To this it is replied that beings must have existed before there could be merit or demerit. Merit and demerit may be compared to a hen, and the body produced to the egg. A hen could not be produced from its own egg. It is argued “that the first creation in the series of creations must have been one of pure equality, there not having yet arisen any such retributive fatality in consequence of a prior variety of embodiment”

The Vedānta Sūtras thus reply to this

“If it be objected that it (*viz* the Lord’s having regard to merit and demerit) is impossible on account of the non-distinction (of merit and demerit, previous to the first creation), we refute the objection on the ground of (the world) being without a beginning.” II. i. 35.

Sankara thus answers the objection that the world has no beginning :

“ This difficulty is not removed by the consideration that the works of living beings and the resulting dispositions made by the Lord form a chain which has no beginning , for in past time as well as in the present mutual interdependence of the two take place, so that the beginningless series is like an endless chain of blind men leading other blind men.”

Sankara justly says that the difficulty is not removed by a supposed endless chain—however far back we go, there would be the same impossibility of a hen being produced from its own egg—merit and demerit existing before beings who could originate them. According to Hinduism, souls may pass into gods, demons, beasts, birds, reptiles, fishes, insects, into plants, and even into inanimate objects. Who can estimate the number of these eternal *sayambhu* essences ! Is it not perfectly unphilosophical, because absolutely unnecessary and egregiously extravagant, to assume such an indefinite number of eternal essences, when one Supreme Essence is sufficient to account for all things, visible or invisible, material or spiritual ?”

Vedantism denies the Fatherhood of God.—If a man denied the existence of his earthly parents, it would be a great sin , but it is a much greater sin to deny that God is our Maker and Heavenly Father.

If our souls are eternal and self-existent, we are a sort of miniature gods. Our relation to God is changed. It is only that of king and subjects. His right over us is only that of might. It is only because He is mightier than we and because He possesses power to benefit and to harm us that we should be anxious to pay homage to Him. There is not the love which a child should cherish towards a father. True religion is thus destroyed.

Creation ascribed to “ mere sport ”—The Vedānta-Sūtra II., I, 33, is as follows.

“ But (Brahman’s creative activity) is mere sport such as we see in ordinary life.”

On the above Sankara makes the following comment

“ We see in every-day life that certain doings of princes or other men of high position who have no unfulfilled desires left have no reference to any extraneous purpose, but proceed from mere sportfulness as, for instance, their recreations in places of amusement . . . Analogously, the activity of the Lord also may be supposed to be mere sport, proceeding from his own nature, without reference to any purpose ”

The Hindu gods are sometimes said to commit sin “ in sport or as a divine amusement.” With this motive the Small-Fox

goddess is said to scatter the seeds of the disease. - What degrading conceptions do all these show of the Divine Being!

The Need of a Great First Cause.—The truth of the Sanskrit proverb *advastuno vastusiddhi*, and the Latin proverb *ex nihilo, nihil fit*, 'nothing can be produced out of nothing,' is admitted. If ever there had been no existence, there would be no existence still. Nothing cannot make something. Hence, *something has always existed*. Herbert Spencer says,

"The existence of a first cause of the universe is a necessity of thought. . . Amid the mysteries which become more mysterious the more they are thought about, there will remain the one absolute certainty that we are ever in the presence of an Infinite, Eternal Energy from which all things proceed."

That which is unconscious and unintelligent cannot will, and cannot act intelligently. Unconscious and unintelligent particles of matter could never arrange themselves into a universe so wonderful as the present. That which has not life cannot give life; that which cannot think cannot form beings with reason. The eternal self-existent First Cause must, therefore, be conscious and intelligent. The acts of a mind prove the existence of a mind; and a mind proves a person.

There is therefore a Self-existent, Eternal, Personal Being, whom wise men reverence and call God.

When it is said that God made all things, it is sometimes asked, 'Who made God?' This is thought to be a proof that there is no Creator. The folly of such an argument can easily be shown by taking a similar case. A person says that a watch must have been made by some wise man. An objector asks, 'Who made the man?' Therefore the watch had no maker!

Buddhists consider that beings are formed by merit and demerit. This does not explain the origin of things. As already explained, creatures must have existed and acted before there could be merit and demerit.

The wisest and best men in all ages have acknowledged the existence of a great Creator, possessed of infinite power and wisdom.

According to Vedāntism, Brahma exists in a state of dreamless sleep; hence the work of creation is due to *avidyā*. *Avidyā* means 'non-knowledge.' It may well be asked how can that which is 'non-knowledge' form a world so wonderfully constructed as ours? Sankara himself says.

"As we have shown in our examination of the Sāṅkhya system, a non-intelligent thing which is not directed by an intelligent principle cannot of itself either act or be the cause of action."

Acknowledgment of the Fatherhood of God.—It is a pleasing sign of progress that the Fatherhood of God is beginning to be admitted by educated Hindus. Some even claim that this doctrine is taught in their own sacred books. In the Sāstras, Father may be one of the many names given to God, but *not as the source of our existence*. What particularly distinguishes an earthly father is, that, under God, he is the author of the child's existence. This can be said of no other person. In that sense neither Brahma nor any Hindu deity can be called father. According to Vedāntism and all other systems of Hindu philosophy, souls are as eternal as Brahma himself. The Bible, on the other hand, says, that God is our Father by creation. "Have we not all one Father? Hath not one God created us?" Christianity teaches us to address God as our "Father in heaven." It is true that we have been disobedient, rebellious children, but we are earnestly invited to return, asking forgiveness.

The ancestors of Europeans and Aryan Hindus once worshipped the same God under the same name, *Dyaush-Pitar*, Heaven-Father. Max Müller beautifully says

"Thousands of years have passed away since the Aryan nations separated to travel to the North and the South, the West and the East; they have each formed their languages, they have each founded empires and philosophies, they have each built temples and razed them to the ground; they have all grown older, and it may be wiser and better, but when they search for a name for that which is most exalted and yet most dear to every one of us, when they wish to express both awe and love, the infinite and the finite, they can but do what their old fathers did when gazing up to the eternal sky, and feeling the presence of a Being as far as far and as near as near can be, they can but combine the self-same words and utter once more the primeval Aryan prayer, Heaven-Father, in that form which will endure for ever, 'Our Father, which art in heaven' "

The Christian doctrine is briefly as follows —

God alone is self-existent, without beginning or end. He is omnipotent, able to call beings or things into existence out of nothing. He gave us a body and a soul. The soul never existed before our present birth. The body is mortal, the soul returns to God who gave it. At the great day of judgment, all must appear before God, to answer for the deeds done in the body, whether good or evil.

As already mentioned, it is unphilosophic to maintain that there are innumerable self-existent beings, when One possessed of almighty power is sufficient. The explanation given by Christianity is beautifully simple, and meets all the requirements of the case.

Vedantism denies the Brotherhood of Man.—This is strongly denied by the system of caste, but it is so likewise by the Vedānta. Brothers are children of the same father. As already shown,

according to the Vedānta, we have no father, and therefore we are not brothers.

On the other hand, the Brotherhood of Man is taught by Christianity. We are all children of the same great Father in heaven, and should love as brethren.

V. TRANSMIGRATION.

An attempt is often made to support one error by another. If souls are eternal, what have they been doing during the past countless ages? To explain this, the doctrine of Transmigration was invented.

TRANSMIGRATION* denotes the passage of the soul after death into another body.

The universe is, in Sanskrit, sometimes called *samsāra*, denoting motion. It is supposed to consist of innumerable souls and innumerable bodies. The bodies are of all kinds, mineral, vegetable, animal, human, divine, demoniac. Souls are supposed to be constantly leaving their bodies, and seeking other bodies some rising, some falling, others stationary according to their *Karma*.

Transmigration is an attempt to account for the state of the world. It is supposed to be necessary to explain the unequal distribution of happiness and misery which exists. If an infant agonize, it is supposed to arise from a great sin committed in a former birth. On the other hand, if a wicked man prospers, it is thought to be plainly the reward of meritorious actions in a previous state of existence.

Only in this way, it is imagined, can God be saved from the charge of injustice.

Origin of the Doctrine.—Transmigration is not found in the Vedas, except a trace of it in one of the latest hymns.

In them a cheerful view is taken of life, and after death a happy reunion with relations is expected in the world of the *Pitris*. The belief arose with Hindu pessimism in the time of the Upanishads, and was intensified by Buddha.

A few quotations may first be given on the subject. The Katha Upanishad says.—

“7. Some enter the womb (again after death) for assuming a body; others go inside a trunk, according to their works, according to their knowledge” V. Valli.

The Chhândogya Upanishad says:—

“7. Thereof he, whose conduct is good, quickly attains to some good existence, such as that of a Brāhmana, a Kshatriya or a Vaisya.

* *Trans.*, beyond, *negro*, to pass.

Next, he who is viciously disposed, soon assumes the form of some inferior creature; such as that of a dog, a hog, or a Chandála." V. 10.

In the Bhagavad Gítá Krishna says to Arjuna.—

"As a man, having cast off his old garments taketh others that are new, so the embodied (soul) casting off old bodies, entereth others that are new." II. 22.

The doctrine pervades the whole of the later sacred books of the Hindus, and is universally received "It is," says Dr. Hooper, "as if every Hindu imbibed it from his mother With the exception of the few whose thoughts have been changed by Western education, no Hindu seems able to conceive a condition of the universe, which does not involve the truth of this doctrine."

It is admitted that there are certain truths underlying this strange belief. It witnesses to the continued existence of the soul in a future life. It also bears testimony to the great truth that sin is inevitably followed by suffering, although it may be long delayed.

Christianity also teaches "Whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap" (Galatians, VI 17) . but it differs from the Hindu doctrine in teaching that we shall reap only what we sow in the *present* life.

There is no doubt that the unequal distribution of happiness in this world is a problem which has exercised the minds of thinking men from the dawn of philosophy On investigation, however, it will be seen that the doctrine of transmigration is attended with insuperable difficulties.

OBJECTIONS TO THE DOCTRINE

1. **It is contrary to our Experience.**—By transmigration is meant that the same soul in the course of time takes up its residence in different bodies. Only *the body is changed, the soul is the same soul*. The soul therefore, being the same, possesses the same faculties in its present and in its former births A traveller who journeys through the earth from city to city carries with him the remembrance of his native place, the persons that he met, and other events that occurred. The soul ought to carry with it a complete remembrance of its past history; but no man has experienced anything of the kind. Any claims to its possession are just as false as those with regard to magical powers.

It is objected that we cannot recall the events of our former births, because we are under the power of *māyá*, or illusion. How is it that *māyá* extends only to alleged former births and not to the present? The fact is that one false theory is attempted to be supported by another. We cannot recollect events in

alleged former births, because they had no existence. We remember the present life, *mâyâ* notwithstanding, because we have really existed.

To explain why the soul does not remember and can pass into an animal, vegetable or mineral, it is reduced to a nonentity. During all its countless transmigrations it remains unconscious, like the *Nirguna Brahma*. The fiction of the *Antah-Karana* has been invented. It is the *Antah-Karana* which knows, acts, enjoys, suffers. All this is imaginary. It is the soul which acts, does right or wrong, enjoys or suffers either directly or through the body.

2 **It is contrary to Science.**—Science teaches that human beings, the lower animals, and plants reproduce exactly their kind. An animal never gives birth to a plant, nor a plant to an animal. The plant or mineral shows no sign that it possesses a soul. Nor do the lower animals show in any way that they have a suffering soul, undergoing penalty.

3. **It fails to explain the Origin of Things.**—Deussen says

“No life can be the first, for it is the fruit of previous actions, not the last, for its actions must be expiated in a next following life.”*

The advocates of the doctrine have been forced to deny that the universe ever had a beginning. Inequalities in life are said to be the results of peculiar habits and works in a previous state of existence. This only removes the difficulty one single step for the question will recur, *Whence those peculiar habits and works?*—and, whence the inequalities in that life?

As already explained, before there could be merit or demerit, beings must have existed and acted. The first in order could no more have been produced by *Karma* than a hen could be born from her own egg. However far back we go, the same impossibility remains.

4 **It is Unjust.**—The object of transmigration is to purify the soul by lessons of warning from past history. This is lost when a person knows not what he did and why he is punished. Suppose a magistrate said to a peon, “Give that man fifty lashes,” would the man not ask, “Why am I flogged?” What would be thought of such a magistrate? What is the use of shutting up a soul in the body of a pig, which has no sense of degradation, which cannot possibly know either that it has ever committed a fault or that it is suffering the penalty due to that fault? It is said that if a man has stolen paddy he will be born a rat, whose chief occupation is to steal paddy. A man must, by way of atoning for one act of theft, become a thief all his life!†

* *Elements of Metaphysics*, p. 329.

† From Dr. Snodder.

Should a son be hanged because his father committed murder? According to transmigration, people suffer, not on account of their own deeds ; but, as it were, for those of their ancestors of which they know nothing.

For if a man is so changed at each birth as to forget all his previous history, he becomes virtually a new being. What he suffers now he suffers on account of sins committed by another ; and these sufferings he has no choice but to endure. Even the very sins a man now commits are punishments of previous sins, and he cannot but commit them. Their punishment, again, he cannot bear in this life if he would, they must be borne by him in another birth, when the loss of all consciousness of the present has made him, in fact, another person. His present happiness is the reward of a previous person's good deeds, his present good deeds will be rewarded in some future person. In all this there is an absence of justice *

4. **It denies Divine Mercy.**—The Rev. Dr Hooper has the following remarks on this point :—

"The system of transmigration leaves absolutely no room for divine mercy. Four of the six philosophical systems do, indeed, acknowledge an 'Īśvara', but what for? His *one* work is to arrange that each soul shall enjoy or suffer precisely the fruit of his doings, shall enter the body which exactly suits his deserts. In other words, Īśvara's one work is to carry out strict, unswerving justice. He has nothing whatever to do with mercy. There is no possible room for it in the system. The very slightest exercise of mercy would be, so far, a derogation from the completeness of the system of Transmigration, a blot on its fair name. What then? Do not Hindus believe in divine mercy? Indeed they do; and that in two ways, but both are entirely irrespective of, indeed they ignore, Transmigration. The statement, 'Īśvara dayālu hai' (God is merciful) is one which very few Hindus indeed would not subscribe to. So far have foreign influences permeated the modern Hindu mind, that very few indeed perceive, what however is obvious to any one who thinks, that the above statement is a flat contradiction, so far as it extends, of the Doctrine of Transmigration."

Hindus accept the most contradictory doctrines. Sankarāchārya says that even Īśvara cannot alter *Karma* any more than he can produce rice out of wheat seed. Yet it is believed that all sins may be washed away by bathing in the Ganges or other supposed sacred waters.

The *Epiphany* thus strikingly shows the cruelty of the supposed system of transmigration and the helplessness of God.

"In reality, the suggested solution only seems to lead us into greater difficulties than ever. God did not create souls, or affix their

* Abridged from Robson's *Hinduism and Christianity* 2nd Ed, pp 191, 192.

varying characters or *karmas* ; they have existed thus eternally, in independence of Him. Granted this, the question at once arises, who or what is responsible for these cruel variations and inequalities? These eternally existing souls suffer from a strange injustice, also existing from eternity, and apparently they will eternally so suffer. Partiality is then coeval, and coeternal with finite existence ; is inherent in the very nature of things. Who or what is the author of this harsh and arbitrary law of *karma* that has thus been going on and will thus go on for ever?"

"The system only seems to make the injustice of the universe more irremediable and more hopeless : it is eternal, necessary, and cannot be bettered. God Himself can only look on eternally at the course of things as a helpless spectator, compelled by some cruel necessity to apportion reward and punishment, according to an unjust law over which He has no control ; He cannot intervene to re-adjust the harsh measure that has been meted out by a power independent of Him, or redress the eternally wrong balance. Human life is beyond His control altogether. He is conniving, from sheer impotence, at a great scheme of eternal injustice." December 13, 1895.

