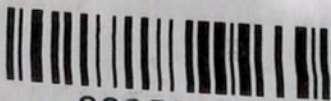


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ON HINDUISM,  
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THE PRINCIPAL HINDU DEITIES  
WORSHIPPED IN  
THE BOMBAY PRESIDENCY.

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A LECTURE

DELIVERED BEFORE THE BOMBAY DIALECTIC ASSOCIATION,

On Tuesday, the 27th March, 1855.

BY  
CHARLES GILDER.

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TO THE RIGHT HONORABLE

JOHN, LORD ÉLPHINSTONE, G. C. H.,

GOVERNOR OF BOMBAY,

&c. &c: &c.

MY LORD,

With the permission which you have kindly accorded me, I venture to inscribe this Lecture on Hinduism to your Lordship, whose administration has already vindicated your Lordship's claim to the character of the enlightened Friend of India. I do not, indeed, expect to add to the extensive information on Indian matters which your Lordship is known to possess, but I am not without the hope that your Lordship's name may create an interest in a subject bearing so directly on the well-being of the people of this country as that treated of in this short paper, and may encourage the efforts requisite to meet the spiritual necessities of the Indian mind.

At the same time, my Lord, I will own that I am ambitious of associating these my first attempts, in the wide field of Oriental research, with the name of ÉLPHINSTONE,—a name pre-eminent in the history and literature of these parts, and now identified with the advancing prosperity of this Presidency.

I am, my Lord,

Your Lordship's most obedient servant,

CHARLES GILDER.

Bombay, 15th May, 1855.



ON HINDUISM,  
AND THE  
PRINCIPAL HINDU DEITIES WORSHIPPED  
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That "the world by wisdom knew not God," is a truth which, as our acquaintance with the world's history enlarges, becomes more and more evident. It is a truth of which we shall have painful illustration in the brief survey which we propose to take of the progress of religious error, and more especially of Hinduism,—the grandest living system of religious error.

A few words will suffice to recommend my topic to you, and to explain the manner of its treatment in this paper.

In introducing to your notice the subject of this Lecture, I do not forget that I am addressing two classes of hearers,—men of the world and men of the closet.

What possible interest can members of this association of the former class, have in the present inquiry? My reply must be brief. What, I ask, is the much envied distinction of men of the world? Surely, it is a deeper insight into human character, a more correct acquaintance with men, than is possessed by their neighbours. And of men of the world in India surely the distinction must be, that they *understand its people*, with whom they are constantly brought into contact. But they will never understand this people without a knowledge of that which makes them what they are; for the religious belief of the Hindu is a clue to his whole character, and of him Carlyle's observation that "a man's religion is the chief fact concerning him," is emphatically true.\*

\* Almost on my way to the lecture room, I have had this view confirmed from a most unexpected source. In an obituary notice, which I have just been reading, of Mr. Joseph Hume, the member for Montrose, lately deceased, who is said to have laid the foundation of his distinguished career in India, the following passage occurs, which I cannot refrain from quoting;—"Mr. Hume, moreover, early studied the religions of the East, and the superstitions of that vast and mixed Asiatic population whose succession of creeds, moulded into so many sects, is so essential a knowledge for the rule of India." *London Mail*, Feb. 26th.

To the Student, few topics can be of more engrossing interest than those which, collaterally with our main enquiry, will be brought before us to-night. How man's religious ideas are originated,—the entrance of religious error into the mind,—the process by which what was originally perceived to be error, comes to be assented to, defended, and believed in as the truth,—the progress and present stage of this corruption in the world,—all are subjects whose bewitchery only the Scholar can fully know. Truly has it been remarked, that “the history of Man's religious ideas is a most important portion of the history of the human mind”; a truth which students of every age have recognized, if we may judge from their writings, and their life-devotion to the study. And it only enhances the interest and importance of that study to trace the influence of these mental laws on science, literature, and the arts, to detect how religious belief affects not merely the moral character, but the genius of a people.

In these prefatory remarks, I have also indicated the plan of this Lecture. Although my more immediate concern is with Hinduism, and more particularly with its manifestations in our own Presidency, still an inquiry of this nature which should leave unnoticed those leading features of the history of all heathen systems, which also mark that of Hinduism, would be most painfully defective; and no amount of desultory information could compensate for the omission. In truth, the necessity for extending our investigations in that direction, is never so pressing as when we attempt to treat of the Hindu Religion, whose discordant phenomena must only distract and confound us, unless we can refer them to the operation of certain laws present in the history of all superstitions.

