

is a most remarkable feature of the constitution, that the judicature and police proceeded, strictly speaking, from the *midst* of the people (Deut. 1: 13). The *people* thus, as it were, guided and *judged* themselves through the agency of men whom—the Supreme Suffetes [Judges] not even excepted—their confidence elected. They had no functionaries appointed, according to *rank* or *wealth*, by some *central* power of the government. Nor did their officers serve for pay; but free, without emolument, unapproachable by bribes, venerable with age and patriarchal influence, they were selected from among the people, to administer the judicial and other functions.¹

ARTICLE VII.

SACRED TRADITIONS IN THE EAST.

BY REV. E. BURGESS, RECENTLY MISSIONARY OF THE A. B. C. F. M.

AMONG all the people of the earth, the religious sentiment appears to be stronger in none, than it is with the adherents of Brahmanism. At least, there is no people with whom religion is more connected with all the affairs of life, than it is with them. From the moment of birth, till death, and after death, the Hindû is subjected to religious ceremony. Probably no language, previous to the invention of printing, possessed so large an amount of literature, as the Sanskrit; and that literature was almost all religious. The most important of the Sacred writings of the Hindûs, are among the most ancient, if they are not *the* most ancient, writings extant at the present day. Sanskrit scholars make the first of the Vedas to be at least as ancient as the books of Moses, and

¹ The statements made in this paragraph are made more manifest in the succeeding chapters of the work.

admit the strong probability, that they were at least parts of them, written some centuries earlier. And from the time of the Vedas, some 1400 or 1500 years B. C., to the last of the Puránas, some 1000 years after, there originated in India, a vast amount of literature, mythological, scientific, and religious. In some respects the literature of the Sanskrit Language surpasses that of the Greeks. Its Mythology is more extensive, and not much more absurd. If its science is not as correct, it is more voluminous. Its poetry is equally elaborate. It enumerates some 150 kinds of verse; some of its poems are said to consist of 100,000 stanzas. Its schools of philosophy outnumber those of the Greeks, and for subtlety and refined analysis, some of the works of the Brahmans are not a whit behind the most subtle and refined productions of Plato and Aristotle.

A mere statement of the names and number of works in the principal departments of literature and science is somewhat formidable. There are the four Vedas written some 1200 or 1800 years B. C.; the Laws of Manu dating some five or six centuries later; the Epic poems, the Mahábhárata and Rámáyana, written probably five or six centuries before our era;¹ then after Christ, there are the eighteen Puránas, or modern mythological religious systems; the eighteen or twenty Sietháantas or astronomical treatises, with treatises on logic, grammar and philosophy, all constituting a body of literature, probably not surpassed in extent before the revival of learning in Europe, by the literature of any language on earth. And it is not, likewise, surpassed by any other literature in that which is absurd, and which indicates a degraded state of mind among the people to whom it belongs; yet there are some redeeming qualities.

The religion and literature of the Hindûs are interesting

¹ In reference to some Hindû books it is evident that a portion of the materials of which they are composed existed centuries before they were collected and put together as we now have them. Prof. Wilson remarks respecting one of those above mentioned: "The weight of authority is in favor of the thirteenth or fourteenth century B. C. for the war of the Mahábhárata." — Vish. Pu. p. 485, note. Yet the present compilation may have been later, and some of its materials may be of comparatively modern origin.

to the philosophical student of history in two respects: viz., the fact that they belong to about one-fifth of the human race, and because they possess some of the most ancient records, and most ancient religious ideas and philosophical systems that have come down to us from antiquity. This last consideration, especially, clothes the systems of Hindû philosophy and religion with an interest they would not otherwise possess. And this interest is increased by the fact, that we find some decided indications of a direct connection between those records and systems and the primitive ideas and religion of man, as shown by the Christian Scriptures. This suggests the particular subject of this Article, Sacred traditions in the East, or,

A presentation of facts, ideas and customs, from the religious literature and habits of the Hindûs, which indicate for those habits and that religion, a connection more or less direct with the true religion as taught in the Christian Scriptures.

The evidence of a connection with, or derivation from, the religion of the Christian and Jewish Scriptures, will be more or less distinct; it sometimes consists in marked resemblances to Jewish or Christian doctrines, and sometimes even the contrast is of such a nature that it suggests for doctrines a common origin.

We begin with the ideas of a Supreme Deity, as the cause of the existence of the universe.

The philosophy and religion of the Brahmans, unquestionably, do recognize the existence of one supreme, self-existent, spiritual cause of all things. "This," says Prof. Wilson of Oxford, "is, with the exception of one school of Philosophy—the Sankya—the received doctrine of the Hindûs." Though when they come to particulars, there is a great variety of opinion in regard to the attributes of their Deity; so much so, that it would be easy to prove from almost any of their systems, Pantheism, Dualism, Materialism or any other religious or philosophical absurdity, that ever entered the depraved heart of man to conceive. It is not our design to speak at all of these various *isms*, our object being simply to notice the fact of their recognition of the true doctrine with its proof.

Says Prof. Wilson: "The Vedas are authority for the existence of one Divine Being, supreme over the universe, and existing before all worlds;" and he gives the following passage: "In the beginning, this all" (the universe) "was in darkness. He (the supreme) was alone, without a second. He reflected, I am one, I will become many. Will was conceived in the divine mind, and creation ensued. (*Oxford Lectures*, p. 43.) In the Mosaic cosmogony the language is: "And God said let us make man in our image after our likeness."

In the Vishnu Purána, it is said: "That which is imperceptible, undecaying, inconceivable, unborn, unexhaustible, indescribable; which has neither form, nor hands nor feet; which is almighty, omnipresent, eternal; the cause of all things and without cause; permeating all, itself unpenetrated, and from which all things proceed; that is Brahma." (*Vishnu Purána*, Prof. Wilson's translation, p. 642.)

The word *Brahma*,¹ is a neuter noun, denoting the abstract Supreme Spirit. The masculine form, *Brahmá*, denotes the active Creator; of which we shall soon speak. Again (p. 642—3) it is said: "That essence of the Supreme is defined by the term *Bhagavat*. The word *Bhagavat* is the denomination of that primeval Eternal God. The word *Bhagavat* is a convenient form to be used in the adoration of that Supreme Being, to whom no term is applicable, and therefore, *Bhagavat* expresses that Supreme which is individual, almighty, and the cause of causes of all things."

"He dwelleth internally in all beings, and all beings dwell in Him. He, though one with all beings, is beyond and separate from material nature. He is beyond all investing substance; he is the universal soul; glory, might, dominion, wisdom, energy, power, and other attributes, are collected in Him, Supreme of the Supreme, in whom no imperfections

¹ This neuter form is pronounced *Brumha*, the final *a* being short, like the final *a* in *America*. The masculine is *Brumhá*, the final vowel being long, has the long Italian sound. And hereafter, in proper names, the *d* (or *a* with the accent) has the long Italian sound, and *a* (or *a* without an accent) has the short sound as above. In some instances the accent may have been omitted.

abide, Lord over finite and infinite, visible and invisible, omnipotent, omnipresent, almighty. The wisdom, perfect, pure, supreme, undefiled, and one only, by which he is conceived, contemplated and known, that is wisdom." (Id. p. 644.)

Many passages of similar import, describing the attributes to the Deity, might be cited from the Vishnu Purána, and many likewise of a different import, honesty in regard to the subject requires us to say, are contained in the same work, which teach pantheism. We cite a single example (p. 216).