Christianity, on the other hand, shows how Divine Justice and Mercy are reconciled through Jesus Christ.

5. **It leads people to impute the results of their own misconduct in this life to sins in a former birth.**—The chief sufferings of men are caused by poverty, sickness, and evil conduct. Poverty is often occasioned by laziness or want of thrift. One great reason why the people of India are poor is their extravagant expenditure on marriages. Most sickness is caused by bad water, filth, and unwholesome food. When people believe that their misfortunes arise from sins in a former birth, they rest contented and make no efforts to remove them.

A father neglects his child and allows him to mix with bad companions. He turns out a drunkard, gambler, and thief. The father, instead of blaming himself, attributes the misconduct of his sons to sins in a former birth. The constant excuse for almost everything that ought not to be his, "What can we do? It is all the fruit of former births." Even murderers comfort themselves with such an excuse.

Deussen says that the doctrine is "a consolation in the distresses of life." *The Hindu* forms a different estimate of its effects. "The contentment of our people is the result of moral death during centuries." The tendency is to lead people to submit to evils instead of trying to remedy them.

5. **It discourages Virtue and encourages Vice.**—The effects of rewards and punishments depend greatly upon their nearness. If very far off, they have very little influence. According to transmigration, people here eat the fruit, sweet or bitter, of actions in former births, while good or evil deeds in this life will be rewarded or punished in some future birth, how distant no one can tell. The natural tendency is therefore what is described.

The Christian doctrine is that we never existed before our present life. This is confirmed by universal human experience. We are here in a state of probation, and shall be rewarded or punished after death, and shall not transmigrate.

A few other observations may be offered.

1. **Inequalities of happiness are less than is supposed.**—

There are many poor men far happier than the rich. There is a proverb: "The fruit of austerities, a kingdom, the fruit of a kingdom, hell." Great men are tempted to vices from which the poor are free. Wealth and power are, not unfrequently, a curse rather than a blessing.

2. **We can look forward as well as backward.**—The *Epiphany* says.

"It seems possible to interpret the puzzling inequalities of life at least as well on the theory of *probation* as on the theory of *retribution*. And to effect this, different kinds of moral development are necessary. One soul is developed to perfection through the process of adversity, another through that of prosperity. The former may be the higher mode; but both courses have their appropriate tests and crises for free will to go through. We believe that all inequalities will be redressed and exhibited in their true light at the Last Judgment, when it will be seen that 'many who are first shall be last.' The justice of God will then be manifest, and till that time we can wait in faith."

3. **Most of our sufferings are caused by our breach of God's righteous law and are intended for our amendment.**

God has made us *persons*, and not *things*. We are not like watches which can only act as they are moved. We have the power of *self-determination*, we are free to do wrong if we choose. But things are so ordered that, as a rule, sin, in the end, leads to suffering. The burning words of Kingsley ought to be impressed upon the minds of all:

"Foremost among them stands a law which I must insist on, boldly and perpetually, a law which man has been trying in all ages, as now, to deny, or at least to ignore, though he might have seen it, if he had willed, working steadily in all times and nations. And that is—that as the fruit of righteousness is wealth and peace, strength and honour; the fruit of unrighteousness is poverty and anarchy, weakness and shame. It is an ancient doctrine and yet one ever young!"*

The Rev. T. E. Slater says:

"Happiness and misery are very largely the result of our own character and conduct here and now. The idle, the imprudent, the intemperate, live in poverty and suffering; while the industrious and the virtuous, as a rule, enjoy prosperity and happiness

* *Limits of Exact Science applied to History.*

"The conditions of life depend, too, very much on the conduct of others. If a man does good, others will be benefited; if evil, others will suffer. Why do so many suffer? Not because they are in fault; not because God is partial; but because they happened to live near one another. If all men were good and honest and just in their dealings with others, there would be far less misery in the world. By removing the evils that men inflict on one another, one reason assigned for the belief in transmigration would disappear."*

4 Children inherit largely the Characteristics of their Parents.—This is called the doctrine of 'heredity,' a demonstrated proof, instead of a mere assumption, like transmigration, invented in an age ignorant of modern science.

"Not our own virtues and vices contracted in some former birth, but the virtues and vices of those who have lived before us reach into our time; and moral and intellectual qualities, virtues and vicious habits, and certain diseases, are all in the stream of heritage which flows from the distant past."

This shows how careful parents ought to be. Their conduct affects, not only themselves, but their posterity. They may leave them a heritage of blessing or woe.

5. We are much influenced by our Surroundings.—This is called the law of 'environment.' A child born among vicious people is almost certain to follow their example, while one brought up among the virtuous may be hoped to imitate them. Reformatories have been established by some Christian Governments by which young criminals have frequently been led to lead new lives.

6. Affliction, properly improved, may have a most beneficial influence on the character.

A holy man of old said, "It is good for me that I have been afflicted. Before I was afflicted I went astray, but now have I kept Thy word." Millions upon millions have had the same experience. Good men, who suffer affliction rightly, come out of it purified, like gold which has been tried by fire. Many parents have been led by the sickness and death of their children to think of a world where there is no more pain or death, and where they shall meet again their loved ones, never more to be separated.

"Life," says Dr. Fairbairn, "is all the nobler from being a battle against evil, all the worthier to be lived that its Maker has designed that it should at once educate and redeem through suffering."†

7. "I know not, God knoweth."—It is admitted that, after all the explanations which can be offered, there is a residue which

* *Transmigration and Karma*, p. 9.

† *The City of God*, p. 186.

is inexplicable. We are like young children trying to understand the government of a mighty empire.

"What am I?
An infant crying in the night,
An infant crying for the light,
And with no language but a cry."

"Behind the veil, behind the veil," in a future state of existence, then God's ways to man will be justified. "What I do thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter."

A belief in the doctrine of transmigration is now confined to uncivilised or half-civilised nations.

Some of the injurious effects of the belief in the doctrine upon Hindus are thus stated by Mr. Slater.

"The transmigration of the soul has always been regarded as the direst calamity by people of India—as the root of all evil. The soul is tossed hither and thither, at the mercy of a force set in motion by itself alone, but which can never be arrested, because its operation depends on past actions wholly beyond control and even unremembered. Hence the desire of means to put a stop to further transmigration, to shorten the duration of the wanderings, has been the object of philosophical research in all the systems.

"And is not this one great reason why the Hindu has declined in power and degenerated? He feels held as by an iron hand in the dread bonds of fate, from which even death allows no escape, but only sets him revolving in an endless cycle of being, whereas his younger brother of the West, under the bracing influence of a more joyous faith, knowing himself to be a son of God, and possessing in Christ a blessed immortality, has widened with the 'process of the suns.' There is little doubt which is the more acceptable and invigorating creed."*

"The system has now been going on for thousands of years, has the Hindu nation become better, age after age? Its own shastras say, No. The first age was the age of truth—the *Krita* age—the present is the *Kali Yuga*, the age of ignorance, folly, and sin, one "period" of which is now drawing to a close. Is it not the universal lamentation of Hindu reformers that the nation has degenerated? And any improvement that is taking place at the present time, is due, not to the belief in transmigration, but to foreign influences that are, indirectly, destructive of it!"†

A dying Hindu, if thoughtful, must leave the world in despair, as he cannot tell what may next befall him. To expiate a sin committed thousands of years ago, he may require to pass into some dreadful hell.

Christianity, on the other hand, teaches that we did not exist before this present life, and we have to account only for actions during it.

* *Christian College Magazine*, Vol. XV. p. 279

† *Ibid.*, p. 337.

REVIEW.

REASONS FOR REJECTING VEDANTISM.

Vedāntism, as a System of Philosophy which for two thousand years has been held in the highest esteem by Hindus, deserves careful study, but as a Religion it is totally inadequate.

The following are some of its defects.

1. Its unworthy representations of God.

Principal Fairbairn says. *What constitutes a religion is a man's belief in a god or in gods, what differentiates religions is the sort of God the man worships.*"

The God whom we worship ought to be our loftiest ideal of perfection in every respect—not only unbounded in power and wisdom, but also in the possession of every moral attribute. He should be able to hold communion with Him by prayer, and He should inspire us to every course of action that is noble and good.

As already explained, the Supreme Deity of Vedāntism is an utterly selfish being, existing in an eternal condition of dreamless sleep, unconscious of its own existence. It neither knows nor cares for any one else. It is without love or mercy, it has neither the power to do good or evil—to reward the righteous or punish the wicked. Under the pretence of exalting Brahma, its condition is virtually reduced to that of a stone.

There is no such Being as the Nirguna Brahma. He is simply the invention of Hindu philosophers, and with him the whole Vedānta system collapses.

2. **Its blasphemous claims to Divinity**—Its Great Sentences are, *Tat tvam asi, Brahāsmi*. The *Brahmarádin* says

"Man is not the mere creature of a God, he is God himself."
"He is Himself the Creator."

As already mentioned, such assertions can only be compared to the ravings of a maniac in a lunatic asylum who fancies himself a king.

On the other hand, man is also reduced to the level of the brute. The soul, when it leaves a human being, may next be united to the body of a dog, crow, or insect, or even a plant.

3. **Vedantism cuts at the roots of morality.**—If the human soul and the Supreme Soul are identical, then the latter is responsible for every action of the former. As He is the sole being, every action that is performed is an action of God. The most wicked deeds which men vainly fancying themselves free agents are tempted to perform, are actually perpetrated by God.

According to Vedāntism, "The distinctions of right and wrong are mere appearances, which will vanish as soon as the dream state of life is dispelled. The *Brahmarádin* says

"If we know that there is nothing else but the A'tman, that everything else is but a dream, that the world's poverties, its miseries, its wickedness and goodness are mere delusions and hallucinations, then we become *Jñāna Yogins*." June 5, 1897

4. Its Yoga exercises reduce a man to semi-idiocy.—The inventors of Vedāntism were entirely ignorant of the structure of the body. The *Chhandogya Upanishad* says

"There are a hundred and one arteries of the heart, one of these penetrates the crown of the head, moving upwards by it a man reaches the immortals; the others serve for departing in different directions, yea, in different directions." VIII 6. 6

Instead of a hundred arteries, there are just two branches of a large artery and two large veins

Their effects, as described by Professor Huxley, may again be quoted :

The person using them is reduced to a state of impassive quasi-somnambulism which, but for its acknowledged holiness, might run the risk of being confounded with idiocy.

"All that remains of a man is the impassive extenuated mendicant monk, self-hypnotized into cataleptic trances which the deluded mystic takes for fore-tastes of final union with *Brahma*."

5. Its denial of the United Evidence of all our Senses.—Because a rope in the twilight is mistaken for a snake, therefore all our senses deceive us. The world has no real existence, all is *Māyá*.

Monier Williams says :

"Common sense tells an Englishman that he really exists himself and that everything he sees around him really exists also. He cannot abandon these two primary convictions. Not so the Hindu Vedāntist."

6. Its Denial of our Natural Convictions.—We instinctively distinguish between ourselves and the objects around us. No one but a learned fool need ask, 'Which is *you* and which is *I*?' The doctrine of non-duality is opposed to our common sense.

7. Its flagrant Absurdities.—The universe contains countless objects, differing widely from each other,—mineral, vegetable, animal. Among the last some are constantly engaged in devouring one another. With what reason can it be alleged that only one Being exists?

According to Deussen, Vedāntism teaches that "the soul of each one of us is not a part or an emanation of Brahman, but fully and wholly the eternal indivisible Brahman itself." If this

is correct, the number of Brahman must be countless. Even a mosquito is the "eternal indivisible Brahma."

8. **Its denial of the Fatherhood of God and Brotherhood of Man.**—A father is one who gives birth to another. According to Vedāntism, we are as eternal as Brahma itself, and therefore have no father. Brothers are children of the same parent. As we have no father, we are therefore not brothers.

9. **Its Selfishness.**—The grand aim is liberation from the miseries of life, to be as useless to others as Brahma itself. On the other hand, the Christian conception of God is, "Thou art good and doest good," and to imitate Him is the great desire of every true Christian.

10. **Its stifling Religion.**—Love, worship, prayer, are three great elements of religion. Vedāntism destroys them all. We cannot love a selfish being like Brahma, it is useless to worship or pray to a Being unconscious even of its own existence.

11. **Its Fruits.**—Bishop Caldwell thus asks what has Vedāntism done for India, the land of its birth?

"Has it promoted popular education, civilization, and good government? Has it educated the people in generous emotions? Has it abolished caste or even mitigated its evils? Has it obtained for widows the liberty of remarriage? Has it driven away dancing girls from the temples? Has it abolished polygamy? Has it repressed vice and encouraged virtue? Was it this philosophy which abolished female infanticide, the meriah sacrifice, and the burning of widows? Is it this which is covering the country with a network of railways and telegraphs? Is it this which has kindled amongst the Native inhabitants of India the spirit of improvement and enterprise which is now apparent? Need I ask the question? All this time the philosophy of quietism has been sound asleep, or 'with its eyes fixed on the point of its nose,' according to the directions of the Gītā, it has been thinking itself out of its wits. This philosophy has substantially been the creed of the majority of the people for upwards of two thousand years, and if it had emanated from God, the proofs of its divine origin ought long ere this to have been apparent; but it has all this time been too much absorbed in 'contemplating self by means of self' to have had any time or thought left for endeavouring to improve the world. What could be expected of the philosophy of apathy, but that it should leave things to take their course? There is much real work now being done in India in the way of teaching truth, putting down evil, and promoting the public welfare, but that work is being done, not by Vedāntists or quietists of any school, but by Christians from Europe, whose highest philosophy is to do good, and by those Natives of India who have been stimulated by the teaching and example of Europeans to choose a similar philosophy."

"The remarks of Lord Macaulay in his Essay on Lord Bacon on the Stoical philosophy of the ancients as contrasted with the modern Baconian philosophy, which is developed from and leavened by the

practical teaching of the Christian Scriptures, will illustrate the unprofitableness of the Vedāntic philosophy better than can be done by any words of mine. "I commend the study of that brilliant Essay to the youthful Hindu. If Sanskrit words be substituted for the Greek technical terms quoted by Macaulay, every word that he says respecting the philosophy of Zeno may be said with equal truth of the philosophy of the Gītā."

A few extracts are given below from Macaulay's Essay.—

"The chief peculiarity of Bacon's philosophy seems to us to have been this, that it aimed at things altogether different from those which his predecessors had proposed to themselves

"What then was the end which Bacon proposed to himself? It was, to use his own emphatic expression, 'fruit' It was the multiplying of human enjoyments and the mitigating of human sufferings. It was 'the relief of man's estate.'"

"Two words form the key of the Baconian doctrines, Utility and Progress The ancient philosophy disdained to be useful, and was content to be stationary It dealt largely in theories of moral perfection, which were so sublime that they never could be more than theories; in attempts to solve insoluble enigmas, in exhortations to the attainment of unattainable frames of mind It could not condescend to the humble office of ministering to the comfort of human beings.

"The ancient philosophy was a treadmill, not a path It was made up of revolving questions, of controversies which were always beginning again It was a contrivance for having much exertion and no progress. It might indeed sharpen and invigorate the brains of those who devoted themselves to it; but such disputes could add nothing to the stock of knowledge There was no accumulation of truth, no heritage of truth acquired by the labour of one generation and bequeathed to another, to be again transmitted with large additions to a third.

"The same sects were still battling with the same unsatisfactory arguments, about the same interminable questions There had been plenty of ploughing, harrowing, reaping, threshing But the garners contained only smut and stubble.

"Words and mere words, and nothing but words, had been all the fruit of all the toil of all the most renowned sages of sixty generations. The ancient philosophers promised what was impracticable, they despised what was practicable, they filled the world with long words and long beards; and they left it as wicked and ignorant as they found it."