I have, in consequence, divided this Paper into three portions; the first treating of *the origin and progress of polytheism and idolatry* as introductory to the whole inquiry; the second treating, in a very general manner indeed, of *the Hindu Religion*; and the third treating of some particulars of its exhibition in this Presidency.

#### 1. *The Origin and Progress of Polytheism and Idolatry.*

The defection of our race from the worship of the one true God, furnishes the reflective mind with a theme of painful interest. To arrive at such a stage of infatuation would appear to require a training in guilt, of more than human capability—a degree of violence to be offered both to our religious sentiments and intellectual faculties, from which our nature should revolt. Placed by his Creator in a world so admirably fitted for his reception, and invited by every object in nature, and every event of Providence, to acknowledge the power, wisdom, and goodness of Him who alone “doeth according to His will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth,” man would seem to have been effectually secured against the sin of idolatry. When, therefore, we attempt to discover the origin, and to trace the progress of the various systems of false worship, we are met at the very outset of our task by a difficulty which can be removed only by reference to the Divine revelation. Unaided reason, impiously scorning the Scripture narrative of the Fall, cannot fol-



low idolatry to its source. But let the veracity of the inspired record be conceded, and we are possessed of a solution at which speculation has in vain attempted to arrive. From that record we learn that the act of our first parents which robbed them of their innocence, and entailed a curse on themselves and their posterity, was their *disobedience* to God. We hold that in that act was enveloped the germ of all the idolatry that ever prevailed in the world. By allowing the instigations of Satan to enter into competition with the commands of the Most High, our progenitors were virtually guilty of idolatry. The doctrine of the Divine Unity necessarily implies on the part of man, the duty of unqualified and undivided obedience to the Divine will. The slightest departure from this duty is a trifling with, a subverting of, the awful doctrine. Disobedience to God is idolatry; a tacit avowal that His is not the only will to which we conform. Hence, the first step in that track of error which terminated in the establishment of such systems of mistaken worship as those of ancient Greece and Rome, and of such as at this day prevail in India and other heathen lands, was taken by our progenitors. They may not themselves have recognised in their act of disobedience a denial of the Divine Unity; and yet, as certainly as an effect follows its cause, has the defection of our race from the worship of the one true God followed that act.

Idolatry, then, being coeval with the Fall, in truth entering into the sin which displaced our first parents from their high estate of innocence, we are not to be surprised that in time it covered the whole earth, and that as the generations of men were further removed from primæval times, this sin should manifest itself in forms of ever-progressive grossness till it could be scarcely identified with the transgression in Eden.

We proceed to investigate the various steps of the defection, and we may remark that few subjects have so deeply and so constantly engaged the learned as the one on which we are now occupied. Various writers, guided in their researches by different principles, and influenced by different motives, have entered upon the inquiry and arrived at the most contradictory results. The theory which is at the present day most generally received and which seems to us best supported by historical testimony, is the one so ably defended by the author of the Divine Legation of Moses. Of this theory we intend offering a brief statement.

I. Bishop Warburton, in his celebrated work, refers to the preserved fragment of the Phœnician history of Sanchoniathon as containing the true origin and progress of vulgar Polytheism. In it, the worship of the Sun, of Fire and the Wind is represented as the *first* species of idolatry into which mankind fell. That the adoration of the elements and of the heavenly bodies was the first step in the corruption of religion,\* is

\* So obvious did this appear to Dr. Campbell, the author of the *Phil. of Rhetoric*, that he affirms—"Mankind, left wholly to themselves, having no supernatural revelation, will not only apprehend the heavenly bodies as animals, but will confine their thoughts, their hopes and fears to these superior beings upon whom they judge by experience they depend."—*Necessity of Revelation*, quoted in Leland's work on the same topic.

supported by the concurrent voice of antiquity, and may moreover be inferred from the statements of travellers, who have, in our own age, visited lands where man exists in his rudest, unsophisticated state. Of ancient writers on the subject, *Eusebius* \* observes that "by the first and most ancient of men the stars of heaven alone were considered and adored as gods." *Plato* asserts that "the first men who inhabited Greece held only the Sun, Moon, Earth, Stars, and Heaven to be gods." *Diodorus Siculus* affirms of the Egyptians, that "the first men looking up to the world above them, and terrified and struck with admiration at the nature of the universe, supposed the Sun and Moon to be the principal and eternal gods." And *Horus Apollo* informs us that in Egyptian hieroglyphics, "a star denoted or expressed the idea of the Deity." *Cicero* has preserved the following well known line of *Ennius* :—" *Aspice hoc sublime candens quem invocant omnes Jovem.*" †

The same renowned orator testifies that both *Euripides* and *Chrysippus* held the aether to be Jupiter.