"This Vishnu is the Supreme Spirit (Brahma), from whence all this world proceeds, who is the world. He is primary nature, He in a perceptible form, "is the world. He is the performer of the rites of devotion; he is the rite. He is the fruit which it bestows, he is the implements by which it is performed. There is nothing besides the illimitable Hari." (Vishnu.)

Such passages, too, are not unfrequent, and the pantheistic theology which they teach, is very prominent in the popular mind.

The next topic which we shall consider, is their account of creation. The cosmogony of the Hindûs is given, with some variation, in the laws of Manu, in the Mahábhárata, and in most, if not all, of the eighteen Puránas, and in other books. The differences are not essential. We take the account given in Manu, which is not only the most concise, but the most ancient, being written, probably in the seventh or eighth century before Christ.

Manu, it may be well to remark, is the personification of Brahmá, the creator, the progenitor of mankind, and from this root through the Gothic, is derived the word *man*. The work, from which we quote, is regarded by the Hindûs, as a revelation from Brahmá:

"(5) This universe existed only in darkness, imperceptible, undefinable, undiscoverable by reason, undiscovered, as if it were wholly immersed in sleep. (6) Then the self-existing power, himself undiscerned, but making this world discernable with five elements, and other principles, appeared with undiminished glory, dispelling the gloom. (7) He, whom the

mind alone can perceive, whose essence eludes the external organs, who has no visible parts, who exists from eternity, even He, the Soul of all beings, whom no being can comprehend, shone forth in person. (8) He having willed to produce various beings from his own substance, first with a thought created the waters, and placed in them a productive seed. (9) The seed became an egg, bright as gold, blazing like the luminary with a thousand beams; and in that egg, He was born himself, in the form of *Brahmá*, the great forefather of all spirits. (10) The waters are called *Nárá*, because they were the offspring of *Nara*, the Supreme Spirit; and as in them his first *áyana* (progress) in the character of *Brahmá* took place, he is thence *Náráyana* (he whose place of moving was the waters). (11) From that which is, the cause, not the object of sense, existing *everywhere in substance*, not existing *to our perception* without beginning or end, was produced the divine male, famed in all worlds as *Brahmá*. (12) In that egg the great power sat inactive a whole year of the Creator, at the close of which, by his thought alone, he caused the egg to divide itself; (13) and from its two divisions, he framed the heaven *above*, and the earth *beneath*; in the midst he placed the subtile ether, the eight regions, and the permanent receptacle of the waters."

Then, passing over some twenty uninteresting, if not unmeaning, stanzas, respecting the creation, in the abstract of mind, consciousness, the vital forms endowed with the three qualities of *goodness*, *passion*, and *darkness*, and the five perceptions of sense, making six principles, immensely active, *viz.*: consciousness and the five perceptions, which with the great soul, make the seven active principles of the universe, the account proceeds:

"(24) He gave being to time and the divisions of time, to the stars also, and the planets, to rivers, oceans, and mountains, to level plains and uneven valleys. (25) To devotion, speech, complacency, desire, and wrath, and to creation; (26) for the sake of distinguishing action, He made a total difference between right and wrong.

(31) That the human race might be multiplied, he caused

the Bráhmaṇ, kshatriya, the vaishya, and the shudra, to proceed from his mouth, his arm, his thigh and his foot. (32) Having divided his own substance, the mighty power became half male and half female, (or *nature*, *active* and *passive*, says the commentator) and from that female he produced *Viráj*. (33) Know me, O, most excellent Bráhmaṇ, to be that person, whom the male power *Viráj*, produced by himself, Me, the secondary framer of all this *visible world*.

(34) It was I, who, desirous of giving birth to a race of men, performed very difficult religious duties, and first produced ten lords of created beings, eminent in holiness. (36) They, abundant in glory, produced seven other (Manus) together with deities, and the mansions of deities and Maharshis, or great sages, unlimited in power; (37) benevolent genii, and fierce giants, blood-thirsty savages, heavenly choristers, nymphs and demons, huge serpents and snakes of smaller size, birds of mighty wing, and separate companies of *Pitris* or progenitors of mankind; (38) lightnings and thunderbolts, clouds and colored bows of *Indra*, falling meteors, earth-rending vapors, comets and luminaries of various degrees; (39) horse-faced sylvans, apes, fish and a variety of birds, tame cattle, deer, men, and ravenous beasts with two rows of teeth; (40) small and large reptiles, moths, lice, fleas, and common flies, with every biting gnat, and immovable substances of distinct sorts. (41) Thus was this whole assemblage of stationary and movable bodies framed by those high-minded beings, through the force of their own devotions, and at my command, with separate actions allotted to each. (42) Whatever act is ordained for each of those creatures here below, I will now declare to you, together with their order in respect to birth." (*Institutes of Manu*, Sir William Jones's Translation, chap. I).

Respecting the cosmogony, it may be remarked (passing by absurdities and incongruities, to speak of which being no part of our design), in comparing it with that of *Moses* :

1. We are reminded of the second verse of the first of *Genesis* : " And the earth was without form and void, and darkness was upon the face of the deep, and the spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters."

(2.) We are reminded by it, of the doctrine that ascribes creation to Jesus Christ, who is called, "The image of the invisible God, the first born of every creature," "the only begotten son of God." In the Hindû account it is said, the Supreme, self-existing spirit, with a thought created the waters, in them placed a seed, which became an egg, in that egg, he himself was born, in the form of Brahmá, who is the active creator. In the Christian scriptures it is said: "In the beginning was the word, and the word was with God, and the word was God, and all things were made by him, and without him, was not anything made that was made;" and again, "For all things were made by him," and "by whom he made the worlds." "No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him," and other passages which bear upon the point. The two most remarkable particulars of resemblance between the two cosmogonies is: The self-existing Supreme Spirit is not the active Creator. The active Creator is the Son of this Supreme Spirit, and yet the same with him.

In the Hindû cosmogony, there are three stages of development before we come to the material universe; in the Jewish and Christian only two. In the latter, the only-begotten creates directly; in the former, Brahmá, who is the *born* from the Supreme self-existing Spirit, himself only created, mind, consciousness, and the five perceptions, and the great Soul, under which seems to be included the universe of spiritual existence. For the creation of the material universe, another stage of development is required, and another form is assumed, or rather, another being produced, who finished the work.

In regard to the origin of moral evil, according to Manu, it seems to be directly attributed to creative power. For he says: "Whatever quality, noxious or innocent, harsh or mild, unjust or just, false or true, he (the Supreme) conferred on any being at its creation, the same quality enters it, of course on its *future births*; (29) and among the beings created, he mentions fierce giants, and blood-thirsty savages. He says, moreover, that all the vital form

at creation with the three qualities, *goodness*, *passion* and *darkness*; and darkness, in Hindû theology, in moral beings, leads to folly, ignorance and sin.

But in the Vishnu Purána, it is said: "The beings created by Brahmá, of the four castes, were at first endowed with righteousness and perfect faith; their hearts were free from guile; they were pure. In their sanctified minds Hari (Vishnu) dwelt; and they were filled with perfect wisdom. After a while, that portion of Hari, which is one with Kála (time), infused into created beings sin, as yet feeble though formidable, or passion and the like; the impediment of the soul's liberation, the seed of iniquity, sprung from darkness and desire. The innate perfection of human nature was then no more evolved. The eight kinds of perfection were impaired, these being enfeebled and sin gaining strength, mortals were afflicted with pain, arising from susceptibility to contrasts, as heat, cold and the like." (*Vishnu P.*, p. 45.)