The Rev. T. F. Slater thus sums up the whole

"The Vedānta, the highest conclusion of Indian thought, is based on a mistaken and pessimistic view of life, on a formulated dogma unsupported by any evidence and untaught in the hymns of the Rig-Veda; the whole an elaborate and subtle process of false reasoning."

Tennyson thus writes of Pantheism in his *In Memoriam* :

"That each who seems a separate whole
Should move his round and fusing all
The skirts of self again should fall
Remerging in the general soul—
Is faith as vague as all unsweet :—
Eternal form shall still divide
The eternal soul from all beside."

WHAT INDIA NEEDS INSTEAD OF VEDANTISM.

Effects of Vedantism.—For two thousand years Vedantism has been the leading philosophy of India, exciting delusive hopes of union with a Nirguna Brahma, and exercising a deadening effect upon the country. Its advocates have taken a pessimistic view of life, and their great aim has been to escape the imaginary misery of re-births. By Yoga exercises they sought union with the Nirguna Brahma, supposed to be in a state of dreamless sleep. Such men cared nothing for civilization and progress,* or the welfare of their fellow creatures. Sir Alfred C. Lyall justly says :

"The conception of an impersonal and unapproachable Being is ineffectual and ethically pernicious."†

Meditation on a selfish Being like the Nirguna Brahma could only promote selfishness in his worshippers. Hence the remarks of Macaulay with regard to the philosophers of Ancient Europe apply still more to the Vedantists :

"They left the world as ignorant and as wicked as they found it."

Enlightened public opinion in the Twentieth Century demands important changes, some of which may be mentioned.

1. THE WORSHIP OF THE GREAT CREATOR AND LORD OF THE UNIVERSE, OUR FATHER IN HEAVEN, INSTEAD OF THE NIRGUNA BRAHMA.

The idea of a God in a dreamless sleep might commend itself to philosophers whose great aim was to deliver themselves from the miseries of rebirths, but such an idea of utter selfishness is now condemned by intelligent men, and the Nirguna Brahma is regarded as a mere fiction, without existence.

On the other hand, the worship of the great Creator and rightful Lord of the universe must meet the approval of every intelligent person. There are several reasons for this.

* See the quotation from Crozier pp. 21, 22. † *Asiatic Studies*, Vol. II, p. 78.

1. **It is His rightful due.**—He who created this earth, who has covered it with plants and living beings such as we see at present, is surely entitled to the worship of His creatures. To neglect Him and set up imaginary deities is rebellion against His authority, and a sin of the deepest dye. He deserves our worship. He first called us into existence, we are dependent upon Him for every breath we draw, we live upon His earth; every thing we possess is His gift. He is both our rightful King and our Father in heaven, deserving our utmost reverence and love.

2. **The change would have a most beneficial effect upon His worshippers.**—We are surrounded by so many temptations to float like dead fish along the stream in which we live, that the loftiest ideal is required to animate us to noble life. What inspiration can be derived from a deity in a state of dreamless sleep? Meditation on him can only tend to make his worshippers as selfish as himself.

Take, on the other hand, the Christian conception of God. If at any time nothing existed, nothing could ever have come into existence. *Some Being must therefore have always existed; that Being is God.* In Christianity God's self-existence is denoted by one of His names, "I AM"

God's eternity and unchangeableness are thus expressed. "From everlasting to everlasting Thou art God; "The same yesterday, to-day and for ever," "With whom is no variableness nor shadow of turning.

God's omnipresence is thus beautifully set forth

"Whither shall I go from Thy Spirit" or whither shall I flee from Thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, Thou art there. If I make my bed in the under-world, behold Thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there shall Thy hand lead me, and Thy right hand shall hold me."

Though Christianity teaches that God is *everywhere present*, it condemns the pantheistic idea that God is everything

His omniscience is thus shown.

"Thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising, Thou understandest my thought afar off. Thou compassest my path and my lying down and art acquainted with all my ways. For there is not a word in my tongue, but, lo, O Lord, Thou knowest it altogether. . . If I say surely the darkness shall cover me, even the night shall be light about me. Yea, the darkness hideth not from Thee, but the night shineth as the day: the darkness and the light are both alike to Thee."

God's infinite power is seen in the works of creation. The countless stars that we see at night are blazing suns. The more powerful our telescopes, the more they show the greatness of God.

God's character is thus described, "Thou lovest righteousness and hatest iniquity." It includes a hatred of sin as well as

a love of righteousness. The *jīvanmukta*, "the man liberated but still living," is supposed to look with equal eye upon virtue and vice. Such is not the Christian conception of God.

Lastly Christianity teaches that "God is LOVE." It is said of Him, "Thou art good and doest good."

Jesus Christ, the Great Teacher, says, "Be ye therefore perfect as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." We are to try to copy His example in things within our power. This would have a most beneficial influence upon our character.

2. THE TRUE PRANAYAMA.

The erroneous ideas about Yoga exercises have had an injurious effect upon the Indian body and intellect. The body has been weakened by an insufficient supply of oxygen, and the intellect has been reduced to a state of semi-idiotcy.

Pranayama, according to the Yoga Sastra, will first be explained. It denotes the Regulation of the Breath. The process consists of inspiration, expiration, and retention of the breath according to fixed rules.

The expiration of the breath is called *rechaka*; its inspiration *puraka*; its suspension *kumbhaka*. Mr. Manilal, says:

"*Prāṇāyāma* has as its chief object the mixing of *prāṇa*, the upper breath, and *apāna*, the lower breath, and raising them upwards by degrees and stages till they subside on the head. This practice awakens a peculiar force which is dormant about the navel, and is called *Kundalinī*. It is this force which is the source of all occult power" p. 52.

Sankarāchārya, in his *Atmānātma Vivekah*, as translated by Mr Mohinee M Chatterjee, thus describes the "five vital airs:—"

"*Prāṇā*, *apāna*, *udāna*, and *samāna*. Their locations are said to be.—of *prāṇa*, the breast, of *apāna* the fundamenent, of *samāna* the navel, of *udāna*, the throat, and *vyāna* is spread all over the body. Functions of these are —*prāṇā* goes out, *apāna* descends, *udāna* ascends, *samāna* reduces the food eaten into an undistinguishable state, and *vyāna* circulates all over the body. Of these five vital airs there are five sub-airs, namely *nāga*, *kūrma*, *krikara*, *devadatta* and *dhananjaya*. Functions of these are eructations produced by *nāga*, *kūrma* opens the eye, *dhananjaya* assimilates food, *devadatta* causes yawning, and *krikara* produces appetite—this is said by those versed in Yoga."

The following are some exercises recommended

"*Uddīyāna* consists in drawing in the navel and the parts above and below it. *Mulabandha* consists in drawing in the parts of the anus, and in mentally exerting as if to draw the *apāna* upward towards the navel. The *jālandhara* consists in pressing the chin to the heart." III. 58, 27. Appendix v.

All this is only shows crass ignorance of the structure of the

body. No breath goes down to the navel, so it cannot be raised. The *prāṇā* and *apāna* are sheer nonsense; as is the "dormant force about the navel." Some account will now be given of breathing and its uses.

The muscles and brain require to be nourished as well as exercised. Pure blood is the chief means. Instead of the *small supply of impure air* afforded by the Yoga exercises, we should aim at a *large supply of pure air*. How is this to be secured? The air we breathe goes down into the lungs, which are full of small air cells, somewhat like a sponge. As a sponge is much larger when its cells are filled with water than when dry, so the lungs swell out when their cells are filled with air. How many little air cells are there in the lungs? About sixty lakhs! The air after staying a little time in the air cells, goes out again. We can see our breasts rise and fall as the air enters and leaves.

It has been explained that it is the oxygen in the air which purifies the blood and removes waste matter. The yoga exercises seek to diminish its supply. The object should be the very reverse. When people lean forward the air cells in the lungs are compressed, and admit a smaller quantity of air. To increase their capacity, the shoulders should be thrown back, we should then slowly inhale as much air as we can to distend the lungs, hold it for some time and then exhale it. Such an exercise practised a dozen times a day, would permanently increase the capacity of the chest, and render a person stronger and healthier. When soldiers enter the army, then girth at the chest is measured. After a time, by means of such exercises, it has been found to increase about two inches or more.

Herbert Spencer says, "The first requisite to success in life is to be a good animal"—that is to have a strong healthy body. If India is to rise in the scale of nations, instead of admiring dreaming ascetics, weak both in body and mind, she must try to produce men like Prince Ranjit Singh, able to compete successfully with Englishmen at their national game of cricket.

The young will find in active games the exercise needed. For persons advanced in life, the exercises prescribed for soldiers, to enlarge the chest will be found of great benefit. The writer, now in his eighty-fourth year, can bear personal testimony on this point.

Huxley shows the real effects of Yoga exercises (see page 12) The true *Prāṇayāma* is to have a full supply of fresh air.

3. ACTIVE BENEVOLENCE INSTEAD OF SELFISHNESS

Bishop Caldwell has pointed out how the Vedāntists in India or two thousand years made little or no efforts to benefit their country.

At present selfishness, in the case of most educated Hindus, consists in allowing women to grow up in ignorance, and then yielding to all their superstitious ideas. This policy of drift should be exchanged for one of active benevolence.

Aim in Life.—It is true that there are several objects to be kept in view in life. We must provide for our support ; we should store our minds with useful knowledge ; and there are many other things which may be lawfully pursued. What we are now considering is the *chief* end of man, the *one great design* to which every thing else should be made subordinate.

Our great aim should be *to seek to be like God*.

The Bible says of God, "Thou art good, and doest good." This is the character at which we should aim. We fulfil the object of our existence only when we copy this pattern.

To be good is the first step. Without this we cannot expect to do any real, lasting good to others. *To be as good as we can* is the best means of being *as useful as we can*.

Our best example is the Lord Jesus Christ, of whom it is said that He "went about doing good."

To seek the happiness of others, is the best means of promoting our own. Kingsley says "If you wish to be miserable, you must think about *yourself*, about what *you* want, what *you* like, what respect people pay to *you*, what people think of *you*, and then to *you* nothing will be pure. You will spoil every thing you touch. you will be as wretched as you choose."

The humblest means of doing good should not be despised. A benevolent man said, "I see in this world two heaps—human happiness and misery. If I can take but the smallest bit from one heap and add to the other, I carry a point. If I can wipe away the tears of a child, I feel I have done something. I should be glad indeed to do greater things, but I will not neglect this."

His own self-improvement should be the first object of the reader. People will be far more influenced by his example than by his words. Let his life be one which it would be desirable for others to follow.

Family duties will occupy the second place. Married men should begin with their wives. The women of India, though ignorant and superstitious, have some excellent qualities. Properly taught, they would prove docile, and, instead of opposing reform, they would become its most active friends. If uneducated, they should be taught to read. The husband and wife should always have an hour or so together before retiring to rest. The work of the day will be over and the children in bed, so that there will be time for teaching. A beginning should not be made with the alphabet, but with a short easy word, which the wife should try to copy. A lesson, even for quarter of an hour every evening, would soon give the ability to read.

Advice about the training of children should be given. Obedience and truthfulness should receive special attention. Filthy speech is one of the crying evils of India. It should be checked.

Religious teaching is of the utmost importance. Superstitious beliefs and practices alone constitute the religion of most Indian women, as doing puja to an idol or walking round the tulasi plant. Our duty to God and the nature of prayer should be explained. Family worship should be observed. Directions will be found in the publications in the Appendix.

Next to the family, other relatives, friends, and neighbours should be benefited as far as opportunities permit.

The reader should join the noble band of Social Reformers, and take part in all the measures which they advocate. Female education should receive special attention as it lies at the root of other reforms.

But *Social* reform is not sufficient. India, above all, needs *Religious* reform.

Hinduism and its gods are thus described by Sir Alfred Lyall:

"A mere troubled sea, without shore or visible horizon, driven to and fro by the winds of boundless credulity and grotesque invention."

"A tangled jungle of disorderly superstitions, ghosts and demons, demigods and deified saints, household gods, tribal gods, local gods, universal gods; with the countless shrines and temples, and the dim of their discordant rites, deities who abhor a fly's death, those who delight still in human victims, and those who would not either sacrifice or make offerings."*

What beneficial influence can such deities exert upon their worshippers?

Such is the religion of the masses, although there are sections holding Vedantic opinions, or altogether indifferent to religion.

What can be a grander work than for educated Indians to aid in turning their countrymen from the worship of imaginary beings, the product of dark ages, to that of the one true God, the Creator of the Universe, our loving Father in heaven!

The late Professor Max Muller is deservedly held in high esteem by educated Hindus. Let them ponder deeply the following remarks which may be considered his last message to India.

"Thousands of years have passed away since the Aryan nations separated to travel to the North and South, the West and East. They have each formed their languages, they have each founded empires and philosophies, they have each built temples and razed them to the ground; they have all grown older, and it may be wiser and better; but when they search for a name for that which is most exalted and yet most dear to every one of us, when they

wish to express both awe and love, the infinite and the finite; they can but do what their old fathers did when gazing up to the eternal sky, and feeling the presence of a Being as far as far and as near as near can be; they can but combine the self-same words and utter once more the primeval Aryan prayer, Heaven Father, in that form which will endure for ever, 'Our Father, which art in heaven'."

The most illiterate woman can understand the word 'Father.' What a blessed change it would be if the mothers of India, instead of frightening their children with stories of demons or training them to worship idols, taught them that the one true God is their loving Father in heaven !

STRENGTH FOR DUTY.

Bishop Caldwell thus describes the conduct of most educated Hindus

"Practically it matters very little in general what theosophy or philosophy a Hindu professes, what his ideas may be about the most ancient form of his religion, or even what his ideas may be about the religious reforms that the age is said to require. As a matter of fact, and in so far as his actual course of life is concerned he is content, except in a small number of exceptional cases, to adhere with scrupulous care to the traditional usages of his caste and sect. His ideas may have received a tincture from his English education, but ordinarily his actions differ in no particular of any importance from those of his progenitors."

How many must make the sad confession of the poet,

"I see the right, and I approve it too,
Condemn the wrong, and yet the wrong pursue."

What is the cause of the moral cowardice almost universal among educated Hindus? They think of their relatives and friends, of their own ease, of the praise of men, but they *do not* think of God.

Dr. Miller of Madras says "If you would have strength and courage to be decided—to take your part and play the man—to be no longer halting between two opinions, no longer yielding to influences and practices which you despise and hate, then seek to know God—to have Him as your helper and your friend Think of how it would give courage in every difficulty, and revive under every disappointment, if you only *knew* that God was working with and in you, and that whatever your struggles and your failures here, still that the victory was *sure*—victory for all that is true and pure at last on earth, and an eternity of restful satisfaction with Himself on high."

Divine help is what is needed to enable us to act up to our convictions of duty.

The first step to be taken may be described in the words, "Acquaint thyself with God, and be at peace with Him."

Perhaps the reader has been living for years forgetful of his rightful Lord and Father in heaven, disregarding His commands, and giving the honour due to Him to others.

With deep sorrow he should make the confession, "Father, I have sinned, and am no more worthy to be called Thy son."

Christianity, like Hinduism, teaches that a Divine Incarnation was necessary for our salvation. His name is JESUS CHRIST, meaning the 'appointed Saviour.' Read in the New Testament an account of His wonderful life. "*The Teaching of Jesus Christ in His own Words*," compiled by Lord Northbrook, some time Viceroy of India, will also be found useful.

We require other help. Jesus Christ says, "If ye then being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children; how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him." His help is needed to enable us to overcome sin and do what is pleasing in God's sight. This should be our daily prayer.

— — —

THE DAWN OF TRUE KNOWLEDGE.