Not to multiply quotations, we may observe that, at the present day, the various savage tribes of America, without exception, hold the sun and stars to be the principal deities interested in human affairs. Even the mythology of India throws no inconsiderable light on the nature of the first idolatry. The doctrine of the Veda, the oldest and most authoritative standard of the Hindu faith, is represented by its ablest interpreters to be a rude polytheistic system of worship, "in which the principal objects of adoration are the fire, wind, sea, sun, moon and other striking natural objects." ‡ "The Sanskrit term for God (*Deva*)"—observes the Reverend J. M. Mitchell, in a paper read by him some time back before the Bombay Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society,— "is derived from the root *div* and *dyu*, to shine; and the fundamental idea of the Divine one in the Veda is drawn from the bright shining sky and its varied phenomena. Essentially the religion of the ancient Hindus was nature worship." §

II. The next step in idolatry, according to the Phœnician fragment of *Sanchoniathon*, was the deification of the dead. Men had by this time reaped the benefits of an advancement in civilisation; and gratitude would induce them to enshrine the memory of those who had been instrumental in raising them to that state. The legislator whose wisdom and counsel had wrought a most salutary change in their condition; the hero whose daring and prowess had rid them of some dangerous foe, would when removed from the scene of their labours, be honoured with monuments,

\* For this and the three following quotations, I am indebted to Warburton's *Divine Legation*.

† Quoted in Leland's *Necessity of the Christian Religion*.

‡ See a paper entitled "The conflict of genius and authority in India," in the *Native's Friend*, for June 1842.

§ *Eusebius* in support of his position, above cited, that the heavenly bodies were the first objects of idolatrous worship, adduces the etymology of the word *Theos*, of which word, and of *Dios*, *Deus*, and *Divus*, General Kennedy in his "Ancient and Hindu Mythology" observes—"they are identical with the Sanskrit *Devah*."

and festivals, and other expressions of a whole people's gratitude and admiration. These marks of affection and respect would in time come to be looked upon as religious rites, and the departed legislator and hero be exalted to the rank of deities. Thus, *Philo Biblius* observes of the Phœnicians and the Egyptians that "they reckoned those among the greatest gods who had been the inventors of things useful and necessary to human life, and who had been benefactors to the nations." *Cicero*, evidently ambitious of similar distinction, quite approves of this custom; and, speaking of the *Dii Majorum Gentium*, he says, that even they were taken from among men into heaven, and that their sepulchres were shown in Greece. It has been justly observed of this species of idolatry that it produced "an amazing multiplicity of gods."\* For, besides the addition which gratitude to and admiration of public benefactors would make to the objects of a people's worship, almost all the social feelings would contribute their portion. "A father afflicted with untimely mourning," says the author of the *Wisdom of Solomon*, "when he had made an image of his child soon taken away, honoured him as a god which was then a dead man; and delivered to those that were under him ceremonies and sacrifices." The design cherished by *Tullia's* afflicted parent, but prevented, by the troublous times in which he lived, from being carried into execution, will be remembered in confirmation of the above statement.

In this instance also, we appeal to the Hindu mythology. *Ritter*, the author of the ablest and most recent *History of Ancient Philosophy*, divides the religious history of India into three periods,—those of the Vedas, of the *Itihásas*, and *Puránas*; and he observes of the second of these periods that in it began "the deification and worship of heroes and atoning priests." He adds—"Such is the natural course of Polytheism; the deified powers of nature give place to deified men and anthropomorphic gods."