The next point of resemblance or coincidence, or perhaps we should say, tradition, for we believe it to be a tradition from a passage in Genesis, relates to the four rivers, that fall out of heaven on Mount Meru, a great mountain fabled to be in the midst of Jambu Dwipa, the inhabitable world. The account in the Vishnu Purána is as follows:

"On the summit of Meru is the vast city of Brahmá, extending fourteen thousand leagues and renowned in heaven. The capital of Brahmá is enclosed by the river Ganges, which issuing from the foot of Vishnu, and washing the lunar orb, falls here from the skies, and after encircling the city, divides into four mighty rivers, and flows in opposite directions. (*Vishnu P.*, p. 169.)

The same account, substantially is found in some of the astronomical treatises. (See Sidhanta Shiromani Ganitádháya, ch. 1. vv. 37, 38.)

In Genesis 2: 10, it is said: "A river went out of Eden to water the garden, and from thence it was parted, and became into four heads."

We pass to traditions respecting the flood. And in order to exhibit the various points distinctly, it is necessary to state briefly the Hindû theory respecting

The Hindûs measure the lapse of time by ages or *yugas*. The present age, or the *Kali yuga*, consists of 432,000 years. Twice this, or 864,000 years, is the duration of the *Dwápára yuga*; three times, or 1,296,000, the *Tréta yuga*; and four times, or 1,728,000 years, the *Tridá yuga*. The sum of these, or 4,320,000 years, constitutes a great age, or *yuga*. One thousand of these, or 4,320,000,000 years, is a day of Bramhá, called a Kalpa. Thirty of these days make a month of his life; twelve months, his year; and one hundred years, his life. At the close of this day he sleeps, during a night equal to his day. As he goes to sleep, the earth is destroyed by fire; this is quenched by a flood of waters. He awakes, and creates all things in the earth again as at the first. We think there can be no question but this idea of a general destruction of all living creatures on the earth is derived, by tradition, from the event recorded by Moses.

But the different accounts of the close of the last day, or Kalpa, specify incidents which, though not always congruous, yet indicate a traditionary connection with the Mosaic account.

The earliest traditionary account in the Hindû scriptures, in relation to the deluge, is found in the Mahábáhrata, one of the great epic poems in the Sanskrit language, the precise age of which it is impossible to determine. It was probably written as early as between the fifth or sixth century before our era.¹

The account, or legend, is likewise found in several of the Puránas, with slight variations. The substance of this legend in the Mahábáhrata, where it is called ancient, is, that Brahmá, assuming the form of a fish, informs Manu, a holy sage, that the earth is to be overwhelmed with a flood of waters, and directs him to build a ship, in which himself and seven other holy sages, with the living seeds of all things, will be preserved. When well secured in the great ship, the fish-formed deity would appear. The holy sage was to fasten the vessel to the fish's horn, and it would then ride safe over the turbulent waters. The holy sage built the vessel,

¹ See note on p. 845.

and collected its precious freight, as directed; the flood of waters came at the appointed time; the fish appeared; to his horn the ship was bound, and thus floated safely, till at last it rested on the loftiest peak of the Himalaya mountains.

But the points of resemblance between the Hindû legend and the Mosaic account, will best be seen from an extract. This extract is taken from the poetic version of Milman, late professor of poetry in Oxford University. Though clothed in poetic language, the author claims for it the quality of a correct version of the original. He likewise aimed at an imitation of the measure and form of verse of the original, and with an interesting degree of success.

Passing over the introduction, which contains some unimportant particulars respecting the manner in which the fish-form deity was introduced to Manu,¹ the holy sage, the account is as follows — the fish, continuing his divine directions :

“When the awful time approaches — hear from me what thou must do.
 In a little time, O blessed — all this firm and seated earth,
 All that moves upon its surface — shall a deluge sweep away.
 Near it comes, of all creation — the ablution day is near;
 Therefore what I now forewarn thee — may thy highest weal secure.
 All the fixed and all the moving — all that stirs, or stirreth not,
 Lo, of all the time approaches — the tremendous time of doom.
 Build thyself a ship, O Manu! — strong with cables well prepared,
 And thyself, with the seven sages — mighty Manu, enter in.
 All the living seeds of all things — by the Brahmans named of yore,
 Place thou first within thy vessel — well secured, divided well.
 From thy ship keep watch, O hermit — watch for me as I draw near;
 Horned shall I swim before thee — by my horn thou’lt know me well.
 This the work thou must accomplish — I depart; so fare thee well.
 Over those tumultuous waters — none without mine aid can sail.
 Doubt not thou, O lofty minded — of my warning speech the truth.”
 To the fish thus answered Manu — ‘All that thou requirest I will do.’

Manu, having done as directed, and launched his vessel on the sea with its precious freight, the fish appears, and the vessel is bound to his head, and,

¹ The name Manuja, Manu-born, as the appellative of the human race (in Sanskrit books), is from Manu; from thence the Gothic Manu, which we have preserved. Manu is the representative of man. — *Milman's Version*, p. 11.

"Dancing with the tumbling billows — dashing through the roaring spray,
 Tossed about with winds tumultuous — in the vast and heaving sea,
 Like a trembling drunken woman — reeled that ship, O king of men.
 Earth was seen no more, no region — nor the intermediate space ;
 All around a waste of waters — water all, and air, and sky.
 In the whole world of creation — princely son of Bharata !
 None was seen, but those seven sages — *Manu* only and the fish.
 Years on years, and still unwearied — drew that fish the bark along,
 Till at length it came, where lifted — *Himavan* its loftiest peak.
 There at length it came, and smiling — thus the fish addressed the sage :
 To the peak of *Himalaya*, bind thou now thy stately ship."
 At the fish's mandate quickly — to the peak of *Himavan*
 Bound the sage his bark, and ever — to this day, that loftiest peak,
 Bears the name of *Manhubandhan* — from the binding of the bark.
 To the sage, the god of mercy — thus with fixed look bespake :
 ' I am lord of all creation — *Brahmá*, higher than all height ;
 I in fish-like form have saved thee — *Manu*, in the perilous hour ;
 But from thee new tribes of creatures — gods, *asuras*, men, must spring.
 All the worlds must be created — all that moves, or moveth not,
 By an all-surpassing penance — this great work must be achieved.
 Through my mercy, thy creation — to confusion ne'er shall run.'
 Spake the fish, and on the instant — to the invisible he passed."

Manu immediately begins his penance and the work of creation. The legend closes :

"Such the old, the famous legend — named the Story of the Fish,
 Which to thee I have related — this for all our sins atones.
 He that hears it, *Manu's* legend, — in the full possession he,
 Of all things complete and perfect — to the heavenly world ascends."

This legend is found in some of the *Puránas*. In fact, the first of the eighteen *Puránas* seems to have received its title from this legend. It is called the *Matsya Purána*, from the fact that its contents were communicated by *Vishnu*, in the form of a fish, or, in the *Matsya Avatár*, i. e. fish incarnation, "in which *Vishnu* preserves a king named *Manu*, with the seeds of all things, in an ark, from the waters of that inundation which, in a season of *Pralaya* (destruction), over-spreads the world."¹ While the ark floats, fastened to the fish, *Manu* enters into conversation with his divine guide and preserver ; and the questions of *Manu*, and the replies of

¹ *Vishnu Purána*, *Wilson's* translation, Pref. p. li.