**"Ring out the old, ring in the new.
Ring out the false, ring in the true."**

In a Convocation Address Sir H. S. Maine described "Oriental culture as false morality, false history, false philosophy, and false physics."

Every educated Hindu knows that the geography and astronomy of his Sacred Books are false. They have no history but incredible legends. The gods of the masses have been described in the words of Sir Alfred Lyall.

In the foregoing pages the Vedānta and Yoga systems of philosophy have been considered and their defects pointed out. Will the reader help to bring in a true philosophy?

The *Dawn of true Science* in India has happily begun. Professor J. C. Bose has been heard with respect by the most distinguished scientists in Europe.

In *Philosophy and Religion* may similar reforms soon take place!

The beautiful prayer in the Brihad Aranya Upanishad should be daily offered:

**"From the unreal lead me to the real.
From darkness lead me to light,
From death lead me to Immortality."**

APPENDIX.

Publications for Indian Readers.

The Religions of the World. An Illustrated Sketch of their History. 8vo. 208 pp. 6 As.

The Great Religions of the World are described and contrasted. India is urged to prosecute vigorously the course of reform on which she has entered. Illustrative woodcuts.

The Hindu Sacred Books Described and Examined.

VOLUME I.

VEDAS AND BRAHMANAS.

An Account of the Vedas, with Illustrative Extracts from the Rig-Veda. 8vo. 166 pp. 4½ As. Post-free, 6 As.

The principal divisions of the Vedas are described with life in Vedic times, the gods of the Vedas, the offerings and sacrifices. Translations of some of the most important hymns in the Rig-Veda are quoted in full.

The Atharva-Veda. 8vo. 76 pp. 2½ As. Post-free, 3 As.

This is the Veda of Prayers, Charms, and Spells. A classified selection of the Hymns is given, including charms to cure diseases, expel demons, secure success in life, destroy enemies, &c., with a review of the whole.

The Brahmanas of the Vedas. 8vo. 232 pp. By THE REV. K S MACDONALD, M.A., D.D., Author of *The Vedic Religion*. 8 As. Post-free, 10 As.

Accounts are given of the Brāhmanas of the Rig-Veda, Sāma Veda, Black and White Yajur Vedas, and the Atharva Veda, showing the development of Hinduism. The state of society, the human, horse, and other sacrifices, the gods and religion of the Brāhmanas are described, with many interesting details.

VOLUME II.

PHILOSOPHICAL WORKS AND LAW BOOKS.

Selections from the Upanishads. 8vo. 120 pp. 4 As. Post-free, 6 As.

The Katha, Isa, and Svetāsvatara, as translated into English by Dr. Boer, are quoted in full, with the notes of Sankara Achārya and others; and there are copious extracts from the Brihad Araṇya and Chhāndogya Upanishads, with an examination of their teaching.

The Bhagavad Gita. 8vo. 108 pp. 3 As. Post-free, 5 As.

This work, supposed to represent the loftiest flight of Hindu Philosophy, consists of a supposed dialogue between Arjuna and Krishna. It seeks to harmonize the Vedānta, Yoga, and Sāṅkhya doctrines, combining with them faith (*bhakti*) in Krishna and stern devotion to caste duties. Numerous explanatory notes are added.

Vedānta Sāra. 8vo. 143 pp. 4 As. Post-free, 5 As.

This celebrated treatise, by Śaṅkara, is considered the best popular exposition of the Vedānta philosophy.

Yoga Sāstra. 8vo. 78 pp. 2½ As. Post-free, 3 As.

The Yoga Sūtras of Patañjali examined, and the supposed Yoga powers shown to be a delusion. The true Yoga Sāstra is explained, with a notice of Śaṅkara Vīvekananda's Yoga Philosophy.

K R I S H N A,

THE HINDU IDEAL OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY.

An Account of his Life as given in the Mahabharata,
Vishnu and Bhagavata Puranas, and the Harivansa.

ADDRESSED TO EDUCATED HINDUS.

HINDUISM

A Religious Chaos

'A mere troubled sea without shore or visible horizon, driven to and fro by the winds of boundless credulity and grotesque invention'

Sir Alfred Lyall

*" From the unreal lead me to the real.
From darkness lead me to light
From death lead me to immortality "*

Brihad Atanya Upanishad

" What is not TRUE is not PATRIOTIC "

Sir Madhava Row

FIRST EDITION, 2,000 COPIES.

THE CHRISTIAN LITERATURE SOCIETY FOR INDIA
LONDON AND MADRAS.

1902.



PREFACE.

Changed Feelings in Bengal with regard to Krishna.—A Bengali correspondent writes to the *Madras Mail*:—

"In the early days of English Education in Bengal, the educated Bengalis manifested a deep aversion to the Hindu god Krishna and his life. In those days they fully adopted the Christian Missionary's view of Krishna. But the last half-century has brought about a complete reaction. Some of the best intellects in Bengal are now upholders of Krishna-worship, although most of them regard him not as a god but as a great religious teacher. Many sincerely believe that the *Bhagavad Gita*, which is attributed to Krishna, is the basis of the teachings of Jesus Christ, the source from which Christ derived his inspiration. Shri-Krishna is stoutly set up as a teacher and rival of Christ, and the Christian Missionary in Bengal now-a-days has to make himself sufficiently well-versed in Shri-Krishna literature, old and recent, in order to combat the arguments of the Bengali graduate." Sept. 26th, 1902.

Causes of the Changed Feeling.—These are mainly two. The first is the growth of false patriotism. It is considered beneath India to have any other than a national divinity. The second is the publication of Bankim Chandra Chatterjee's *Life of Krishna*. The novelist presented his hero in such a new light, that he was largely accepted by Bengalis as the Hindu Ideal.

Thoughtful men will not set aside the unanimous testimony of the original authorities on account of the fiction of a novelist of the nineteenth century. Although it may gratify national pride for a time, in the end it will have a very different effect. The civilised world will be astonished that such an Ideal should have been chosen.

The wise words of Sir Madhava Row should be deeply pondered by Bengali patriots

"What is not TRUE is not PATRIOTIC."

Every structure on a false foundation will, sooner or later, come down, and "great will be the fall thereof."

J. MURDOCH,

MADRAS, November, 1902.

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KRISHNA, THE HINDU IDEAL.

INTRODUCTION.

AN *ideal*, is an imaginary model of perfection. It may refer to different qualities, as an ideal of beauty, valour, virtue, &c. The Deity worshipped by a nation may be supposed to represent its highest standard of perfection in every respect.

At present, especially in Bengal, Krishna denotes the Hindu ideal of a Divinity. He is thus eulogised by Babu Bulloram Mullick, B.A..

"He was the Prince of Yogis as well as the Prince of princes. He was a magnificent warrior and statesman, a profound scholar, and an admirer of the ancient institutions of the land. He was an expounder of the ancient theological philosophy—the glorious heritage of our Aryan forefathers. Altruism was what he taught by his personal example"*

In the preface to a little volume entitled, *The Imitation of Sri Krishna*, he is described as, "the greatest spiritual figure that has appeared in the religious drama of the world" (page i). It is added, however, "The being who is equal in virtue as well as in vice is to us a grander figure than the extremely virtuous man." (p. ii).

Rai Bahadur Lala Baij Nath, B.A., says of Krishna

"There is no doubt that he combined in him, in the most perfect manner, all human excellences—physical, mental, moral, and spiritual, to their fullest possible development, and, as he himself said in the *Bhagavad Gita*, incarnated in Yuga after Yuga for the protection of the good, destruction of the wicked, and restoration of lost righteousness"†

Chaitanya, "Lord Gauranga", is revered as a reflection of Krishna. The same may be said of Sri Ramakrishna.

A correspondent of *The Hindu* characterises Krishna as "the holiest being that ever trod this earth."

He has even some admirers among European and American ladies. Mrs. Besant has selected him as her *ishṭa devatā*. In

* *Krishna and Krishnaitism*, p. 18.

† *Hinduism Ancient and Modern*, p. 62.

a letter to Dr. Lunn, she, "re-affirms" her profound reverence for "Shri Krishna," and hopes that one day he may be fortunate enough to "catch a glimpse of his Divine beauty."* At a recent meeting in Calcutta, the chairman, Baba Norendra Nath Sen, introduced the American Swami Abhayananda as a "professed devotee of our Lord Sri Krishna." Sister Nivedita seems to have forsaken for him her first love, "Kali-ma"

THE TRUTH ABOUT KRISHNA HOW TO BE ASCERTAINED.

Lawyers, in investigating a case, demand the original evidence—not hearsay statements. A life of Krishna, written by a novelist in the nineteenth century, cannot be accepted as an authority. The Mahābhārata contains the earliest and most trustworthy evidence. Next to it are the Vishnu Purāna and the Bhagavata Purāna. They are considerably later, but they represent the opinions of the times when they were written. The Harivansa is a later addition to the Mahābhārata.

All of them contain incredible statements, but if the four agree on certain points, they may be regarded as expressing Hindu opinion.

Plan of the following Work.—This is to take first the references to Krishna in the Mahābhārata, and then to give the leading events recorded in the other authorities. The voluminous nature of the works requires the references to be greatly abridged. Only in a few important cases can extracts be given in full.

Challenge to prove Inaccuracies.—It is a favourite weapon with Hindu controversialists to denounce statements from their own sacred books as the *calumnies of Missionaries*. General charges are worthless. Let them point out in detail any mis-statements in the following pages.

The following English translations have been used, to which the reader can refer.

The Mahābhārata. Nine Volumes. By Pratapa Chandra Ray, C. I. E.

The Vishnu Purāna. One Volume.

The Bhagavata Purāna. Two Volumes.

The Harivansa. One Volume.

The last three are edited and published by Manmatha Nath Dutt, M. A., Rector, Keshub Academy, Calcutta.

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS ON THE MAHABHARATA

The following remarks, by Krishnalal M. Jhaveri, in *East and West*, express the opinions of scholars with regard to the Mahābhārata.

"Like all other ancient historical works, like the histories of Livy and Herodotus, the Mahābhārata is full of incidents, unnatural, impossible, and exaggerated. Indeed, this element of handling truth so roughly, at times so pervades it, that one feels completely at sea to know where one should draw the line between the credible and the incredible, the true and the untrue, the possible and the impossible. The notion, of course, has now been exploded that the Mahābhārata is nothing else than a string of palpable fictions, but at the same time it has been brought out also that the real events narrated in it have been hidden away under a huge pile of interpolations, additions, and accretions, ancient and modern. Each successive generation added something to it to perpetuate the trend of thought peculiar to it, each intelligent hand, itching to write something, and actuated by the motive of adding one more stone to the cairn of a semi-historical, semi-divine work, laboured at adding to its size. A worshipper of Shiva was as desirous of handing down to coming generations the power and glory of his God, a worshipper of Vishnu was equally desirous to do the same for his ideal, and both of them found a convenient field for the exercise of their energies in the Mahābhārata. It is out of such chaos that order has to be created, and it has been found possible to do so from certain internal evidence furnished by the work itself.

"The Epic is divided into eighteen *Parvas*, or parts, each consisting of several sections, or *Adhyayas*." The very first Parva—*Adi-Parva*,—opens with a section very much in the nature of a table of contents, and it is called the *Parva Saṅgraha Adhyaya*. The minutest details of the events narrated in the work are given there, nothing is omitted. Though there are reasons to suspect that this section itself is an addition to the epic, still it seems to have been tacked on to it very soon after its composition. We may, therefore, safely conclude that what is not mentioned in this section, but is still met with in the Mahābhārata, is an interpolation. For instance the two celebrated *Gītās*, the *Anugītā* and the *Brahmagītā*, fathered upon Krishna, though found to take up a large part of the epic, are still not alluded to in this section, and so are to be considered later additions. Similarly, a comparison of the number of *Shlokas* (verses) mentioned in the several sections, with their number at present, leaves no doubt about the more modern and recent character of several parts of the work, and by a careful sifting of those figures, it is possible in several places to determine whether we are dealing with the original or the additional.

"It is not at all rare to find in this history, two descriptions or reasons of an event given, one contradicting the other. Of these two, one must be an after-thought, an interpolation. An intelligent author, even though at times he may indulge in repetitions, will take care not to contradict what he has said before, he will not write in a way that would make what he says before irreconcilable with what he says afterwards. There are scores of instances of such irreconcilable descriptions in the book, and we can unhesitatingly say, therefore, that one at least of the two in each case has to be rejected.

"The Mahābhārata is full of events which are out of place where they are narrated; neither the sequence of events, nor the propriety of the situation demands the happening or the narration of that particular event. This inopportuneness, coupled with any one of the traits mentioned above, would lead one strongly to suspect the genuineness of that particular matter.

"Lastly, supposing we accept one of the two irreconcilable descriptions mentioned above as the correct one, and if that be found to partake also of any of the characteristics mentioned before, then even that correct one lays itself open to rejection as being an interpolation."

EARLIEST REFERENCE TO KRISHNA.

Dr. Muir says that, as far as yet known, this is the short passage in the Chhândogya Upanishad, "Ghora, the descendant of Angiras, having declared this to Krishna the son of Devaki."[†]

PRINCIPAL INCIDENTS RECORDED IN THE MAHABHARATA.

As already mentioned, from the immense size of this work, only the leading events can be noticed, and these only greatly abridged. Still, it is believed, that the impression given is correct. The references are to the translation of Pratapa Chandra Ray.

ADI PARVA.

Krishna seems first mentioned as Vāsudeva, the mighty son of Rukmini, who, along with many other princes, came to the Svayamvara of Draupadi. Krishna recognised the disguised Pándavas. After the marriage he gave them costly presents, including thousands of young and beautiful female servants brought from different countries. (pp. 527, 560, 579.)

With the consent of Krishna, Arjuna carried off his sister Subadhra according to Kshatriya custom. p. 606.

At a picnic on the banks of the Jamna, the women of the party, "their gait unsteady with wine, began to sport at the command of Krishna and Arjuna." Draupadi and Subadhra, "exhilarated with wine, began to give away costly ornaments." (p. 615.)

Pāvaka gave Krishna a fiery discus, and Varuna gave him the bow Gándiva and a car whose banner was the ape, to fight the Daityas. (pp. 622, 624.)

* East and West, April 1902, pp 658-660.

† Sanskrit Texts, Vol. iv. p. 188.

Krishna and Arjuna defeat the Jánavas and Āsuras who occupied the Khandava forest, after which Agni was able to burn it and renew his strength. (pp. 631-636).

SABHA PARVA.

Yudhisthira wishes to celebrate the Rajusya sacrifice, and Krishna comes to Indraprastha. Krishna advises Yudhisthira first to slay Jarásandha. Krishna, Arjuna, and Bhima enter the palace of Jarásandha disguised as Brahmans, and in a fight with Bhima, Jarásandha is killed. Krishna afterwards returns to Dwáraká. (pp. 47-77).

When the Rajusya sacrifice was about to be performed, Krishna came with presents. Among the assembled kings, Sahadeva offered the first *Arghya* to Krishna. Sisupála, king of Chedi, took offence at this, spoke against Krishna, and challenged him to fight. After recounting some of the evil deeds of Sisupála, Krishna struck off his head with his discus. When the assembly separated, Krishna returned to Dwáraká (pp. 95-127).

VANA PARVA

Krishna's austerities are described. He lived for eleven thousand years on water alone, he stood for a hundred years with arms upraised standing on one leg living upon air, he stood on one leg for a thousand years of the celestials, &c. (pp. 37, 38.)

Krishna miraculously feeds Durvása and ten thousand of his disciples. (p. 779)

Mahádeva says of Vishnu, "From him all the gods had their being, and after him the world is said to be *Varshnava*, or pervaded by Vishnu. And for the destruction of the wicked, and the preservation of religion, even he hath taken his birth among men in the race of the Yadus. And the adorable Vishnu is styled Krishna." (p. 803.)