III. The last stage in the progress of idolatry was the worship of brutes. Egypt is represented to have been the cradle of this species of superstition. A variety of hypotheses has been advanced to account for its origin; the most probable of which seem to be those of *Cudworth*, *Mosheim*, and *Warburton*. *Bishop Cudworth*, supposing that the ancient Egyptians held the Platonic doctrine of "eternal ideas" in the Divine mind,—the archetypes of all existences,—conceives that "in falling down to bulls and cows and crocodiles, they meant at first to worship only the divine and eternal ideas of those animals," and that in lapse of time this worship was transferred to the animals themselves. *Mosheim* attri-

\* Nothing can more strongly illustrate the blinding influence of the attempt to bend facts in support of a favourite theory than the arguments adduced by the late *General Kennedy* to prove that none of the heathen gods were dead men deified. He observes in his work already referred to—"Had such a system (of deification) ever existed, it becomes impossible to explain the cause which prevented a principle so extensively applicable, and so gratifying to the pride of man, from producing no more than the very limited number of deities which have existed in any country." Equally erudite writers have been amazed at the multiplicity of heathen gods.

butes the introduction of this superstition to the policy of the prince, and the craft of the priest. To preserve useful animals and destroy the noxious, was, he thinks, the object of the Egyptian princes, to attain which effectually they had recourse to the co-operation of the priests, who would persuade the people that certain animals were under the immediate protection of particular gods, and thus make it sacrilegious to hunt or annoy them : this would be the first step to their adoration. Bishop Warburton asserts that the employment of the figures of animals, in the hieroglyphics, as symbols of the elementary gods and heroes, and of their attributes, is sufficient to account for this species of worship. "This," he observes, "in no great space of time introduced a symbolical worship of their gods under hieroglyphical figures. But the people presently forgot the symbol or relation, and depressed this superstition still farther by a direct worship, till at length the animals themselves whose figures these hieroglyphical marks represented, became the objects of religious adoration." The truth seems to lie between the theories of Mosheim and Warburton.

Our limits forbid our prosecuting this subject any further. Hurriedly as we have dealt with it, however, an important lesson is suggested, which we cannot well omit to record. The history of superstition teaches us the danger of trifling with the doctrine of the Divine Unity. No earthly foresight could have revealed to the first Polytheists that the worship of the heavenly bodies and the elements would give birth to those abominations of the latter stages of idolatry, which tower high and dismal, as monuments of human depravity. But the believer in revelation finds no difficulty in accounting for the amazing accumulation of errors and absurdities which characterises the progress of Polytheism and Idolatry. "The awful repression of the idea of one exclusive sovereign deity," having been removed, man advanced from folly to folly till he "changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds and four-footed beasts and creeping things ; ... and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator."

## II. Of *Hinduism generally.*

Our field of enquiry has narrowed : the preceding general reflections will, however, secure acceptance for those which follow on Hinduism.

The Hindu religion has generally been supposed to have continued unaltered during many thousand years. Its present aspect has too often been allowed to be a sure index of its past ; its features to-day have been identified with those of by-gone centuries. Thus, the Abbe Dubois writes—"In my opinion the Hindus will remain the same in this respect after another thousand years as they were a thousand years ago."\* Even the judicious Robertson asserts—"what now is in India always was there and is likely still to continue."† Such a view of Hinduism is undoubtedly erroneous. There have been religious revolutions in India. Time has

\* Quoted in the *Calcutta Review* for April 1845, art. Transition states of the Hindu mind.

† Historical Dissertation on Ancient India.

wrought as many changes in the superstitions of this land as in those of any other country under the sun. Error is ever varying, and it would be a remarkable anomaly if Hinduism wanted this characteristic. The religion of the Veda, the oldest and most authoritative standard of the Hindu faith, has almost entirely lost its influence upon the people. Polluted as that religion is by a most degrading Polytheism, it has been supplanted by a system of worship, if possible, more revolting. From comprising a few deities, the Hindu Pantheon has swelled to "a long catalogue of thirty-three crore."

We have already referred to Ritter's division of the religious history of India into three periods, vizt. of the Vedas, of the Itihásas or heroic poems, and of the Puranas. Count Bjonstjerna, also, in his "Essay on the Theogony of the Hindus," assigns the following six successive stadia in the development of Hinduism:—

1. The first stadium, he says, was the religion of the Vedas; or monotheism tinged with Sabæism.

2. The religion of the Vedánta; or pure monotheism.

3. The religion of Menu's institutes; or pantheism, and the adoration of inferior deities, saints, and genii.

4. The religion of the Puránas; or the doctrines of the *trimurti*, and of incarnations.

5. The religion of the Upa-Puránas; or the mythology of the Poets.

6. The religion of Buddha; or the reformation of Brahmanism.

We are not prepared to defend the accuracy of this tabular view of the changes through which the Hindu religion has passed; the general fact, however, of its having varied at different periods, is placed beyond doubt by the recent researches of Orientalists.