Vishnu, form the main substance of the compilation. The principal subjects are, as usual in the Puránas, an account of the creation, the royal dynasties, the duties of the different orders, and various mythological legends.

In the Bhágavat Purána, this legend of the Fish Avatár, has, according to a passage translated by Sir W. Jones, an additional statement which should be given. The fish-form deity says:

“Take thou, therefore, all kinds of medicinal herbs and esculent grains for food, and, together with the seven holy men, and pairs of all animals, enter the ark without fear.” (*As. Res.* Vol. II. p. 118.) The copy of the Bhágavat in our possession, however, if we have the right passage, does not warrant the definite language, “pairs of all animals.” Bournouf translates it, “bringing together a collection of (from) all beings” (*rassemblant la collection de tous les êtres*). *Bhág. Pu. Li.* 8vo. ch. 24: 34.) The translation of Bournouf appears to be correct. In another place, Sir Wm. Jones has translated the passage, “pairs of all brute animals.” The original, in his copy, was probably different from that of the French savans.

In the Puránas, the particular name given to the Manu saved from the deluge is Satyavrata, an expressive epithet for a holy man; and this Satyavrata was the seventh from the first Manu of the present day of Brahmá, or present creation; the first Manu, being called the Swayambhuva, i. e. sprung from the self-existent.

Just in this connection, it may not be out of place to notice the resemblance between the Sanskrit word *ádim*, meaning *first*,¹ and the great progenitor of the human race, and likewise that between *Manu* and *Noah*, the final syllable being the root of the name of the patriarch. See, likewise, note on the next paragraph.

¹ Lieut. Col. Vans Kennedy says: “But whatever be the comparative antiquity of the Hindú scriptures, we may safely conclude that the Mosaic and Indian chronologies are perfectly consistent; and that Manu, son of Brahmá, was the Adima, or first created mortal, and consequently, our Adam.” — *Ancient and Hindú Mythology*, p. 134. Sir W. Jones suggests the same. — *As. Res.* Vol. II. p. 401.

The next fact we shall notice is the hebdominal division of time. The origin of this division of time, into weeks of seven days each, among men, is undoubtedly indicated in the Mosaic account of creation.

The Hebrews had, for a long time, no separate names for the different days of the week; except that the seventh day was called the *Sabbath*, or day of rest. The names of the different days originated with some other people. And here two points of consideration present themselves, viz. the division of time into weeks of seven days each, and the giving separate names to the different days. For the Hindûs have the division of weeks, the same as the Hebrews, and they have the days separately named, which the Hebrews had not.

There can be no question that the division itself was from the Mosaic record, or rather from the facts which the Mosaic record contains. The ancestors of the Hindûs doubtless had this mode of dividing time before the Jews were a distinct people. The mere mention of the fact of this manner of reckoning time being in use among that people at a period of remote antiquity, is sufficient for our purpose. Yet the fact is clothed with additional importance, when we consider that separate names were first given to the different days of the week in India, and that those names are the same as now in use among the Anglo-Saxon nations of Europe. It is well known that these names of the days of the week are those of the sun, moon, and the Saxon names of the five planets known to the ancients, viz. Mercury, Venus, Mars, Jupiter, and Saturn. Now the evidence appears to be conclusive, that these five planets were first discovered and named in India; and that their names, with those of the sun and moon, were given to the seven days of the week.

The names of the planets, according to several authors, occur in the Vedas, which existed in their present form thirteen or fourteen hundred years before the commencement of our era.¹ And, from astronomical data, they re-

¹ "The Mythology of the Vedas personifies the elements and planets." Cole-

ceived their present names about 1425 B. C.¹ The names of the planets in the Sanskrit language are the names of deities in the Hindû mythology, which correspond to the deities designated by the names of the same planets in Grecian and Roman mythology, and likewise in the mythology of the nations of Northern Europe, whence originated the Saxon element of the English language, and consequently the English names of the days of the week.² The division of time into weeks was not known among the Greeks and Romans at the commencement of our era, and the existence of the planets is not indicated in any Greek and Latin author till about 610 B. C.; except that, in Homer, the morning and evening stars are mentioned. But they are supposed to be different bodies. Pythagoras is said to have first suggested that the morning and evening stars (*Ἐωσφόρος* and *Ἑσπερος*) were one and the same star. (Pythagoras flourished 540—500 B. C.)

Democritus wrote a treatise respecting the planets (*Περὶ τῶν πλανητῶν*), among which he reckoned the sun, moon, and *Ἐωσφόρος*; but as yet their number had not been determined.³ Seneca says Eudoxus derived his knowledge of the planetary motions from Egypt.³

brooke, as quoted by Vans Kennedy, and which the latter says, "is doubtless correct." — *An. Myth.* p. 365, and a writer in the *Calcutta Review*, Vol. III. p. 119.

¹ Bentley's *Hind. Ast.* p. 4.

² Thus *Āditya*, the sun, with *vāra*, day, *Ādityavāra*, is the name of the first day of the week, or Sunday; and so of the other days, as in the following table:

From <i>Āditya</i> , the Sun,	is <i>Ādityavāra</i> ,	or Sunday.
" Ravi, "	" <i>Raviwāra</i> ,	" "
" Soma, the Moon,	" <i>Somawāra</i> ,	" Monday.
" <i>Mangala</i> , Mars,	" <i>Mangalawāra</i> ,	" Tuesday.
" Budha, Mercury,	" <i>Budhawāra</i> ,	" Wednesday.
" Brahaspati, Jupiter,	" <i>Brahaspatiwāra</i> ,	" Thursday.
" Shukra, Venus,	" <i>Shukrawāra</i> ,	" Friday.
" Shani, Saturn,	" <i>Shaniwāra</i> ,	" Saturday.

³ Smith's *Classical Dictionary*, Art. Planets, ed. 1849. — Quoting Seneca (*Quaest. Nat.* VII. 3): "Democritus subtilissimus antiquorum omnium suspicari ait se plures stellas esse quae currant, sed nec numerum, illarum posuit, nec nomina, nondum comprehensis quinque siderum cursibus. Eudoxus ab Egypto hos motus in Graeciam transtulit."

But it is not our design to enter, here, into a comparison of the claims of the Greeks and Hindûs to originality in reference to astronomical science. The object of these remarks is to show that the institutions of the Hindûs, in regard to some interesting points, can claim an origin nearer to the Mosaic epoch than the institutions of any other people.

The next point we shall mention is that relating to the mode of the divine existence. We allude here, more particularly, to the triune doctrine in relation to the Deity; or, to use a term of some Christian theologians, the three *hypostases* of the Godhead. The Hindû formulary is simply this: the supreme Deity as active creator exists as Brahmá, as preserver, he is Vishnu, and as destroyer, he is Shiva. This Hindû idea has often been noticed by writers on the Trinity; and sometimes, perhaps, too much importance has been attached to it, as being an argument in favor of the corresponding doctrine of Christianity. It should never be adduced as a positive argument. The utmost use that can be made of the Hindû idea, is to ward off some objections urged against the Christian doctrine, on account of its unreasonableness. And here it should not be pressed too far, for there is danger of proving too much, or of creating more objection than we obviate. If we go to the Hindûs for knowledge or illustration in reference to this matter, we shall find more than three hypostases in the godhead. We shall find four, and other things that do not favor the truth.