UDYOGA PARVA.*

Duryodana and Arjuna both go to Dwáraká to seek the help of Krishna in the coming war. Krishna sees Arjuna first, and promises to help him as charioteer although he will not fight. (pp. 13, 14.)

Krishna offers to go to the Kurus, to obtain peace if possible. (p. 256.) He vainly advises Duryodana to make peace. (p. 358.) Krishna shows his divine form. From his body issue myriads of gods, each of lightning effulgence, and not bigger than the thumb. On his forehead appear Brahmá, and on his breast Rudra. On his arms appear the regents of the world, and from his mouth issue Agni, the Maruts, with Indra, myriads of Yakshas

* The *Virdita Parva* does not contain any thing special

and Rākshasas, &c., also issued therefrom. Celestial drums are beaten in the sky and a shower of flowers falls. (pp 380, 381) Krishna afterwards returns to Indraprastha, and reports what had happened. (p. 420.)

BHISMA PARVA.

Krishna and Arjuna blow their conches (p. 2) Arjuna asks Krishna to place his car between the two armies that he might see who were assembled to fight. He is filled with despondency at the idea of fighting with his kinsmen (p. 76). The Bhagavad Gītā. (pp. 79-143).*

Krishna urges Arjuna to kill Bhishma (p. 387.) Krishna offers to kill Bhishma himself. To this Yudhishthira objects as Krishna had promised not to fight. (pp 392, 393)

DRONA PARVA.

Krishna thus describes his four forms .

"I have four forms, eternally engaged as I am in protecting worlds. Dividing my own self, I ordain the good of the worlds. One form of mine staying on the Earth is engaged in the practice of ascetic austerities. Another beholdeth the good and evil deeds in the world. My third form, coming into the world of men, is engaged in action. My fourth form, lieth down in sleep for a thousand years." p 96

Krishna and Arjuna, with joined hands, praise Mahādeva, (p. 221) Krishna dances for joy, clapping his armpits (p 590). Krishna advises the Pāndus how to kill Drona .

"Casting aside virtue, ye sons of Pāndu, adopt now some contrivance for gaining the victory, so that Drona of the golden car may not slay us all in battle. Upon the fall of his son Aswatthāman, he will cease to fight, I think. Let some man, therefore, tell him that Aswatthāman hath been slain in battle." This advice, however, O king, was not approved by Arjuna. Others approved of it. But Yudhishthira accepted it with difficulty " p 627.

Bhima slew an elephant, and told Drona that Aswatthāman had been slain. As Drona would not believe Bhima, Yudhishthira, advised by Krishna, agreed to say what was desired. "Fearing to utter an untruth, but earnestly desirous of victory, Yudhishthira distinctly said that Aswatthāman was dead, adding indistinctly the word *elephant* (after the words). Before this, Yudhishthira's car had stayed at a height of four fingers' breadth from the surface of the Earth. After, however, he had said that untruth his (vehicle and) animals touched the Earth," (p. 630). Krishna praises Mahādeva as the "divine Lord, the First Cause of the

* See *The Religious and Moral Teaching of the Bhagavad Gītā Examined*, 8vo. 72 pp. 2 As

Universe," &c, (p. 682). "The blue-throated god then gave bows unto Vāsudeva." Mahādeva said, "Kesava always worships the Lord Siva, regarding his phallic emblem to be the origin of the Universe" (pp. 683, 684).

KARNA PARVA

Krishna urges Arjuna to fight, (p. 209). Krishna declares the following five falsehoods to be sinless

"On an occasion of marriage or of enjoying a woman, or when one's entire property is to be taken away or for the sake of a Brahman, falsehood may be uttered. These five kinds of falsehood have been declared to be sinless." (p. 253)

Arjuna wished to put an end to his life for having insulted Yudhishthira. Krishna urged him to utter his own praise as equivalent to suicide (p. 261)

Karna begs Arjuna not to strike him till he has extricated the wheel of his chariot, (p. 361). Krishna taunts Karna for appealing to virtue (p. 362).

SAUPTIKA PARVA.

Krishna revives a child, (p. 53). Krishna praises Mahādeva as the highest of all the gods, the beginning, middle and end of all creatures (pp. 55, 56).

STRI PARVA.

Gāndhārī curses Krishna for not having prevented the slaughter of the Kurus and Pāndavas (p. 55). Krishna accepts the curse (p. 56)

SALYA PARVA.

The Pāndavas hearing invisible beings cry out that Bhishma, Drona, Karna and Bhurisravas had been slain unrighteously, wept in sorrow. Krishna thus justifies the use of unfair means for the slaughter of the Kuru warriors

"If I had not adopted such deceitful ways in battle, victory would never have been yours, nor kingdom, nor wealth. You should not take to heart that this foe of yours hath been slain deceitfully" p. 239.

SANTI PARVA.

Krishna asks Yudhishthira not to grieve for men who die heroically in battle in the observance of Kshatriya duties, (p. 79). Krishna recites the story of Chārvāka's penances and the boon he had received from Brahmanā, (p. 123). Yudhishthira finds Krishna in Yoga meditation, (p. 123). Bhishma hymns Krishna "Thou art what people say to be THAT. Thou art the Supreme Lord" (p. 137). Krishna enables Bhishma to "see the universe like a

plum in his hand," (p. 160). Krishna identical with the Supreme Spirit, (pp. 462, 463).

ANUSASANA PARVA.

After Krishna had praised Mahádeva he was promised eight boons. Krishna said :

"Firmness in virtue, the slaughter of foes in battle, the highest fame, the greatest might, devotion to Yoga, thy adjacence, and hundreds upon hundreds of children—these are the boons I solicit of thee."

Umá also offered eight boons. Among others she said, "Thou shalt have sixteen thousand wives Thy love for them and theirs also for thee shall be unlimited." p. 92.

Mahádeva thus praised Vāsudeva ; "Hari is superior to the grandsire himself He is the eternal Purusha. Otherwise called Krishna," (p. 673). The thousand names of Vāsudeva or Vishnu (pp. 684, 715).

ASWAMEDHA PARVA.

The *Anugitá* Parva is a summary of the Bhagavad Gítá (p. 33). Krishna explains his identity with the originator, and destroyer of all things (p. 140.). Krishna's arrival at Dwáraká (p. 156). Restores life to a child, (p. 177.). Krishna attributes Arjuna's hardships to the elevation of his cheek bones. (p. 218).

MAUSALA PARVA.

Visvámitra, Kanna, and Nárada, mocked by the Yádavas, declare that Sámba should bring forth a fierce iron bolt for their destruction, (p. 2) The king Ugrasena causes the iron bolt to be reduced to powder, and thrown into the sea (p. 3.). The manufacture of intoxicating liquors is forbidden Whoever did so was to be impaled alive with all his kinsmen, (p. 3).

Strange portents are seen at Dwáraká. Asses are born of cows and elephants of mules. The Yádavas, committing sinful acts, are not seen to feel any shame. Wives deceive their husbands, and husbands deceive wives, (p. 4).

The Yádavas wish to go with their families on a pilgrimage to some sacred water. They go with an abundance of edibles and drink, (p. 6)

Destruction of the Yádavas.

The following account is quoted in full from the Mausala Parva :

"The Vrishnis* mixing with wine the food that had been cooked for high-souled Brahmans, gave it away unto monkeys and apes.

* Descendants of Vrishni the eldest son of Yádu.

These heroes of fierce energy then began their high revels, of which drinking formed the chief feature, at Prabhāsa. The entire field echoed with the blare of hundreds of trumpets, and abounded with actors and dancers plying their vocations. In the very sight of Krishna Rāma began to drink with Kritavarman; Yuyudhāna, and Gada and Vahhu also did the same.

"Then Yuyudhāna, inebriated with wine, derisively laughing at and insulting Kritavarman in the midst of that assembly, said, 'What Kshatriya is there who, armed with weapons, will slay men locked in the embraces of sleep and therefore already dead?' Hence, O son of Hridikā, the Yādavas will never tolerate what thou hast done."

After similar mutual recriminations,

"Having said these words Sātyaki rushed at Kritavarman and severed his head with a sword in the very sight of Kesava. Yuyudhāna (a name of Sātyaki) having accomplished this feat, began to strike down others then present. Krishikesa ran to prevent him doing further mischief. At that time, however, O monarch, the Bhojas and Andhakas, impelled by the perverseness of the hour that had come upon them, all became as one man and surrounded the son of Sini. Janārdhana, of mighty energy, knowing the character of the hour, stood unmoved without giving way to anger at the sight of those heroes rushing in wrath at Sātyaki from every side. Urged by fate and inebriated with drink, they began to strike Yuyudhāna with the pots from which they had been eating. When the son of Sini was being thus assaulted, Rukman's son (Pradyumna) became highly enraged. He rushed forward for rescuing Sātyaki, who was engaged with the Bhojas and the Andhakas. Endowed with might of arm and wealth of energy, these two heroes exerted themselves with great courage. But as the odds were overwhelming, both of them were slain in the very sight of Krishna. The delight of the Yadus, beholding his one son slain and the son of Sini too, slain, took up, in wrath a handful of the *Erakā* grass that grew there. That handful of grass became a terrible bolt of iron, endued with the energy of the thunderbolt. With it Krishna slew all those that came before him. Then the Andhakas and the Bhojas, the Carneyas and the Vrishnis, urged by Time, struck one another in that tearful mêlée. Indeed, O king, whoever amongst them took up in wrath a few blades of the *Erakā* grass, these, in his hands, became soon converted into a thunderbolt. Every blade of grass then was seen to be converted into a terrible iron bolt. All this, know, O King, was due to the curse denounced by Brahmins. He who hurled a blade of grass saw that it pierced through even such things as were utterly impenetrable. In fact, every blade was seen to become a terrible bolt having the force of thunder. Son killed sire, and sire killed son. Inebriated with wine they rushed and fell upon one another. The Kukuras and the Andhakas met with destruction like insects rushing at a blazing fire. As they were thus being slaughtered, no one amongst them thought of escaping by flight. Knowing that the hour of destruction had come, the mighty-armed Kesava stood there eying everything. Indeed the slayer of Mādhv stood, raising a bolt of Iron formed of a blade of grass. Beholding that Sāmva was slain and also Chārudesana and Pradyumna and Aniruddha,

Mádhava became filled with rage. Beholding Gada (a younger brother) lying dead on the ground, his wrath became enhanced. The wielder of Cánga and the discus and the mace then exterminated the *Vrishnis* and the *Andhakas*. Vábhru of mighty energy and Dáruka then said to Krishna, 'O holy one, a very large number of men has been slain by thee! Turn now to where Ráma has gone! We wish to go there where he has proceeded' (pp. 6-9).

Krishna, entering Dwáráká, asked his father to protect his wives till Arjuna came; he would himself go into the forest. Krishna now recollected the words of Durvása that he was to die by a wound in the foot.* Krishna laid himself down on the earth in high Yoga. A hunter, named Jara, mistaking Krishna for a deer, pierced his foot with an arrow. The hunter, filled with fear, was comforted by Krishna, who then ascended to heaven, worshipped by all the deities, (pp. 10-12).

Excellency of the Mahabharata.—The Bhárata is worshipped by the very gods. The Bhárata is the foremost of all Scriptures. One attains to emancipation through the Bhárata. This is certain truth.

Promises regarding the Mahabharata.—He who listens with devotion to this Bhárata from the beginning becomes cleansed of every sin, even if he be guilty of Brahmicide or the violation of his guru's bed, or even if he be a drinker of spirits or a robber of other people's goods, or even if he be born as a Chándála. Destroying all his sins, like the maker of day destroying darkness, such a man, without doubt, sports in felicity in the region of Vishnu, like Vishnu himself. p. 28.

KRISHNA AS DESCRIBED IN THE PURÁNAS AND HARIVANSA

The statements are mainly based on the Vishnu Purána and Bhagavata Purána, with one or two from the Harivansa.

As the Vishnu Purána is shorter, it will be taken as the basis, but additions, in some cases, will be made from the Bhagavata Purána and Harivansa.

BIRTH OF KRISHNA.

Cause of Birth.—"At that time," says the Vishnu Purána, "Earth, over-burdened by her load, repaired to Mount Meru to an assembly of the gods, and addressing the divinities, with Brahmá at their head, related in piteous accents all her distress. 'At this present season, countless hosts of proud and powerful spirits, chief of the demon race, assuming celestial forms, now walk the earth; and, unable to support myself beneath the incumbent load, I come to you for succour.'

* Krishna had omitted to wipe off some grains of rice which had fallen on the foot of the irascible sage, and he cursed him.

When the gods had heard these complaints, they went with Brahmá at their head to Vishnu, and recited his praises. Among other things they said: "Thou art the Rich, the Yayush, the Sáman, and the Atharva Vedas. Thou art accentuation, ritual, signification, metre, and astronomy; history, tradition, grammar, theology, logic and law; thou art inscrutable." Thou art the protector of the world, and all beings exist in thee; all that has been or will be, thou art."

Hari was pleased and thus spoke to Brahmá "Tell me, Brahmá, what you and the gods desire." Brahmá quickly prostrated himself, and said, "Behold, lord, this Earth oppressed by mighty Asuras, comes to thee to be relieved from her burden."

When Brahmá had ended, the supreme Lord plucked off two hairs, one white and one black, and said to the gods, "These my hairs shall descend upon Earth, and shall relieve her of the burden of her distress. This my (black) hair shall be impersonated in the 8th conception of the wife of Vasudeva, Devakí, who is like a goddess; and shall slay Kansa, who is the demon Kalanemi." Having thus spoken, Hari disappeared*.

Birth.—Kansa was a tyrannical king of Mathura, the son of Ugrasena and cousin of Devakí, who had deposed his father. The Muni Nárada informed him that Vishnu would be born as the 8th child of Devakí, and would take away his life. Kansa wished to kill her, but Vasudeva, her husband, said, "Spare her life and I will deliver to you every child that she may bring forth." Agreeably to this promise Vasudeva delivered to Kansa each infant as soon as it was born. Vishnu told Yoganidra† that the seventh conception would be formed of a portion of Shesha, or part of himself, and that he himself would become incarnate in the eighth conception of Devakí.

On the day of Krishna's birth the clouds emitted low pleasing sounds, and poured down rain of flowers. Vasudeva, taking the babe, went out that same night, for the guards were all charmed by Yoganidra. To protect the infant from the heavy rain that fell from the clouds at night, Shesha, the many-headed serpent, followed Vasudeva, and spread his hoods over their heads. When the prince with the child in his arms crossed the deep Yamuna, the waters rose not above his knee. That night Yasodá, the wife of Nanda, a cowherd of Gokula, had brought forth a daughter. Vasudeva taking up the female child, placed his son in her place by the side of the mother, and then quickly returned home. When Yasodá awoke, she found that she had been delivered of a boy as black as the dark leaves of the lotus, and she was greatly rejoiced.

* *Vishnu Purána*, Book V, Chap. 1.

† The sleep of devotion, also termed *Máyá*. The *Sakti* of Vishnu.

Vasudeva bearing off the female infant of Yasodá, reached his mansion unobserved, and entering placed the child in the bed of Devakí. The guards were awakened by the cry of a new-born babe, and starting up, they sent word to Kansa that Devakí had borne a child. Kansa immediately repaired to the residence of Vasudeva, where he seized upon the infant and dashed it against a stone, but it rose into the sky and expanded into a gigantic figure having 8 arms. This terrific being said to Kansa, "He is born who shall kill thee," and then vanished. After this Kansa, much troubled in mind, set free Vasudeva and Devakí. Vasudeva taking Balaráma, his son by Rohini, another wife, gave him to Nanda to be brought up with Krishna at Gokula.*

CHILDHOOD OF KRISHNA.