Moreover, by most people an important element which enters into the religious system of the Hindus has been entirely overlooked. Before the Bráhmans imported, along with themselves, their religion into India, there existed an *aboriginal* superstition, "This aboriginal Hindu religion" says a well-informed writer in the Oriental Christian Spectator for July 1846,\* "still in the main exists, and enters largely into the modern system of Hinduism." Evidences of this fact abound; but my limits forbid my attempting to set them before my hearers, who will find much interesting information on the subject in the paper already quoted.

The sixth stadium in the table by Bjonstjerna suggests another ultra-Bráhman element in the religion of the Hindus, namely, the reformation of the Brahmanical theology that followed the rise and dissemination of Buddhistic doctrines.

Hinduism, then, is not a homogeneous system but a rude conglomeration of, at least, three different and antagonistic elements,—the aboriginal Hindu religion, Brahmanism, and Buddhism.

Before proceeding to give an account of the principal deities, which now

\* Art.—The religious systems of the modern Hindus.

make up the mythology of the Hindus, a few observations on their doctrines of the divine unity and of the *trimurti* (or triad) appear necessary.

1. The doctrine of the divine unity is frequently stated in the Hindu sacred writings. But as propounded in these, it presents a melancholy contrast to the representations of the Christian Scriptures on this subject. The Brahm of the Hindus, notwithstanding the high sounding epithets lavished on him, retires into the most contemptible insignificance when brought into comparison with the Jehovah of the Bible. The former is described to be a "qualitiless" abstraction, unconscious of its\* own existence, its quiescence unruffled by a thought, its repose undisturbed by a dream. Its highest bliss is in inglorious sloth, in profound torpor. Sometimes, indeed, it is spoken of as being infinite, eternal, omnipotent and omniscient; but "with one or two exceptions," says Dr. Duff, in his work on India, "all the attributes ascribed to it might with almost equal propriety be predicated of infinite space or infinite time." "Nowhere," continues this eloquent writer, "can a single moral attribute, properly so called, be found ascribed to the one god—the Supreme Brahm of the Hindus." Unpossessed of moral qualities it can, no more than space or time, be the object of moral sentiment. And not to speak of its securing the filial love and trust of mankind, it cannot command even the worship extorted from their fears, for who dreads "an infinite nothing?" The doctrine of the divine unity has, consequently, made little impression on the people of India. It has not the slightest influence over their worship, which is, in the strictest sense of the terms, a system of polytheism and idolatry. Coleman, an author by no means disposed to disparage Hinduism, remarks—"From whatever source the existing theology of the Hindus may have sprung, we need only here observe that at the present day, it is, in practice, the most decided and extravagant polytheism; that the objects of its worship are almost exhaustless, and that those objects are as varied in their attributes as they have been multiplied in their numbers."† To be convinced of the truth of this statement we have but to look around us, to witness a people doing homage to uncouth blocks of wood, and shapelessly sculptured stones; assenting to a ritual at times the most puerile and vexatious, and at others the most immoral and revolting; giving credence to the most absurd accounts of their deities; and never carrying their love and worship beyond the precincts of their horrid pantheon, to His courts, "in whom we live and move and have our being." Ah! if a St. Paul should traverse this land, would not his spirit be stirred within him to see it "wholly given to idolatry!" And if anything could augment the bitterness of his feelings, it would be the reflection that, unlike Athens, which amid its idol shrines had yet an altar reared "to the unknown God," here there is no temple dedicated to his service, no act of worship addressed to his Majesty.‡

\* *Brahm* is of the neuter gender.

† Preface to Coleman's *Mythology of the Hindus*.

‡ Atheism itself could not possibly induce a more entire forgetfulness of the one living God; and yet, General Kennedy, in an early part of his work on Ancient and

2. *The Trimurti*.\* The persons in the Hindu triad are never mentioned together in the Veda. Brahmá and Vishnu are there ranked with the inferior deities; Shiva is never named. Nor are any three gods, with the attributes of creator, preserver, and destroyer, respectively applied to each, found united in those ancient writings. It is obvious, therefore, that this doctrine is an innovation of later years. The writer in the *Oriental Christian Spectator*, already referred to, has we think, made out a strong case in favour of his opinion that Shiva is a deity borrowed by the Bráhmans from the aboriginal faith once obtaining in India. Of the many arguments he has urged we select one: It is remarkable that the officiating priests of this god are not Bráhmans, but men of the *Shu'dra* (or servile) caste, who, while attached to the temples, are termed *guravas*. A Bráhman never dares to touch the image of this god, but presents his offerings at a distance. This fact alone is sufficient to shew that Shiva was not originally reckoned to be a deity by the Bráhmans, and that his worship was "adopted into their system for the sake of gaining an influence among the tribes who were previously addicted to it."