Yet, this triune mode of the divine existence, may be viewed as a most interesting fact in connection with theological ideas. It is an interesting fact, that they should suppose the Deity has these three forms of existence; and we have scarce a doubt that this idea with them had some connection with the Bible doctrine in relation to the same point. And when taken in connection with the fourth *hypostasis*, just alluded to, this connection is with the Bible view more apparent. This fourth *hypostasis*, or state, or rather the first, since it is the first in order, is the state of the supreme self-existent, previous to his taking the form of

Brahmá, the active creator. The order of the divine existence according to Hindû ideas, is as follows : First, there is the Supreme, Self-existent, who was before all other existence, who is designated by the neuter noun *Brahma*. This Being, by a process of development which their theologians attempt to explain, is born of himself, in the form of *Brahmá*, who is the creator of the universe. He then exists as preserver, in the form of *Vishnu*, and as destroyer in the form of *Shiva*. In Christian theology, the only begotten Son is the active creation and ruler of the world, that is, he has the character of the last three divine states of the Hindûs, viz : *Creator, Preserver and Destroyer*. It is a noticeable fact, that Hindû theogony and cosmogony, are the only ones, besides the Jewish-Christian system, that contemplate the future destruction of the world. But this doctrine of the future destiny of the world will be alluded to again, before we close.

The next topic to which we shall allude, is *their doctrine respecting the origin and destiny of this material world*.

We have before alluded to the doctrine (unquestionably taught in *Manu* and the *Puránas*, and affirmed by learned natives of India and by Europeans to be taught in the *Vedas*) of a Supreme being who was separate from, and the cause of, the material universe, equivalent to the doctrine that matter is not eternal, but was created by the one eternal self-existent Spirit. We allude to this doctrine again in this place, for the purpose of connecting the beginning of the world with its course and future destiny.

We should remark, however, that some schools of philosophy teach the eternity of matter. Some maintained, that the principle or element of the sensible world is *eternal and indestructible*, admitting at the same time the existence of a supreme, self-existent, eternal spirit, separate from this elementary principle, and whose agency has brought it out and developed it in forms cognizable to the senses. There are dualism and atheism, and pantheism in every form and degree. And yet there is the doctrine of one Supreme Being, eternal, before all, and the creator of all. This doctrine is

strenuously maintained by the vedantists. This school or sect affirm that this doctrine is the end and scope of the Vedas. This is denied by other schools and sects, and not without reason. But however this may be, the origin of the world from a supreme self-existent eternal Spirit, is asserted with a distinctness found nowhere else out of the Bible.

But there is not so much difference of opinion respecting the future destiny of the world. It might be remarked, that, as far as ascertained, the Vedas are silent respecting this topic, nor is anything said of it, in the laws of Manu, the next sacred writing, in point of antiquity. But in the Purānas the future destiny of the world is plainly described. In the Vishnu Purāna, the catastrophe which, according to Hindû belief, awaits this world, is described in the following language :

“ At the end of a thousand periods of the four ages, the earth is for the most part exhausted . . . The eternal Vishnu then assumes the character of Rudra, the destroyer, and descends to reünite all his creatures to himself. He enters into the seven rays of the sun ; drinks up all the waters of the globe, and causes all moisture whatever in living bodies or in the soil, to evaporate ; thus drying up the whole earth. The seas, the rivers, the mountain torrents, and springs are all exhaled ; and so are all the waters of Pátála, the region below the earth . . . The destroyer of all things, Hari, in the form of Rudra, who is the flame of time, becomes the scorching breath of the serpent, Shesha, and thereby reduces Pátála to ashes. The great fire, when it has burned all the divisions of Pátála, proceeds to earth and consumes it also. A vast whirlpool of eddying flame then spreads to the region of the atmosphere, and the sphere of the gods, and wraps them in ruin. The three spheres shew like a frying-pan amidst the surrounding flames, that prey upon all movable or stationary things. The inhabitants of the two upper spheres, having discharged their functions and being annoyed by the heat, remove to the sphere above, or Maharloka. When that becomes heated, its tenants, who after a full period of their stay are desirous of ascending to higher re-

gions, depart for Janaloka." Here Maharloka and Janaloka are the fourth and fifth sphere above the earth, the former situated ten millions of leagues above Dhruva, or the polar star, and the latter, at twice that distance. Janaloka is the residence of the "pure minded sons of Brahmá."

"Having thus destroyed the earth, Rudra breathes forth heavy clouds, which pouring down their contents for a hundred years, quench the fires and deluge the earth, fill the middle region, and inundate heaven." At the end of a hundred years, Brahmá awakes from his sleep, creates the world anew as he did before. (*Vishnu Purana*, p. 632 & 213.)

This passage has some striking resemblance to one in the Christian scriptures, which is as follows:

2 Pet. 3: 10—13: "But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also shall be burnt up. Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved and the elements shall melt with fervent heat. Nevertheless we according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness."

In both these accounts the earth is to be destroyed, and new heavens and a new earth succeeds, in which, according to the Christian scriptures, "dwelleth righteousness," but which according to the Hindû account, is to be precisely like the preceding.

It is to be noticed that, in the Hindû belief, the destruction takes place through the instrumentality of fire, and that in the re-creation or renovation, there is a process of development through water, affording a striking coincidence with the Jewish and Christian doctrine in relation to both these points. After the destruction, the analogy ceases. And although, in noticing these coincidences, our direct object is accomplished, it will not be foreign to that object to give, in brief, the Hindû idea of the whole future destiny of the universe.

The destruction just noticed, is that which takes place at the end of the Kalpa, or day of Brahmá. This day consists of 4,320,000,000 of years. His night is of equal duration. Three hundred and sixty days and nights make one of his years, and one hundred years his life. The years of this immense period are expressed by a number having fifteen places of figures, of which the first three are 315, making, according to our system of notation, three hundred and fifteen millions of millions of years.

The theory is, that at the end of his day Brahmá goes to sleep, from which results the destruction of the universe, as is said in some places in their scriptures, in others that, assuming the form of Shiva or destroyer, he destroys it. The whole exists in a state of chaos during his night, and at the beginning of another day or kalpa, he creates the universe anew in all respects as before. And thus in alternate sleeping and waking, creating and destroying the universe at the beginning and end of each kalpa or day, the thirty-six thousand days of his life, pass away, when " Brahmá himself expires, and with him die all the gods and holy sages, and all forms whatever retrograde successively into their constituent elements, until the whole is merged into the single or double rudiment of being, universal spirit, or primary matter, according to the theories of the dualistic or non-dualistic philosophers. After a considerable interval, similar causes produce similar effects; nature and spirit are again in movement, the creation is renewed, and the universe thus eternally fluctuates between existence and non-existence without any motive, without any end, that rational conjecture can guess at." (*Wilson's Oxford Lectures*, p. 55.)