Kills Putana.—One night, the female fiend Pútaná, the childkiller, finding the little Krishna asleep, took him up and gave him her breast to suck. Now whatever child is suckled in the night by Pútaná instantly dies; but Krishna, laying hold of her breast with both hands, sucked it with such violence that he drained it of the life, and the hideous Pútaná, roaring aloud, fell on the ground expiring.† The inhabitants awoke in alarm at the cries of the fiend, ran to the spot, and found Pútaná lying on the earth, and Krishna in her arms. Yasodá, snatching up Krishna, waved over him a cow-tail brush to guard him from harm, while Nanda placed dried cow-dung powdered upon his head, giving him at the same time an amulet.‡

Overturns a Waggon.—On one occasion, whilst Krishna was asleep underneath the family waggon, he cried for the breast, and kicking up his feet he overturned the vehicle, and all the pots and pans were broken. The cowherds and their wives hearing the noise came exclaiming, "Ah ' ah '" and then they found the child sleeping on his back. "Who could have upset the waggon?" said the cowherds. "This child," replied some boys, who witnessed the circumstances, "we saw him," said "they, crying and kicking the waggon with his feet, and so it was overturned." Nanda, not knowing what to think, took up the boy; whilst Yasodá offered worship to the broken pieces of pots and to the waggon, with curds, flowers, fruit, and unbruised grain.§

* *Vishnu Purána*, Book V. Chaps. 2-4

† The *Bhagavata Purána* says, "O foremost of Kings! even in its fall, her body, crushed by its weight, all trees standing within twelve miles. Surely that was greatly marvellous."

‡ *Vishnu Purána*, Book V. Chapter 5

§ *Vishnu Purána*, Book V. Chapter 6.

Complaints about the Misconduct of Krishna.—The Bhagavata Purāna says :

"Then the Almighty Krishna, accompanied by Rāma, began to sport with other boys of Vraja of the same age with him, thus enhancing the joys of the women of Vraja. The wives of the cowherds seeing the beautiful boyish pranks of Krishna repairing to his mother, said in her hearing, ' Krishna untethers the calves untimely. And if some one out of anger, says anything to him, he laughs out. Inventing novel means of pilfering, he steals and drinks tasteful curd and milk. He distributes his drinks among the monkeys, and if they do not eat, he breaks the pots containing curd and milk. When he does not find anything, being angry at the household he goes away after having made the infants cry aloud. When these things (milk, curd, &c.) are placed beyond the reach of his hands, he creates expedients by piling wooden seats, and mortars, &c. Again knowing them to be concealed in pots hanging in swings, he will strike holes in the pots. At times when the wives of the cowherds will be occupied in the performance of household duties, he will finish his work of theft in dark rooms, making the jewels of his person serve the purpose of lamps. He perpetrates these and other shameful acts. He passes urine and leaves excretions in cleansed houses. Thus committing vile deeds by thievish tricks, he lives near thyself like a very gentle boy. Thus apprised of the misdeeds of Krishna by these women who had been looking at his terrified eyes and his beautiful face, Yasodā only laughed, and was not willing to chastise him ' "



KRISHNA WITH BUTTER

Steals Butter and is tied to a Mortar.—While Yasodā was feeding Krishna, a cowherdess told her that the milk was boiling over. Setting down Krishna, she ran to save the milk. Then Krishna having broken the vessels containing the curds and buttermilk, destroyed the churning staves, and having taken a small earthen pot filled with butter, ran off to the cowherds,

children. He found a wooden mortar, placed upside down, upon which he sat, and having seated his companions around him, they began to distribute the butter to each other laughing, and to eat it.

When Yasodā came back she saw the court-yard and hall scattered with curds and buttermilk. Going out with a stick in her hand, she found Krishna distributing butter. Pretending to be angry, Yasodā brought him home and tied him to a wooden mortar, saying, "Now, you naughty boy, get away if you can." She then went about her domestic affairs. As soon as she had left, Krishna trying to extricate himself, pulled the mortar after him to the space where two large trees grew near each other. Having dragged the mortar between the trees, Krishna pulled it through, dragging down the trees. From the binding of the rope (*dāma*) round his belly (*udara*), Krishna is called Dāmodara.

The inhabitants of Gokula amazed at what happened, said, "Let us go to Vrindāvan where prodigies may no more disturb us." Having ascertained a lucky time from an astrologer for setting out, they departed.*

Harivansa account of the Departure to Vrindavan.—To induce the cowherds to go to Vrindavan, Krishna used the following expedient :

"From the hairs of his body (Krishna's) then arose hundreds of wolves, living on fat, blood, and flesh. As soon as they came out they ran in all directions as if to devastate the village Vraja. Beholding them fall upon calves, kine, and their women, the milkmen were stricken with great fear. "My son, my brother, my calf, my cow have been eaten by the wolves!" Such cries were heard in every house. Hearing the cries of the milk-women and the doleful noise of the kine, the assembled cowherds wished to go to Vrindavan."

Krishna at Vrindavan.—Balārāma and Krishna grew up together, engaged in the same boyish sports. They made themselves crests of the peacock's plumes, and garlands of forest flowers, musical instruments of leaves and reeds, or played upon the pipes used by the cowherds. They were robust, and they roamed about, always laughing and playing, sometimes with each other, sometimes with other boys, driving along with the young cowherds the calves to pasture. Thus the two guardians of the world were keepers of cattle, until they had attained 7 years of age in the cowpens of Vrindāvan.†

THE YOUTH OF KRISHNA.

Combat with Kaliya.—One day Krishna going to Vrindāvan, came to the Yamuna. Within its bed was the fearful pool of the

* The *Prem Sagar* and *Vishnu Purāna*, Book V. Chap. 6.

† Translation, pp. 270-271 abridged.

‡ *Vishnu Purāna*, Book V. Chap. 6.

serpent Kalya, boiling with the fires of poison. Krishna determined to dislodge the Naga, and thus enable people to frequent the *vicinage without fear*. It was the special purpose of his descent on earth to reduce to subjection all such violators of law. Climbing a kadamba tree on the banks of the river, he leaped boldly into the pool of the serpent king. Kalya then came forth attended by many other powerful and poisonous snakes, and by hundreds of serpent-nymphs. Coiling themselves around Krishna, they all bit him with teeth from which fiery poison was emitted. Krishna's companions, beholding him in the pool, encompassed by the snakes, ran off to Gokula, lamenting his fate. The cow-herds and their wives and Yasodā hearing the news, ran to the pool, frightened out of their senses. The Gopis, overcome with sorrow, said, "Let us plunge with Yasodā into the fearful pool of the serpent-king."



Balarāma then told Krishna to assume his celestial character, upon which he speedily extricated himself from the coils of the snakes. Laying hold of the middle hood of their chief with both hands, he bent it down, and set his foot upon the hitherto unbended head, and danced upon it in triumph. Whenever the snake attempted to raise his head, it was again trodden down. Trampled upon by the feet of Krishna, as they changed position in the dance, the snake fainted, and vomited forth much blood. The females of the snake-king then implored the clemency of Krishna.

The snake-king also feebly begged for mercy, acknowledging the pre-eminence of Krishna. The snake-king was set at liberty, but told to depart with his family to the Ocean. Praised by the Gopas and Gopis, Krishna returned to Vraja.*

Steals the Clothes of the Gopis.—One day while the Gopis were bathing, Krishna was pasturing cows sitting under the shade of a fig tree. Having heard the women singing, he came silently to the spot and looked on. A sudden thought struck him to steal their clothes, and having placed them all in a bundle before him, he climbed up a kudum tree. In the meantime the Gopis looking on the bank for their clothes could not find them. They said to one another, 'Not even a bird has been here, who can have taken away our clothes!' Just then a Gopī saw Krishna sitting on a kudum tree with a bundle of clothes before him. She called out, "Behold him who has stolen our clothes!" Hearing this and seeing Krishna, the women were ashamed. Sitting down in the water, joining their hands and bending their heads, they entreated Krishna to restore their clothes. Krishna replied, "By the oath of Nand, I will not give them thus, come out of the water, one by one, and ye shall obtain your clothes." At last the women, spreading their hands before them, came out of the water, bowing their heads. When they stood opposite to Krishna on the bank, he said laughing, "Now put your hands together and come forward, and I will give you your clothes." After giving them he said, "Be not displeased at what has happened, because this is a lesson I have given you. The habitation of the god Varuna is in water, for this reason if any one goes naked into the water, his character is entirely destroyed. Now go home and return in the month Kartika to dance the circular dance with me!"

The Mountain Govarddhana is held up by Krishna.—One day Krishna found all the cowherds busily preparing a sacrifice to Indra. Inquiring the reason, he was told that it was because Indra sent rain by which all living beings subsist. To this Krishna replied, "We are sojourners in forests, and cows are our support. The object that is cultivated by any one should be to him his chief divinity. The spirits of these mountains walk the forests. If they should be displeased with those who inhabit the forests, they will kill the offenders. We, then, are bound to worship the mountains, to offer sacrifices to cattle. What have we to do with Indra? Cattle and mountains are our gods. Let prayer and offerings then be addressed to the mountain Govarddhana, and kill a victim in due form. When the oblations have been presented, and the Brahmans have been fed, let the Gopis walk round the cows decorated with garlands."

* *Vishnu Purana*. Book V. Chap. 7.

† From the *Bagavata Purana*.

When Nanda and the other shepherds heard these words of Krishna, they said that he had spoken well, and performed the ceremony as he had enjoined.

Indra, disappointed of his offerings, was exceedingly angry. Addressing the clouds, he said "The insensate cowherd Nanda, assisted by his fellows, has withheld the usual offerings to us, relying upon the protection of Krishna. Now, therefore, afflict the cattle with rain and wind." When Indra ceased, the clouds, obedient to his commands, came down in a fearful storm of rain and wind, to destroy the cattle.

Krishna, after saying that this is the work of Indra, plucked up the mountain Govardhana, and held it aloft with one hand in sport, saying to the herdsmen, "Lo, the mountain is on high, enter beneath it quickly, and it will shelter you from the storm." Upon this, all the people, with their herds and their waggons and the Gopis, repaired to the shelter of the mountain. For 7 days and nights did the vast clouds sent by Indra rain upon Gokula to destroy its inhabitants, but they were protected by the elevation of the mountain, and Indra, being foiled in his purpose, commanded the clouds to cease. Krishna then restored the great mountain to its original site.¹

The Rasa Dance.—The following account is from the Bhagavata Purāna.

"Thereupon Govinda began his sportive dance, known as *Rāsa*, in the company of those best of damsels who attended on him and were greatly delighted, and stood holding one another by the hand. Then having stationed himself between every two of these damsels, Krishna the lord of all Yoga, commenced in that circle of Gopis, the festive dance known as *Rāsa*. Each damsel thought that Krishna was standing near her, and had embraced her by the neck. The firmament was then thronged with hundreds of chariots of the celestials accompanied by their wives, whose curiosity had been greatly excited. With desire raging in their breasts, these women having their throats smeared with various anointments, began to dance and sing. One damsel placed her cheek on Krishna's cheek. Then Krishna gave into her (mouth) the betel which he had been chewing. Although the Almighty Lord was self-satisfied, yet in his sport he enjoyed the company of these Gopis, having multiplied himself into as many Krishnas as there were Gopis. (*Here we omit one sloka*) Then in the company of these ladies he entered the waters of the Yamuna. Thereafter, O sire, he was sprinkled with water by those youthful damsels, who had been laughing and shooting amorous glances at him. Thereafter surrounded by the damsels, he sported on the grass on the bank of the Yamuna. Then Krishna resembled an elephant maddened with ichor-shedding sportng with she-elephants. (*Here we omit one sloka*)

¹ *Vishnu Purāna*, Book V. Chapter, 10.

Explanation of Krishna's conduct asked.

The AUSPICIOUS PARIKSHIT asked.—The Almighty Lord of the universe did incarnate himself by a part only for the propagation of the true religion and for the suppression of the vile ones. He is the Creator, expounder, as well as the upholder of the dignity of piety. O Brāhmana ! how did he then act in direct contravention of all systems of religion, by holding illicit intercourse with the wives of others ? The lord of the Yādus had attained the fruition of all his desires. With what end in view did he then perpetrate this shameful act ? O thou of excellent vows ! dispel all our doubts regarding this."

"The AUSPICIOUS SUKA answered:—Even the lords of people (Brahmā, Indra, etc.) deviate from the path of virtue, and become guilty of ravishment. But their acts do not bring any sin on the powerful and dispassionate ones (who perpetrate them), even as fire is not to be blamed for burning all things. But those who are not masters of their passions should not commit such acts even in their minds, if they do these acts out of foolishness, they are sure to meet with destruction, even as persons, except Rudra, meet with destruction having drunk poison. The words of the guardians of people are true (so ought to be followed) ; but their actions are scarcely true (so ought not to be indiscriminately followed) Therefore an intelligent person should act up to those words of them that are proper and not self-contradictory" pp. 150, 151

"Whoever respectfully listens to and rehearses the account of the amorous sport of Vishnu with the damsels of Vraja, conceives great devotion for the Almighty Lord, and subduing his own self, he speedily destroys his desires that are maladies of the mind, p 152.

Krishna and Radha.—Among the Gopis Krishna's favourite was Rādhā, the wife of Ayanagoshā. Her sister-in-law, seeing them together, told her brother of his wife's misconduct, and Rādhā was in fear lest he should murder her. When however she communicated her fears to her lover, he reassured her, telling her that when her husband came he would transform himself into Kālī, and her husband, instead of seeing her with a lover, would find her engaged in worshipping a goddess. Her husband happening to come soon after this, and finding her so employed, joined with her in the worship of Krishna in the form of Kālī. It is Rādhā whose name is ever associated with Krishna in hymns, songs, prayers and pictures. At this day all the wives of this deity are forgotten, but Rādhā is worshipped along with her lover.†

Kills the demon Arishta in the form of a Bull.—One evening whilst Krishna and the Gopis were amusing themselves in the dance, the demon Arishta, disguised as a savage bull, came to the spot, after having spread alarm through the station. He had vast

* *Bhagavad Gita*, Book x, chapter, xxxiii, abridged.

† *Hindu Mythology* by Wilkins p 170 The story is well known.

horns, and his eyes were like two fiery suns : as he moved, he ploughed up the ground with his hoofs, his tail was erect. Terrifying all the kine, the demon advanced. The herdsmen and their women were exceedingly frightened, and called aloud on Krishna, who came to their succour, shouting and slapping his arm in defiance. The demon, pointing his horns at the belly of Kesava, ran furiously upon the youth. Krishna, smiling, stirred not, but on the approach of the bull held him firmly by the horns, and wrung his throat as if it had been a piece of wet cloth, and then tearing off one of the horns, he beat the fierce demon with it until he died, vomiting blood from his mouth.*

KRISHNA KILLS KANSA.

Krishna destroys Kesin.—After this the rishi Nārada told Kansa how the child had been transferred from Devaki to Yasodā. He resolved to invite Krishna and Balarāma to Mathura to witness athletic sports, when he would engage them in a trial of strength with his chief boxers, by whom they would assuredly be killed. The invitation was to be sent to them by Akrura, one of the few good men in his kingdom. On the way he would order the fierce demon Kesin, who haunts the woods of Vrindavan, to attack them.

Kesin came in the shape of a steed, spurning the earth with his hoofs, and springing in his paces beyond the orbits of the sun and moon. The Gopas and Gopis fled in terror to Krishna for protection. Krishna, addressing Kesin, said, "Come on, wretch!" The demon ran upon him with his mouth opened wide, but Krishna enlarging the bulk of his arm, thrust it into his mouth, and wrenched out his teeth. The arm of Krishna in the throat of the demon continuing to enlarge, he was torn asunder, and lay separated into two portions. Krishna stood unharmed and smiling after the destruction of the demon.†

The Purāna makes Krishna styled Kesava from the destruction of Kesin; but grammarians derive it from *kes*, 'hair' and *va*, 'possessing.'