Various ingenious speculations on the origin of the Hindu triad have been attempted by writers of eminence. Sir W. Jones, in the preface to his hymn to *Surya* (the sun) observes—"It is probable that the *triple divinity* of the Hindus was originally no more than a personification of the sun, whom they called *Tritanu*, or *three-bodied*, in his triple capacity of producing forms by his genial *heat*, preserving them by his *light*, or destroying them by the concentrated force of his *igneous matter*." Other speculators, with some degree of probability on their side, have supposed the *trimurti* to be a corruption of the revealed doctrine of the Trinity. Few, however, we trust, have carried their speculations so far as to go the length of the following observations of the late General Kennedy:—"It is so difficult to understand how this singular opinion could possibly have originated in the human mind, that it also might be, with the greatest probability, ascribed to an immediate revelation from God, of a much more explicit nature than the word *Elohim*, which has given rise to so much discussion." Faber's fanciful theory on the subject must be familiar to every student in mythology; we do not, therefore, stop to enter into its details. Professor H. Wilson tells us—"In the original scheme, Brahma, Vishnu, and Shiva were nothing more than mythological personifications of the power of the one First Cause—to create, to preserve, and to destroy."†

Hindu Mythology, informs the reader that the doctrine of the divine unity must have made "a much deeper impression on the mind of the Hindus, to whom it was, and still is, a truth essential for salvation, than if it had been permitted to become a topic of customary and inconsiderate discussion." In a subsequent chapter of his book, however, he falls into a contradiction by classing the unity of God among those truths "which do not appear to exert much, if any, influence on the greater mass of the Hindus."

\* There is a colossal representation of the *Trimurti* at the extremity of one of the Elephanta caves.

† See note to page 348, Mill's *British India*, Vol. 1.

In concluding these hasty reflections on the doctrine of the *trimurti*, we freely confess that we have not, in spite of our endeavours to do so, arrived at a satisfactory acquaintance with it. The Hindu sacred books themselves are most contradictory on this point. Some Puránas represent, Brahma, Vishnu, and Shiva as the persons of the triad, and dependent on Brahm. In others, Shiva is declared to be the supreme deity, while Brahma, Vishnu, and Rudra are said to be his dependents. Justly has it been observed by the Historian of British India,—“Whenever indeed we seek to ascertain the definite and precise ideas of the Hindus in religion, the subject eludes our grasp. All is loose, vague, wavering, obscure, and inconsistent.”

### III. *The Principal Hindu Deities Worshipped in the Bombay Presidency.*

We come to the third and last division of this Paper, in which I proposed to give a brief account of the principal Hindu Deities worshipped in the Bombay Presidency. Notwithstanding the great length to which the preceding reflections have extended, you cannot have failed to observe their bearing on this part of our enquiry. As I said before, the disjointed phenomena of Hinduism must always be ill understood unless their place in the system is known, and the system itself must be unintelligible unless its relation to other idolatrous systems is ascertained. We have adopted the *synthetical* mode of treatment; instead of beginning with Hinduism and analyzing it into its “elements,” we have preferred to begin with those elements, combining them, as we have proceeded, into their “compounds”—the phenomena of Hinduism; a method which has been pronounced to be “the more convenient for storing up in the mind all that is to be remembered on a subject.” I might have adopted a different arrangement and have worked the theory of idolatry out of the mass of facts with which an inquiry into Hinduism would present us; but then, in that case, I should have had to mingle facts with opinions, whereas it has been my desire to keep them distinct, so that if in one portion of my Lecture I should indulge freely in the expression of opinions, those opinions should be supplemented by an uninterrupted statement of the facts on which they profess to be founded. By the arrangement which I have employed, I believe I have succeeded in attaining my object. In the portion of the lecture on which we have now entered, a plain although, I trust, not unsuggestive, statement of facts, is all that will appear. The only merit that I claim for the following Sketch, is its being a faithful exposition of religious belief and observance derived, not from books, but from those who profess and are under the influence of that belief. Indeed, I think I may safely say, that it is as scrupulously correct a record of the information so imparted to me, as any deposition in a Court of Law. In order to preserve its character in this respect, I have refrained from subjecting it to the slightest modifications either of matter or language; and I think I shall not be blamed; for, what we all most desire to know on the subject is, not what Hinduism appears to the learned, nor yet what it appeared to its founders and first professors,—these we may glean from



books,—but what it appears to the great mass of its professors at the present day. In other words, we desire to be informed what is the “living creed,” of the people about us; what do *they* believe about their gods, and what account can *they* give of the worship paid to them. In the statement which follows, the desired reply is given in the words of intelligent Hindus themselves: Theirs is the testimony; I am, in a manner, only their spokesman.