In this origin and destiny of the universe, the origin and destiny of man is of course included. But in this latter, especially in man's destiny, Hindû religion and theology contain some points, that indicate a connection more or less direct with divine revelation. We will therefore occupy a little space in speaking of some of the Hindû ideas respecting the *condition, duty, and future destiny of man.*

We have before alluded to the creation of the progenitors of the human race, and to the fact, that for a considerable time, the race existed in a state of innocence and purity. The manner of falling from this state was different from that given by Moses. The fall from a sinless state was occasioned by the influence of Vishnu in the form of time. "That portion of Hari, (Vishnu), which has been described as one with kâla (time), infused into created beings sin, the impediment of the soul's liberation, the seed of iniquity, sprung from darkness and desire." (*Vish. Pu.* p. 45.)

Hindû philosophy and theology take a most gloomy view of the state and prospects of man. And this gloomy condition results from ignorance and darkness which are nearly or quite synonymous with sin: Says the Vishnu Purâna (p. 639), speaking of man after birth: "Enveloped by the gloom of ignorance, and internally bewildered, man knows not whence he is, who he is, whither he is, whither he goeth, nor what is his nature; . . . what is to be done, and what is to be left undone; . . . what is righteousness and what is iniquity, what is right, and what is wrong, what is vice and what is virtue. Thus man like a brute beast, addicted only to animal gratification, suffers the pain that ignorance occasions. Ignorance, darkness, inactivity, influence those devoid of knowledge, so that pious works are neglected; but hell is the consequence of the neglect of religious works according to the great sages."

Then follows a detailed description of man's suffering on account of this ignorance and darkness, especially in old age, in death, and in the future world, all constituting a version of the doctrine of retribution for sin, unsurpassed for fearfulness and terribleness in the whole compass of theological literature. And this is according to the general tenor of Hindû ideas in relation to these subjects. Of course, there is much that is absurd, and worse than absurd, and we do not intend to go into detail respecting these doctrines and ideas; we shall only notice two or three prominent points.

The problem is: How shall man be freed from this state

of darkness and misery? The answer of Hindû philosophers is: complete deliverance can be obtained only by knowing Brahmá.

But here a proper understanding of the subject will be facilitated by considering the prominent points separately. These are:

1. The doctrine of retribution.
2. The provision for retributive justice in a future world, or future states of being.
3. The manner of becoming freed from this state of sin.
4. The state of the soul after its emancipation.

We shall dwell on these separate points but briefly:

Hindû theology makes seven spheres, the first of which is this earth, a state of probation, and the seventh is satya-loka, one hundred and twenty millions of leagues above the polar star, "which" (says the Vishnu Purána, p. 213) "is the sphere of truth, the inhabitants of which never again know death." Some of these spheres are the residences of super-human beings, and others are places where human souls, on leaving the body, go to enjoy the rewards of virtuous acts performed in this life. Below this earth is Naraka, or hell, with twenty-eight divisions with different means of torture and punishment for sins committed in the body. These divisions have separate names: Thus there is the "hell of heated caldrons," that of "red hot iron," that of "a great flame," that of "a fiery flame," that of "the head inverted," that, "where all the leaves of the trees are swords," that "whose wells are blood," etc. "These hells, and hundreds of thousands of others," continues the Vishnu Purána (p. 209), "are the places in which sinners pay the penalty of their crimes. As numerous as are the offences which men commit, so many are the hells in which they are punished."

"At the expiration of a limited period, the soul, which in either of its destinations (that is, in heaven or hell), had continued to be invested with a subtile and ethereal but material and sensible body, returns to earth, and is born again, in union with some gross and elemental body, according to

former merits or demerits of the individual, as a reptile, fish, bird, a beast, a giant, a spirit, a divinity, until after sundry migrations it ascends or descends to man to undergo a similar career." (Ox. Lec., p. 63.)

The language of the Vishnu Purána is: "The various stages of existence are, inanimate things, fish, birds, animals, men, holy men, gods, and liberated spirits; each in succession a thousand degrees above that which precedes it; and through these stages, the beings that are either in heaven or hell are destined to proceed until final emancipation be obtained" (p. 210). "That is, when punishment or reward in hell or heaven, proportioned to the sin or virtue of the individual, has been received, he must be born again as a stone or plant, and gradually migrate through the several inferior conditions until he is once more born a man; his future state is then in his own power." (Prof. Wilson, note to the preceding passage, p. 210.)

This seems like a double penalty for sin; since after suffering in the various hells, according to the deserts of a sinful life, the same retribution pursues into succeeding births. This difficulty was seen by the commentator on Manu, who says in explanation, "it is to efface all remains of their sins." (Manu, xii. 54.)

The system of rewards in heaven, and punishment in hell, and future migrations through innumerable states of existence, in stones, plants, trees, insects, cruel beasts of prey, filthy beasts, and beings of all classes and conditions, is described with great minuteness in Hindû scriptures. Sins are classified according to their heinousness, and the hells; and the future births are designated, through which those who commit them must pass in their course of retribution; and this course must be run, before the sinner can enjoy another season of probation in a human form. As examples, take the following: The Purána says, "The murderer of a Bráhmaṇ, stealer of gold, or drinker of wine, goes to the hell of swine (Shukar). The seller of his wife, a jailer, a horse-dealer, and one who deserts his adherents, falls into the hell of red hot iron (Taptaloha). He who is disrespectful to his

spiritual guide, who is abusive to his betters, who reviles the Vedas, or who sells them, goes to the hell of salt (Lavana)." (*Vish. Pu.*, p. 208.)

These are sufficient specimens of that kind of moral legislation.

After suffering the appointed time in the infernal regions, as determined by the judge of those gloomy places, the soul returns to earth, and is born in the form of some animate or inanimate being, according to a minutely graduated scale. Thus, "The slayer of a Brahman must enter, according to the circumstances of his crime, the body of a dog, a swine, an ass, a camel, a bull, a goat, a sheep, a stag, a bird, Chandala, or a Puccasa. A priest who has drunk spirituous liquors, shall migrate into the form of a smaller or larger worm or insect, of a moth or fly, feeding on ordure, or of some ravenous animal. He who steals gold, shall pass a thousand times into the bodies of spiders, of snakes and of cameleons, of aquatic monsters. They who hurt any sentient beings, are born in animals eating raw flesh; they who taste what ought not to be tasted, maggots and small flies; they who steal ordinary things, devourers of each other. If a man steal grain in the husk, he shall be born a rat. If he steal flesh meat, a vulture; if he steal a deer or an elephant, he shall be born a wolf; if a horse, a tiger; if a woman, a bear; as far as vital souls, addicted to sensuality, indulge themselves in forbidden pleasures, to the same degree shall the acuteness of their senses be raised in their future bodies." (*Manu B.*, xii. 54—73.)

A number of pages might be filled with these details. We have given more examples than we should, but for the wish, while exhibiting the nature of the Hindû system of rewards and punishments, to give likewise some idea of their notions of sin and its deserts.

But what way does Hindûism offer of escape from this condition of sin and suffering?

First must be noticed the system of penance. Any sin may be expiated by penance. And the scale of penance is as minutely graduated, as that of transmigration, or

that of sufferings in the twenty-eight hells. The ingenuity of Hindû theology is not behind Popery in this respect. And Brabmanism is more rational than Romanism, in as much as it makes a difference between pardon and sanctification. "That sinner goes to hell," says the Purána, "who neglects the expiation of his guilt" (p. 210). But expiation by penance, will not entitle him to heaven, or final beatitude. In order to reach this goal of highest aspiration, which being reached, there is an end of births and deaths and transmigration, the knowledge of Brahma, the Supreme, must be attained to. The attainment of this knowledge is regarded as most difficult. The passions must be entirely subdued, the mind must become indifferent to worldly pleasure and worldly pain, and become pure and holy.