Krishna's Departure.—Akrura came to Gokula, and addressing Krishna, bowed his head to his feet. After he delivered his message, Krishna promised that he would go with Balarāma to Mathura, and within three nights he would slay Kansa. The Gopas were inconsolable, thinking that after seeing the graceful women of Mathura, Krishna would not return to them. Traveling in a car drawn by fleet horses, the two brothers arrived after sunset at Mathura.

Krishna kills Kansa's Washerman, etc.—Krishna and Balarāma entered Mathura, dressed like country people. As they walked about they saw a washerman colouring clothes, and with

* *Vishnu Purāna*, Book V. Chapter 14.

† *Vishnu Purāna*, Book V. Chap. 16.

smiling countenances they went and threw down some of his fine linen. The washerman was the servant of Kansa, made insolent by his master's favour: so he provoked the two lads with loud and scurrilous abuse, until Krishna struck him down, with his head to the ground, and killed him. Then taking the clothes they went their way, clad in yellow and blue raiment, until they came to a flower-seller's shop. The flower-seller presenting to them some of his choicest flowers, Krishna promised the greatest blessing to him and his posterity.

As they went along the high road, they saw a crooked girl, named Kubja, carrying a pot of ointment to the palace. At their request she gave them some of the fragrant ointment, which they rubbed over their bodies. Krishna lifting up her head with his thumbs and two fingers, and pressing down her feet with his feet, straightened her, and made her a beautiful woman. In gratitude she invited them to her house.

Entering the hall of arms, Krishna asked which bow he was to try. When shown it, he drew it with violence, and snapped it in two.*

The Public Games.—When Kansa knew that Krishna and Baladeva had come, he said to Chanura and Mushtika, his boxers, "Two youths, cowherd boys, have arrived, these two foes of mine must be killed by you fairly or unfairly." Next he sent for his elephant driver, and told him to station his great elephant near the gate of the arena, and drive him upon the two boys when they should attempt to enter.

In the morning the citizens assembled on the platforms set apart for them, and the princes, with the ministers and courtiers, occupied the royal seats. Near the centre of the circle, judges of the games were stationed by Kansa, while he himself sat apart close by upon a lofty throne. Separate platforms were erected for the ladies of the palace, for the courtesans, and for the wives of the citizens. Nanda and the cowherds had places appropriated to them, at the end of which sat Akrura and Vasudeva. Amongst the wives of the citizens appeared Devaki, the mother of Krishna.

When Krishna and Balarāma tried to enter the arena, Kansa's great elephant sought to keep them out. Krishna and Balarāma sported with it as they used to play with calves in their infancy. At length Krishna seized it by the tail, and whirling it round, dashed it on the ground, and killed it with blows. He pulled out the elephant's tusks, and blood streamed like a river from its mouth.

When the music sounded, Chanura sprang forth, and the people cried "Alas!" and Mushtika slapped his arms in defiance. Covered with dust and blood from the elephant, whom, when

* *Iskcon Purāna*, Book V, Chaps. 19, 20.

goaded upon them by his driver, they had slain, and armed with his tusks, Balarāma and Krishna confidently entered the arena. Exclamations of pity, mingled with astonishment, arose from all the spectators. "This, then, said the people, "is Krishna! This is he by whom Pūtana was slain; by whom the waggon was overturned, &c." The women complained that it was a great sin in the judges of the games to suffer a contest between boys and strong men.

Krishna, having tightened his girdle, danced in the ring, shaking the ground on which he trod. Balarāma also danced, slapping his arms in defiance. Krishna contended with Chanura, mutually entwining and pulling and beating each other with fists, arms and elbows, pressing each other with their knees, and kicking with their feet. At last Krishna having whirled Chanura round a hundred times dashed him on the ground with such violence as to smash his body into a hundred fragments, and strew the earth with a hundred pools of blood. In like manner, Balarāma threw Mushtika on the ground, and beat him till he was dead.

Kansa, in fierce anger, said to the people, "Drive these two cowboys out of the assembly, seize Nanda, put Vasudeva to death with torture." Upon this Krishna sprang up to the place where Kansa was seated, seized him by the hair of his head and crushed him to death by his weight. Krishna then dragged the dead body by the hair of the head into the arena, which made a deep furrow. A cry of grief arose from the assembly.

After Krishna and Balarāma had embraced the feet of Vasudeva and Devakī, Krishna liberated Ugrasena from confinement, and placed him on the throne. The chief of the Yādavas being crowned, performed the funeral rites of Kansa, and of the rest of the slain.⁴

Krishna and Balarama study the science of arms.—After Ugrasena had been raised to the throne, the two youths repaired to Avantī, to study under Sandipani. In the course of 64 days they had gone through the elements of military science, with the treatises on the use of arms, and directions for the mystic incantations which secure the aid of supernatural weapons. Sandipani, astonished at such proficiency, imagined that the sun and moon had become his scholars. When asked what present he should receive as his fee, he requested them to give him his dead son, drowned in the sea of Prabhāsa. Taking up their arms they marched against the ocean, but were told that a demon, named Panchajana, who lived in the form of a conch shell, had seized the boy and still had him. Krishna plunged into the sea, slew the demon, and took the conch shell as his horn, the sound of

⁴ *Vishnu Purāna*, Book V. Chaps. 17, 21

which fills the demon hosts with dismay. He also restored the boy to his father.*

Mathura besieged.—Kansa had married the two daughters of Jarásandha, King of Magadha, a very powerful prince. When he heard that Krishna had killed his son-in-law, he collected a large army, determining to put the Yádavas and Krishna to the sword. He invested the city with 5 lakhs of chariots, as many elephants, 14 lakhs of horse, and 25 lakhs of infantry armed with heavenly weapons. Krishna and Balaráma, with a small but resolute force, went out and defeated the armies of Magadha. Eighteen times did the haughty prince renew his attack, but was as often defeated.†

KRISHNA AT DWARAKA.

Dwaraka founded.—Notwithstanding the repeated defeats of Jarásandha, Kalayavana, the king of the Yavanas, with myriads of mlechchas and barbarians, and a vast army of elephants, cavalry, chariots and foot, advanced against Mathura. Krishna thinking that the force of the people had already been reduced, resolved to construct a citadel for the Yadu tribes so strong that it might be defended even by the women.

The Vishnu Purána simply says that Krishna solicited a space of 12 furlongs from the ocean and there he built Dwáráká, defended by high ramparts, and beautified with gardens and reservoirs of water, crowded with houses and buildings, and splendid as Amarávati, the capital of Indra. Thither Krishna conducted the inhabitants of Mathura, and there waited at that city the approach of the king of the Yavanas.‡

Destruction of Kalayavana.—When the Yádavas had been removed to Dwáráká, Krishna went forth unarmed and alone, and attracted the attention of the king of the Yavanas, whose army still surrounded Mathura. Krishna led the king to follow him into a large cave. Seeing a man lying there, and thinking it must be Krishna, the king kicked him, and in an instant became a heap of ashes. A man, named Muchukunda, had received as a boon from the gods, the power to sleep for a long period with this condition attached, that whoever should awake him should be instantly consumed by fire issuing from his body. Thus the king of the Yavanas perished, while Krishna escaped, and seized the army and treasures thus left without an owner. Krishna conducted them to Dwáráká, and delivered them to Ugrasena.§

Balarama, when drunk compels the Yamuna to come to him.—Balaráma finding wine in the hollow of a tree became drunk, and not knowing what he said, called out, "Come hither, Yamuna

* Vishnu Purána, Book V. Chapter 21.

† Vishnu Purána, Book V. Chapter 22.

‡ Vishnu Purána, Book V. Chapter 23.

§ Vishnu Purána, Book V. Chapter 24.

river, I want to bathe." The river disregarding the words of a drunken man, came not at his bidding. Balaráma, in a rage, took up his ploughshare which he plunged into her bank, and dragged her to him, calling out, "Will you not come, you jade?" Now go where you please (if you can)." Thus saying, he compelled the dark river to follow him whithersoever he wandered. Assuming a mortal form, the Yamuna besought Balaráma to pardon her, after which he let her go *

Krishna carries off Rukmini.—Bhishmaka, king of Vidarbha, had, a son named Rukmin, and a beautiful daughter named Rukmini. Krishna fell in love with the latter, and solicited her in marriage; but her brother, who hated Krishna, would not assent to the espousals. With the concurrence of his son, Bhishmaka affianced Rukmini to Sisupála. Krishna, his brother and other Yádavas went to the capital of Vidarbha to witness the wedding. Krishna contrived, on the eve of the nuptials, to carry off the princess, leaving Balaráma and his kinsmen to bear the attack of his enemies. When pursued by Rukmin with a vast army, Krishna, with his discus, destroyed them all, and would have killed Rukmin but for the intercession of his sister. Krishna afterwards married Rukmini in due form, having first made her his own by the Rakshasa ritual or by force.

Krishna had a son by Rukmini, called Pradyumna. While an infant, he was carried off by the demon Sambara, but afterwards he slew the demon!

The Wives of Krishna.—Besides Rukmini, Krishna had seven other beautiful wives, Kalindí, Mitravindá, the virtuous Nagnajití, the queen Jamvabatí, Rohini, of beautiful form the amiable and excellent daughter of the king of Madra, Madri: Satyabhámá, the daughter of Satrajit, and Lakshmaná, of lovely smiles. Besides these he had 16,000 other wives.†

The Children of Krishna.—The divine Krishna, the universal form without beginning, begat on all these wives 180,000 sons of whom thirteen were most celebrated, Pradyumna, Charadesha, Sámha, and others. Pradyumna married Kakudwatí, the daughter of Rukmini and had by her Anruddha. Anruddha married Subhadrá, the granddaughter of the same Rukmini, and she bore him a son named Vajra. The son of Vajra was Báhu and his son was Sucháru.

In this way the members of the Yadu family increased and there were many lakhs of them, so that it would be impossible to repeat their names in hundreds of years. Two verses regarding them are recited. "The domestic teachers of the boys in the use of arms numbered three crores and eighty lakhs. Who shall

* *Vishnu Purána*, Book V, Chapter 25. † *Vishnu Purána*, Book V, Chapter 26.
‡ *Vishnu Purána*, Book V, Chapter 28.

enumerate the powerful members of the Yádava family, who were tens of tens of thousands and hundreds of lakhs in number²⁴

Krishna destroys Naraka.—Indra came on his elephant to Dwáraká and reported to Krishna the tyranny of the demon Naraka. He had carried off the maidens of gods, saints, demons and kings, and shut them up in his palace. He had taken the umbrella of Varuna, the earrings of Aditi, Indra's mother, and now demanded his elephant Airāvata.

Krishna having called Garuda and having first placed Satyabhámá on his back, then mounted himself, and the bird flew to the capital of Naraka. Then Krishna destroyed thousands of demons, and when Naraka came into the field showering upon the deity all manner of weapons, he cut him in two with his discus. Earth then presented the two earrings of Aditi. In the apartments of the women he found 16,100 damsels, in the palace 6,000 large elephants, each having 4 tusks, and 21 lakhs of excellent horses. All these Krishna sent to Dwáraká. Then taking the umbrella of Varuna, and the jewel mountain, he mounted Garuda with Satyabhámá, and set off to the heaven of the gods to restore the earrings of Aditi.¹

Battle for the Parijata Tree.—Garuda went lightly with his burden as if in sport. On arrival at the gates of Swarga, Han blew his shell, and the gods advanced to meet him with respectful offerings. When he presented the earrings to Aditi, she praised him. "Thou art the eternal, universal and living soul, thou art the origin of all beings. Thou art gods, Yakshas, Dairys, Rákshasas, Siddhas, Pisáchas, Gandharbas, men, animals, deer, elephants, reptiles, trees, shrubs, and grasses, thou art all bodies whatever, composed of aggregated atoms."

Indra afterwards took Krishna and Satyabhámá round the gardens of Swarga. There they saw the Párijáta tree, produced when the ocean was churned for ambrosia. The bark was of gold, its fruit-stalks bore numerous clusters of fragrant fruit. When Satyabhámá noticed the tree, she said to her lord, "Why should not this divine tree be transported to Dwáraká? You have often said to me, 'Neither Jambavatí nor Rukminí is so dear to me, Satya as you are.' If you have spoken the truth, let this Párijáta tree be the ornament of my mansion. I long to shine amidst my fellow queens, wearing the flowers of this tree in the braids of my hair."

Thus solicited by Satyabhámá, Krishna took the Párijáta tree, and put it upon Garuda. The keepers of the garden remonstrated and said, "This Párijáta tree belongs to Sachí, the queen of Indra; it is not proper for you to remove it." Satyabhámá then sent this contemptuous message to Sachí. "If you

* *Vishnu Purána*, Book IV Chapter, 15.

† *Vishnu Purána*, Book V, Chapter 26.

are the beloved wife of your lord, let him prevent my husband from carrying off this tree."

Sachí excited her husband to resent this affront, and Indra, attended by the army of the celestials, marched to attack Krishna in defence of the Párijáta tree. A terrible battle ensued, in which arrows flew like rain-drops from two heavy clouds. The gods were defeated, and only Indra and his elephant, Airávata were left to contend with Krishna, and Garuda. Indra threw his thunderbolt at Krishna, but he caught it, and Garuda disabled Airávata. When Indra was going to run away, Satyabhámá, called him and said, "Take the Párijáta tree. I do not wish to take that which is another's property." Krishna also restored to Indra his thunderbolt. Upon this Indra said, "Let this Párijáta tree be transported to Dwáraká, and it shall remain upon earth as long as thou abidest in the world of mortals."

The Párijáta tree was planted in the garden of Satyabhámá, the smell of which perfumed the earth for three furlongs.

The above is the account given in the *Vishnu Purána*. The *Bhagavata Purána* merely says, "Incited by his wife, Krishna took away the Párijáta tree, having subdued the gods, and planted it in the garden of Satyabhámá." The *Harivansa* says that Satyabhámá's desire for the Párijáta tree was excited by Narada's presenting a flower from it to Krishna's other spouse, Rukminí.†

Krishna's 16,100 Wives.—All the wealth, elephants, horses, and women of Naraka were taken to Dwáraká. At an auspicious season Krishna espoused all the maidens whom Naraka had carried off from their friends. At one and the same moment he received the hands of all of them, according to the ritual, in separate mansions. The number of the maidens was 16,100, and with so many different forms did the foe of Madhu multiply himself. Every one of the damsels thought that he had wedded her in his single person; and the creator of the world, Hari, the assumer of universal shape, abode severally in the dwelling of each of these his wives.‡

In the *Mahábhárata*, *Anusásana Parva*, Krishna lauds Siva as the supreme Deity. Siva offers Krishna 8 boons, one of them being "a hundred hundred sons." Uma, wife of Siva, also offers 8 boons. Besides giving them, she added 16,000 wives.§

Battle between Krishna and Siva.—Krishna had in all 180,000 sons. The eldest was Pradyumna, the son of Rukminí. His son was Anuruddha. Ushá, daughter of Bana, a thousand-handed Asura who worshipped Siva, had fallen in love with Anuruddha, and had him conveyed to her by magic art. The guards discovering him with Ushá, reported it to the king, who sent men to seize

* Book V Chaps 30, 31.

† Note by Wilson

‡ *Vishnu Purána*, Book V Chap 31

§ See Translation p 92.

Aniruddha, but taking up an iron club he slew his assailants. Bana then by magic bound Aniruddha in serpent bonds.

When this was reported to Krishna, mounting Garuda along with Balaráma and Pradyumna, he set off for the city of Bana. On nearing the city, Fever, emanating from Siva, having 3 feet and 3 heads, fought desperately with Krishna, but was overcome by Fever which Krishna had engendered. The former then departed, saying to Krishna, "Those who call to memory the combat between us shall be exempt from febrile diseases."