Before the creation of the world, there was one only, formless God. He “imagined” to create different kinds of worlds, and accordingly the sun, moon and stars came into being. The nature of the Deity when he desired to create worlds is named Rajagun, and is Brahmá. That nature which looks after and upholds this creation is called Sutwagun, and is Vishnu. The nature which destroys, is named Tamagun, and is Shiva or Rudra. From that time, men began to pay their homage to these three natures, as if they were three different deities.

*Brahmá*.—It so happened, however, that, on one occasion, Vishnu and Brahmá set out to discover the extremities of Shiva. Vishnu took the direction of the feet, and Brahma that of the head. But although they had occupied many days in the search, none of them could discover either extremity. Vishnu therefore returned. But Brahmá thinking that it would not be reputable for him to confess his inability to discover Shiva’s head, created a cow and a ketakí plant, in order that they might both bear false witness concerning the success of his search. On his return to his compeers, he, presenting the cow and the plant, declared that, having arrived at the head of Shiva, he washed it with the milk of the former, and paid his devotions to the latter. Thereupon the cow and the plant affected to corroborate this falsehood. The lie uttered, Shiva cursed all three, addressing each as follows. To Brahmá he said—“From this day forward no mortal shall erect a temple to you or consecrate your image. Should any one do so, he will peril his happiness.” In fulfilment of this curse, Brahmá has, with a solitary exception, no temple erected to him.\* He is exhibited by no image, and his few followers worship him mentally. To the cow Shiva said—“Henceforth you will be quite an impure animal;” but on her petitioning him to remit the sentence, the god, favorably disposed towards her, yet not willing wholly to withdraw the malediction which he had pronounced, condemned her to have only her mouth impure, and as a consolation for even this partial disgrace, assured her that his worshippers should eat her five productions. To the ketakí plant the indignant god declared.—“Your flower shall no one offer to me in worship.”

*Vishnu*.—This god is represented with four arms, and riding on an eagle. His weapons are the shankha, chakra, gadá and padma. His heavenly residence is Vaykunth. There have been ten incarnations of him. He has many temples and images consecrated to him. On the eleventh day of every month, his followers keep a religious fast, more principally on the 11th day of A’shádh and the 11th of Kartikshuddh. On

\* This temple is on the Lake Pushkar (now Pokhar) near Ajmir.

these days, his devotees in every part of the land throng his temples. He is mostly worshipped by means of the shálígram a species of black pebble found in the Gandakí river in Nepaul. The Tulasí plant is dedicated to him.

*Shiva*—Two classes of temples are dedicated to his worship: there being some in which are consecrated (stapith) and others in which are unconsecrated (swayambhu) symbols of him. He has no images; but is generally painted with five heads, with the Ganges streaming down them. Around his neck are a chain of snakes and a necklace of skulls. His body is covered with the ashes of the funeral pile. His mantle is the tiger's skin. His weapons are the trishúla and pásh. The goddess Párvatí forms half of his person. He rides on a bullock. Every Monday of the week is sacred to him, especially the Mondays in the month of Shráwan, when his followers observe a rigorous fast, dining only at night. Once a year he is worshipped with great show in all his temples, namely, on the 14th day of Mághwadya called Shivarátri. The kamal flower, the dhatura, and the leaves of the bel plant are employed in his worship: the last is indispensable. His symbol is the Linga, which is usually a stone brought for the purpose from the Ganges. In the temple of Wálkeshwar, the Linga is of sculptured stone; in private devotions clay is employed. He is worshipped under different names, and has several notable shrines scattered over the Presidency, namely, those of Dhopeshwar at Rájápur, of Tháneshwur in Malwan, of Harihareshwur at Suvarndurg, of Kanakeshwar at Alibag and Malwán, of Māhábaleshwur at Gokarn, and of Bhuleshwur and Wálkeshwar in Bombay.