Or in the language of a late writer, in describing this doctrine of Hindû religion: "One thing alone must be loved; one thing alone attentively thought upon, and this is the Supreme Being. Complete equanimity, complete indifference to pain or pleasure, love or hate, to all worldly matters, must be acquired before this devotion to the Supreme One can be steadily fixed in the heart. In every act of our life, that Being alone must be uppermost in our thoughts.

We must remember that the action performed is not done for our sakes, with any interested motive, but as an offering of love and duty to the Supreme Being, in purity and equality of heart. This is, at least, a sensible and religious doctrine; and if we add to it faith and love, will be even a Christian doctrine. It is the teaching of our Saviour, when he bids us hate father and mother, and take up the cross; and when he points to the lily of the field, which toils and spins not, but puts faith in its creator to give it nourishment. "But we must not be carried away by enthusiasm at the apparent Christianity of the doctrine of our philosophy." We omit the remarks of the author under this "but." (Translation of the Bhagavad Gítá, by J. C. Thompson, p. CX.)

When the soul has thus become pure, on leaving the body, it is united to Brahma. The means to be employed to attain to this state of freedom from sin, and indifference to the world,

are, devotion, reading the Vedas, meditation on Brahmá, and various kinds of austerities for subduing the passions.

Now while, both in regard to the object to be obtained, and the manner of obtaining it, there is much that is absurd, pernicious and ridiculous, as would appear from a full exhibition of the different parts of the system, yet all its important points have corresponding points in Christian theology, to which they bear a striking analogy.

For example, take the doctrine in relation to the highest state to which man can aspire, defined by the Hindûs as union with the Supreme Brahma, and freedom from the sufferings and liabilities of transmigration, and consequently the end of probation. As this doctrine lies in the Hindû mind (as is evident from its description in their books, and the declaration of living men), it implies such a union with Deity as destroys individuality, individual consciousness, and identity; and yet many passages in their sacred scriptures, which speak of this state and manner of attaining to it, have almost their precise equivalents in the Bible and in the language of Christian writers.

The following passages are specimens :

“Of all those duties, the principal is to acquire from the Upanishads (parts of the Vedas), a true knowledge of the one Supreme God; that is the most exalted of all sciences, because it ensures immortality.” (*Manu* B. xii. 85.)

“They who know the Vedant, and observe its meaning well, who exercise devout meditation, and who are pure at last in Brahma-loka, are altogether delivered, and become immortal.” (*Vedantism by Mullens*, p. 103.) “He who knows him as the knower of every thought, of every individual mind, obtains immortality” (id. p. 102). “He who completely understands this (part of the) Veda, after being free from sin, goes to Swarga, and abides there forever” (id. p. 106). “The man who becomes thoughtful, wise and ever pure, reaches the divine glory, and descends no more from it into the world” (id. p. 106). “He who knows the supreme is free from all bonds, from all miseries, and is freed from birth and death. Through meditation upon him, by the dissolu-

tion of the body, he gains the third state and has the universe for his wealth" (id.—). "That soul rising from the body, having arrived at the supreme light, possesses his form." — "As rivers flowing, go into the sea and lose their name and form; so the wise, freed from name and form, gain him who is supreme, perfect, and splendid. He who knows that Supreme, becomes Brahma" (id. p. 107).

The last quotation is the key for understanding the doctrine of being united to Brahma. With the exception of some passages, the language is much like some expressions in the Christian scriptures and in Christian writers. For example: "This is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only living and true God." And the numerous passages which speak of the believer "being in Christ," "being found in Christ," "putting on Christ," "being like Christ," being united to Christ, and finally, being united to him to be separated from him no more forever. Swallowed up in Christ, at death, "the spirit returns to God who gave it," and others which are sometimes heard.

But lest we give too favorable a view of Hindûism, a few passages must be given, showing how this knowledge and state are to be obtained.

"The man who keeps outward accidents from entering his mind, and his eyes fixed in contemplation between his brows; who makes his breath to pass through his nostrils; who restrains his senses, heart, and mind, intent on final emancipation; who is free from desire, fear, and anger, is emancipated." (Bhagavat Gítá, ch. 5.) "To the devotee (yogi), gold, iron, and stones are alike. The yogi plants his feet firmly on a spot that is undefiled. . . . There he should sit with his mind fixed on one object alone in the exercise of his devotion for the purification of his soul, keeping his head, his neck, and body steady without motion, his eyes fixed on the end of his nose, looking at no other place around. This divine discipline is not to be attained by him who eateth more than enough or less than enough; neither by him who hath a habit of sleeping much, or by him who sleepeth not at all. (ch. 6.) Dryan [wisdom] incul-

icates exemption from attachments and affection for children, wife, and home, and a dislike to the society of man." (Bh. Gítá, ch. xii. quoted by Mullen's Vedanta, p. 57.)

The only remaining doctrine we shall mention, as having a resemblance among Christian doctrines, is that of the incarnation of the Deity.

The word *incarnation* has been taken from Christian theology. The Sanskrit word used to denote this form of divinity is "*Avatára*," meaning *descent*. But as the Supreme Deity, in his *descents* to earth, assumes some form, the word *incarnation* is not inappropriate.

The Hindû writings speak of ten principal *descents* of the supreme deity to earth, though in theory these descents are, in number, almost infinite. The object of these descents of the supreme deity are, in general, the preservation of good men, the punishment of wicked men, or destruction of monsters that are afflicting the human race. What was done was local and temporary in its influence, and generally unworthy of the direct interference of the Creator of the universe. And they have no resemblance to the incarnation of Christ except in the elementary idea, viz. the deity taking a created form in order to interfere with the affairs of man. This idea has, so far as I know, no place in any other theology except the Christian.

Of the ten principal *avatárs* of the supreme, nine are past; the tenth, the *Kalki*, is to come. It will come at the close of the present age, or *Kali yuga*. The object of that incarnation or *avatár* will be to destroy the enemies of religion and restore the piety and purity of preceding ages. The *Kali yuga* is the iron age, in which the world is growing worse and worse. Hear the Purána on this subject :

"Wealth and piety will decrease day by day, until the world will be wholly depraved. Then property alone will confer rank; wealth will be the only source of devotion; falsehood will be the only means of success in litigation, and women will be objects merely of sensual gratification; dishonesty will be the only means of subsistence; weakness will be the cause of dependence; menace and presumption

will be substituted for learning; liberality will be devotion; simple ablution will be purification; fine clothes will be dignity; earth will be venerated but for its mineral treasures (i. e. there will be no holy places); the Brahmanical thread will constitute a Brahman. No man's life will exceed three and twenty years. Amidst all castes he who is the strongest will reign over a principality thus vitiated by many faults. The people, unable to bear the many burdens imposed upon them by their avaricious sovereigns, will take refuge amidst the valleys of the mountains, and will be glad to feed upon wild honey, herbs, roots, fruits, flowers, and leaves; their only covering will be the bark of trees; and they will be exposed to cold, and wind, and sun, and rain. Thus in the Kali age shall decay constantly proceed, until the human race approaches annihilation.