A battle then took place in which Bana and the whole of the Asuras, assisted by Siva and Kartikeya, fought with Krishna. After a terrible battle, Siva, no longer able to fight, sat down in his car, while Kartikeya took to flight. Krishna, with his discus, lopped off the arms of Bana. When about to launch it a second time to destroy Bana, Siva interceded for the life of his worshipper. Krishna, granting his request, said: "You are fit to apprehend that you are not distinct from me, that which I am, thou art."*

Paundraka destroyed and Kasi burnt.—A man, called Paundraka, fancying himself to be Vishnu who had come down upon earth, sent the following message to Krishna: "Relinquish, thou foolish fellow, the discus, come and do me homage; and I will give thee means of subsistence." Krishna replied that he would come with his discus. Mounting Garuda, he set off for the city of Paundraka.

The King of Kási sent his army to assist that of Paundraka. Krishna showering upon the enemy shafts from his bow, and hurling at them his mace and discus, quickly destroyed both armies. Paundraka was cut in pieces by the discus; the king of Kási's head was struck off and thrown into the city, after which Krishna returned to Dwáráká.

When the people of Kási sought the help of Siva to destroy Krishna, a fierce female form was sent for this purpose. She came to Dwáráká when Krishna was engaged in sportive amusements and playing at dice. He said to the discus, "Kill this fierce creature." The demon attacked fled to Kási. The army of Kási and Siva's demi-gods came out to oppose the discus. Not only were they destroyed by the discus, but the whole city with its inhabitants was consumed by fire, after which the discus returned to the hand of Vishnu.†

* *Vishnu Purāna*, Book V. Chaps. 32, 33.

† *Vishnu Purāna*, Book V. Chap. 34. Chapter 35 describes how Balaráma dragged the city Hastinapur towards him to throw it into the river. The next chapter narrates how he destroyed the Asura Dwidiva in the form of an ape.

THE DEATH OF KRISHNA AND DESTRUCTION OF DWARAKA.

The Curse on the Yadavas.—At the holy place Pindāraka, Visvāmītra, Kauwa, and the great sage Nārada, were observed by some boys of the Yadu tribe. Giddy with youth, they dressed and adorned Sāmba, a son of Krishna by Jambavatī, as a damsel, and conducting her to the sages, they addressed them with the usual marks of reverence, and said, "What child will this female, the wife of Bābru, who is anxious to have a son, give birth to?" The sages very angry at being thus tricked by the boys, said, "She will bring forth a club, that shall crush the whole of the Yādava race."

The boys told all that had occurred to Ugrasena, and, as foretold, a club was produced from the belly of Sāmba. Ugrasena had the club, which was of iron, ground to dust, and thrown into the sea; but the particles of dust then became rushes. One part of the club which could not be broken when thrown into the sea was swallowed by a fish. The fish was caught, the iron spike was extracted from its belly, and was taken by a hunter, named Jara.

The Message to Krishna.—Then there came a messenger from the gods to Krishna, saying, "The demons have been slain, and the burden of the earth has been removed, now let the immortals once again behold their monarch in heaven. To this Krishna replied, "The burdens of the earth are not removed until the Yādavas are extirpated. When I have restored the land of Dwārakā to the Ocean, and annihilated the race of Yadu, I will proceed to the mansions of the immortals."

Krishna observing the signs and portents prognosticating the ruin of Dwārakā, said to the Yādavas, "Behold these fearful phenomena; let us hasten to Prabhāsa to avert these omens."

The Picnic at Prabhāsa.—The Vishnu Purāna merely says that "The Yādavas ascended their rapid cars and drove to Prabhāsa, along with Krishna, Rāma, and the rest of their chiefs. They bathed there." The Harivansa Parva of the Mahābhārata enters more into detail. The following account is abridged from it, as given by Dr. Rajendralala Mitra:

"The wise Baladeva, the lord of regions, Janārdana and the princes, earthly lords of godlike glory, issued forth in separate parties. Along with the handsome and well-adorned princes, came thousands of prostitutes. These dealers on their beauty had been originally introduced into Dwāravatī by the mighty Yādavas, who had brought them away from the palaces of the Dāityas whom they had conquered. There were common harlots who had been kept for the entertainment of the Yādava princes. Krishna had kept them in the city with a

* Vishnu Purāna, Book V. Chap. 37.

† Vishnu Purāna, Book V. Chapter 37,

view to prevent unseemly brawls, which, at one time, used to take place on account of women."

"Baladeva went out with his affectionate and only wife Revati. Adorned with garlands of wild flowers, and jubilant with draughts of kadamba wine, he disported with Revati in the ocean waters.

"Govinda of the lotus eye entertained himself in many forms with his 16,000 wives, so pleasing everybody that each thought Krishna was most attracted to her, and it was for her only that he was in the ocean water. By his order the ocean then circulated clear and fragrant water devoid of all saltiness. Standing ankle-deep or knee-deep, thigh-deep or breast-deep each according to her choice, the ladies in great glee threw showers of water on Krishna, and Krishna, in his turn, showered water on the ladies. Some resting on their breasts like pitchers, swam about in great joy for the gratification of Janārdana. Delighted with the sight, Krishna sported with Rukmini.

"The accomplished and heroic princes, in a separate company entertained themselves in the sea-water with the damsels who had come with them, and who were proficient in dancing and singing.

"At this time Krishna sent for Panchachūdā, Kauveri, Māhendri, and other accomplished Apsarasas, to heighten the pleasure of the entertainment, and when they, with folded hands, appeared before him and saluted him, the Lord of the universe spoke to them most encouragingly, "For my sake," said he, "O fair ones entertain the Yādus," exhibit to them your rare proficiency in dancing and singing, as well as in actions and music of diverse kinds."

"The charming Apsarasas respectfully received the order of Hari, and entered joyfully the pleasant throng of the noble heroes. When the princes were overcome with wine, bewitching actresses lifted them high in the air, and anon held them in their hands, looking at them with enchanting grace.

"Inflamed by plentiful libations of kadamba liquor, Balarama, the majestic, danced in joy with his wife the daughter of Revata, sweetly beating time with his own hands. Beholding this, the damsels were delighted. The wise, and noble Krishna, to enhance the enjoyment of Bala, commenced to dance with his wife Satyubhāmā. The mighty hero Pásthā (Arjuna) who had come to this sea side picnic with great delight, joined Krishna, and danced with the slender and lovely Subhadra.

"Krishna and Nārada began to pelt water on Bala and his party, and they in their turn did the same on the party of Krishna. The wives of Bala and Krishna, excited by libations of various wines, followed their example, and squinted water in great glee, with syringes in their hands.

The Brahman sage Nārada,* the revered of the gods, began to dance with his matted locks all dishevelled. By mimicking the action of some, the smile of others, the demeanour of a third set, he set all a laughing.

* The reputed author of one of the principal law treatises, *Nārada Saṁhitā*.

On the conclusion of the dance, after putting on their dresses they repaired to the banqueting hall. There they took their seats according to their respective ranks. Cleanly cooks served up to them young buffaloes roasted on spits, and dressed by dropping ghi thereon; large haunches of venison; meat cooked as curries, and sauces made of tamarinds, pomegranates, &c. Of drinkables, too, of various kinds, the party partook most plentifully, with appropriate relishes. Surrounded by their loved ones, they drank of maireya, mādhvika, surā, and āsava,* helping them on with roasted birds, seasoned with pungent condiments, cakes of rich flavour, &c.†

The Destruction of the Yadavas.—The Vishnu Purāna says, “As the Yādavas drank, the destructive flame of dissension was kindled amongst them by mutual collision, and fed with the fuel of abuse.” The Mahābhārata gives particulars, already quoted.

The Vishnu Purāna thus describes the fight :

Infuriated by the divine influence, they tell upon one another with missile weapons, and when these were expended, they had recourse to the rushes growing nigh. The rushes in their hands became like thunderbolts, and they struck one another with them fatal blows. Kesava interposed to prevent them, but they thought that he was taking part with each severally, and, continued the fight. Krishna then enraged took up a handful of rushes to destroy them, and the rushes became a club of iron, and with them he slew many of the murderous Yādavas, whilst others, fighting fiercely, put an end to one another. In a short time there was not a single Yādava left alive, except the mighty Krishna and Dāruka.‡

Balarāma assuming the form of Sesha, and the Message to Dwaraka.—Krishna and Dāruka, going towards Balarāma, who was sitting at the foot of a tree, beheld a large serpent coming out of his mouth. The mighty serpent then proceeded to the Ocean, and, adored by attendant snakes, entered into the waters of the deep. Dāruka was told to go to Dwārakā to relate what had happened; to tell the people that the sea would inundate the town, and bid them depart with Arjuna.

Krishna killed by a hunter.—On one occasion, the rishi Durvāsa was hospitably entertained by Krishna; but the latter omitted to wipe away the fragments of food which had fallen on the foot of the irascible sage, who thereupon foretold that Krishna was to die by a wound in the foot. After Dāruka left, Krishna sat engaged in thought. Assuming one of the postures in which

* “All strong spirits prepared in different ways.” *Indo-Aryans*, Vol. I. p. 426.

† *Indo-Aryans*, Vol. I. pp. 424-441. See also Harivansa Translation, pp. 684, 647.

‡ *Vishnu Purāna*, Book V. Chap. 37.

abstraction (yoga) is practised, he had laid his left leg across his right thigh, by which the sole of the foot was turned outward.

A hunter, named Jara, whose arrow was tipped with a blade made of the piece of iron of the club which had not been reduced to powder, beholding from a distance the foot of Krishna, mistook it for part of a deer, and shooting his arrow, lodged it in the sole. Jara, seeing his mistake, fell at Krishna's feet and asked forgiveness, to whom Krishna said, "Fear not in the least, go, hunter, through my favour to heaven, the abode of the gods." Immediately a celestial car appeared, in which the hunter ascended to heaven, and Krishna abandoned his mortal body, and the condition of the threefold qualities.*

Funeral Rites.—Arjuna having found the bodies of Krishna and Balarāma, performed for them and the rest of the slain, the obsequial rites. The 8 queens of Krishna, with Rukmini at their head, embraced the body of Hari, and entered the funeral fire. Revatī also, embracing the corpse of Balarāma, entered the blazing pile. Hearing these events, Ugrasena and Vasudeva, with Dewaki and Rohinī, committed themselves to the flames. Arjuna conducted the thousands of the wives of Krishna and all the people from Dwārakā with tenderness and care. The Pāryāta trec proceeded to heaven, and on the same day that Hari departed from the earth the dark-bodied Kali age descended. The ocean rose and submerged the whole of Dwārakā, except along the dwelling of the deity of the race of Yadu. The sea has not yet been able to wash that temple away, and there Kesava constantly abides, even to the present day. Whoever visits that holy shrine, the place where Krishna pursued his sports, is liberated from all his sins.†

KRISHNA'S CHARACTER HOW TO BE ESTIMATED.

Vague declamation without evidence, is worthless. The following steps are necessary

All the Facts must be collected.—Without this no correct judgment can be formed. The foregoing statement includes *all* the main events in Krishna's life, taken *verbatim*, without addition or comment, from the Mahābhārata, the Vishnu and Bhagavata Pūrānas, and the Harivansa, the highest authorities on the subject. The translations quoted are not from Europeans, whose accuracy might be impugned, but from competent Bengali scholars. Conclusions should be drawn from them, not from Krishna's life by a novelist in the nineteenth century. In this way an imaginary Krishna may be framed, totally unlike the original.

* Vishnu Purāna, Book V. Chap. 37.

† Vishnu Purāna, Book V. Chap. 38.

The Facts must be examined by men competent to form a judgment.—Hindu pundits are noted for their want of common sense and credulity. They accept the most extraordinary and contradictory statements with implicit belief. Many Hindu controversialists reject, add, or alter the evidence as suits their purpose.

Sir H. S. Maine says :

Where the Indian intellect had been trained at all before the establishment of the British Indian Empire, it stood in need, before anything else, of stricter criteria of truth '.

India has now trained lawyers, men accustomed to weigh evidence. The foregoing extracts contain the facts of the case, let them draw the conclusions based upon them, and not from imaginary representations

Bad Deeds not counterbalanced by Good Deeds —Suppose a man in a court of justice is charged with theft. The charge is not withdrawn on account of other alleged good deeds. The question is *Did Krishna act in the manner described* ' not whether he acted differently on other occasions, whether he was not a great warrior or statesman ?

OBJECT OF KRISHNA'S INCARNATION.

The Bhagavad Gītā says

"As often as there is a decline of *dharma* and an exaltation of *adharma*, then I produce myself. I am born from age to age, for the preservation of the good, for the destruction of the wicked, and the re-establishment of *dharma*." (iv 5-8)

In proof of the fulfilment of his mission, it is said that he killed wicked kings like Kansa and Sisupāla, besides countless demons

It may be mentioned that belief in demons is characteristic of a low state of civilization. In India it was probably inherited from the savage aborigines, whose religion was demon worship.

The stories of Krishna's victories over demons only convince intelligent men that they are fictions. In the Bhagavata Purāna, the body of Pūtana, in its fall is said "to have crushed by its weight all trees standing within twelve miles." Well may the remark be added, "Surely this was greatly marvellous" (see p 12)

The Twentieth Century, instead of accepting such wonders, looks upon them as the inventions of poets in an unenlightened age.

In the following remarks the writer endeavours not to make a single statement not based on evidence supplied. If their accuracy is questioned, let the details be given with the proofs. General charges, without evidence, are worthless.

CHARACTER OF KRISHNA AS DESCRIBED IN THE MAHABHARATA, THE PURANAS, AND THE HARIVANSA.

1. DISOBEDIENCE AND MISCHIEVOUSNESS AS A CHILD.

In the Christian Commandments relating to our conduct to others, the first is, "Honour thy father and thy mother." Of Jesus Christ and His parents it is said, that He was "subject to them." Krishna so disregarded the commands of Yasodá, that she tied him to a mortar. He amused himself by pulling the tails of the calves; he took pleasure in scattering curds and butter on the floor and compound, in breaking pots, &c. See the account of him as given in the Bhagavata Purána, (p. 13) Chaitanya, in *Lord Gauranga*, is described as acting somewhat similarly in refusing to learn the alphabet, besmearing his body and dress with dust, &c. "Sometimes when Nímái sorely taxed her patience, Shachee would pursue him with a rod in her hand."

Notwithstanding such conduct, many Hindus have such low ideas of God that the worship of Krishna as a child is popular. He is represented as a child with butter in his hand (see page 4). He is worshipped under the name of Bála-Gopála, the boy Gopál or Krishna. Balkrishna is a common name.

Krishna was disobedient to Yasodá, and his children acted similarly towards himself, ending in their own destruction.

2 LOW IDEAS OF TRUTH AND HONESTY.

Truth — Arjuna and Yudhishtira had higher ideas of truth than Krishna.

In the Drona Parva, as already quoted, (See p. 6) he recommended a falsehood to be told: "Casting aside virtue, ye sons of Pándu, adopt now some contrivance for gaining the victory, so that Drona of the golden car may not slay us all in battle; upon the fall of (his son) Aswattháman he will cease to fight, I think. Let some man therefore tell him that Aswattháman has been slain in battle." Arjuna did not approve of this advice. Yudhishtira accepted it with great difficulty.

It is said that Yudhishtira, on account of this falsehood, told at the suggestion of Krishna, was punished by a sight of the lost in hell on his way to heaven.

When Krishna agreed to become Arjuna's charioteer, the promise was given that he should not fight. Notwithstanding this, he offered to fight with Bhishma. To this Yudhishtira replied, "O Krishna, I dare not for my own glorification falsify