“When the practices taught by the Vedas and the institutes of law shall nearly have ceased, and the close of the Kali age shall be nigh, a portion of that divine being who exists in his own spiritual nature as Brahma, and who is the beginning and the end, and who comprehends all things, shall descend upon earth; he shall be born an eminent Bráhmaṇ, of Sambhala village, as Kalki. By his irresistible might he will destroy all the Mlechas (barbarians or foreigners) and thieves, and all whose minds are devoted to iniquity. He will then reestablish righteousness upon earth; and the minds of those who live at the end of the Kali age shall be awakened and shall be as pellucid as crystal. The men who are thus changed by virtue of that peculiar time, shall be as seeds of human beings, and shall give birth to a race who shall follow the laws of the Krita age, or age of purity. As it is said: ‘When the sun and moon and the lunar asterism Tishya, and the planet Jupiter, are in one mansion, the Krita age shall return.’”¹

Another author has epitomized the work of the tenth Avatára as follows: “Seated on a white horse, the deity will descend towards the close of the Kali yuga, and will destroy the universe.”²

¹ Vishnu Purána, pp. 482—484.

² J. C. Thomson's translation of the Bhagavad-Gítá, p. 140.

These resemblances between the Hindû and Christian religious doctrines cannot be supposed to be the result of accident. Nor can they be attributed to the independent workings of unrestrained imagination. The points of resemblance are too numerous, and the resemblances themselves too striking, to admit of such a supposition. Some of those thoughts respecting the mode of divine existence, the moral government of the world, the future destiny of this earth, and of the race of man, evidently had a higher origin than man's imagination; they are the offspring, more or less direct, of divine revelation. And yet these thoughts, and the systems with which they are connected, are so interwoven with absurd human speculations, that they only help to form systems of error. The indications of truth which they furnish, do not constitute a redeeming quality in those systems. To be satisfied that this is so, the candid mind has only to examine those systems in all their parts, and see their practical influence on the condition of man. It is common for infidel writers to speak of the Hindû Shastras, as having equal claims on man's consideration and obedience with the Bible. They will perhaps take some maxim of a heathen philosopher, and place it beside one of the proverbs of Solomon, an aspiration of David, or a saying of Jesus, and exclaim: "see the equality of the systems!" They will liken Vyasa, Confucius, Socrates, and Mohammed to Moses, Isaiah, and Jesus, and speak of the former as religious teachers, on an equality with the latter. We will only say in regard to this class of men, that he who will soberly compare the Hindû Shastras with the Bible, making the former equal to the latter, exhibits such a peculiarity in his moral and intellectual powers, that to attempt to change his opinions by the common modes of reasoning, would be useless.

It is admitted, that the Hindû Shastras contain some noble maxims, and inculcate, in the abstract, some correct moral principles. But these maxims and principles never exceed in purity the teachings of the Bible, and can never be adduced to weaken the claims of the Book. Nay, more, they

are found in such connections that often their origin is clearly traceable to the divine revelation recorded in the Bible. And by no mode of estimation can there be drawn a conclusion more unfavorable to the Bible than this, viz. : Some things found in the Hindû scriptures and Hindû religion had an origin in the revelation of the Bible. Others have come down from the earliest ages, in traditionary channels, parallel to the Bible ; and where the facts related in the Hindû sacred writings conflict with the facts of the Christian scriptures, the former are easily shown to be unfounded.

When the literature of the Sanskrit language began to be made known in Europe, some three fourths of a century ago, the infidelity of that day raised a shout of triumph over the weapons it supposed it had derived from the East against Christianity. There were books written thousands, even millions, of years before the creation of man, according to the Mosaic account. There were astronomical tables which proved astronomical observations in India three thousand years before the Christian era. Infidelity was jubilant. The Bible was proved to be false, and Christianity must fall. But the shout of triumph was raised too soon. When a few years of patient investigation had brought out the actual facts, the case has a different aspect. The oldest Hindû writings, or the earliest astronomical observation or record, cannot be *proved* to have had an earlier date than the fourteenth or fifteenth century before Christ. And the oldest astronomical treatise which had been made so important a witness against the Bible, was proved, incontrovertibly, to have been composed some four or five centuries after Christ. And as the work of bringing to the light the ancient literature of the Brahmans proceeds, the tendency among European scholars, is to assign more and more modern limits to its ancient works. This tendency to modernize, is sometimes, doubtless, suffered to proceed too far. But however this may be, this fact may be regarded as established, viz., that the ancient literature of India affords no materials for disproving the truthfulness of the Bible ; on the contrary, it contains much that corroborates the claims of the Sacred Volume to a divine authenticity.

The results of antiquarian researches in India, as affecting the truthfulness of the Bible, have been similar to those in Egypt; especially those connected with astronomical records. The case of the Egyptian zodiac of Denderah will ever be memorable in the annals of infidel assaults on the Bible. When the French savans, some sixty years ago, discovered that tablet of astronomical sculpture in an Egyptian temple, they thought it must have been made seventeen thousand years ago. Their opinions were put forth with the greatest confidence. A certain professor of a European university (Breslau) put forth a pamphlet, entitled "Invincible proof that the earth is at least ten times older than taught in the Bible." Says a writer respecting that event and those times in France: "This was a time of woe for a small band of Christians, and of great rejoicings for the infidels of all countries." They regarded it as proved, that there was never a creation or deluge, at least not at the time the Bible specifies. "The Old and New Testaments contain only a series of lies."¹ But this triumph was not long. The next generation of learned men deciphered those hieroglyphics, and found that the origin of the temple was not to be placed earlier than the second century before the commencement of the Christian era. Some have placed it in the first century after. Thus vanished this invincible argument against the Bible chronology. Thus the strongholds of infidel argument have been taken, one after another; not only this, but the guns of all those fortresses have been turned against those who erected them.

What is to be the next point of attack? The antiquities of India have, to a good extent, been explored. And the result is, the very fables of mythology corroborate the history of the Bible; the elements of the earliest systems of philosophy harmonize with the doctrines of that holy book, and nothing authentic in that ancient literature has even the semblance of disproving the divine authenticity of the sacred Oracles. For those immense astronomical periods,

¹ A writer in the New York Observer, June 1855.

those enormous claims to a high antiquity, are proved to have been forgeries.

In Egypt, the monuments on which infidels were most relying for arguments to set aside the history of the Bible, are shown to have had comparatively a modern origin. The testimony from the most ancient ruins of the lands, which were the scene of many of the important events of Bible history, is more direct and valuable. The monumental ruins of ancient Nineveh and Babylon, after lying buried three thousand years, are brought to light and found to have on them the very names of the Jewish kings, and fragments of Jewish history, recorded in the Bible.

Geological science, less than half a century ago, was reckoned as one of the strongholds of infidelity. It is now no longer so. The testimony of this science is unequivocally pointing the other way. The records of creation, as found in the solid rocks, without absolutely conflicting in any, harmonize in some important points with, and even directly corroborate, that given by Moses. In times of ignorance, or in the infancy of science, the haters of divine truth can falsify the records which God has left of himself, both in his word and works. Without saying that those times of ignorance and the infancy of science are past, one thing is certain: as the sphere of human knowledge widens, and that knowledge itself becomes more accurate, whether in relation to the heavens above, the earth beneath, or the waters under the earth, the increase of light is only placing the authenticity and truth of the Bible on a more solid and immovable basis.