*Ganesh* (or *Ganpati*).—There are different accounts of this god in the different Puránas. The subjoined is the one most widely circulated. Upon a certain time, Shiva left his home to put down the giant Gajásur. Párvatí, Shiva's consort, who was left alone, being about to repair to her bath, and apprehensive that she might be disturbed, created a man (Ganesh) from some dirt off her body, and set him to guard the place and prevent all intrusion. While she was bathing, Shiva returned home after defeating the giant; and Ganesh, not recognizing in him the lord of Párvatí, obstructed his entrance. Shiva flew into a passion and in his rage killed the obstructor, Ganesh; of whose origin he, of course, was ignorant. On joining Párvatí, he related the circumstance to her, when she made known to him that he had been destroying her son, and desired him to reanimate the deceased. To conciliate her, Shiva agreed to resuscitate Ganesh, but not being able to find the head, he substituted that of Gajásur, which Shiva had brought home as a trophy and which resembled an Elephant's. Shiva now sought to make Ganesh some amends for his cruelty; and having expressed his admiration of the bravery of the former, blessed him, saying, that he should be called upon by men before they commenced any undertaking, and that the most worldly-minded mortal whose schemes did not leave him time for worship, should, at least, remember Ganesh. He is called also *Vighna Hartá* or the Rescuer. His great days are the fourth day in Bhádrapad and in Mágshuddh. On

the fourth day of Bhádrapad, the people make an image of clay, painted red, which, after some days, they drown in deep water. In Mágh they worship the stone images consecrated to him in the temples. This god is peculiarly partial to offerings of a red colour. An indispensable article in his worship is a species of grass named *dúrva*, which is made up into little bundles, each containing twenty-one stalks; these little bundles are placed on his head with gandh and rice, by the worshipper. Ganesh has four arms. He rides on a rat; and thereby hangs a tale. On the fourth day of Bhádrapad, the Hindus deem it ill-omened to see the moon. They say that on that day Ganesh was out, riding his favourite charger—the rat—when the poor animal sank exhausted under his big belly and thick dwarfish figure, causing him to roll over. On this the mischievous moon, who was looking on, laughed at the divine predicament. Ganesh observing this, worked himself into a towering passion and cursed her, saying that no one should ever after that see her face. The gods, however, anxious for the safety of the world, which they conceived would be endangered by the total withdrawal of the moon's presence, petitioned him to revoke his curse, and, in compliance with their prayer, Ganesh was pleased to limit the operation of the curse to the fourth day of Bhádrapad. On this day should an individual wilfully see the moon, he is taught to believe that some calamity will inevitably befall him. There is, however, a Shloka which, if repeated over and over again, will charm away the evil, should the gaze have accidentally fallen on the moon; but the way more usually resorted to, is to provoke the abuse of neighbours by smashing their windows and lamps. Ganesh is one of the household gods of every Hindu, and has a place in the family pancháyatan or shrine, in which he is represented by a little stone of a reddish hue, to be met with in the river Nerbudda. There is a temple of his at Pulá in the Ratnagiri Collectorate, and one in Bombay near Bholeshwar.

*Káll*, (or *Shakti* or *Párvatí*). She is the consort of Shiva. Most family shrines are supplied with an image (of gold or silver or copper) of *Párvatí*. In the absence of an image, a little ball (*suvarna-mukhí*) is made to represent her. She is propitiated by secret rites, in the course of which, spirituous liquor is drunk and flesh eaten by Bráhmans; who can never be induced to divulge their manner of worship, and the only way in which it can transpire is by the agency of interlopers. Her followers wear a red sectarian mark between the eye-brows. She is worshipped with much assiduity, and has two days of the week sacred to her, namely, Tuesday and Friday. She has a temple of some note at Sap-tashringa near Násik.

*Surya*.—The Sun is worshipped under this appellation. A symbol of the sun forms a necessary portion of the Paucháyatan, were a stone known as *Surya Kánt* is set up to represent him. He is worshipped every day, directly. His great day is Rathasaptamí, which occurs on the seventh of Mágh. On this day a painted representation of him is made, as a man sitting in a chariot drawn by a seven-headed horse. The Hindus say that when a son is born into the world, *Surya*, delighted at the birth of a new

worshipper, elevates the earth three inches, in ordinary cases : but his joy at the birth of a Bráhmán knows no bounds ; for, on every such addition to a Bráhmán family, he is supposed to offer a thousand cows. When a daughter is born, Surya shares in the disappointment of the parents, and, in every case, in his rage depresses the world three inches. Sunday is his day of the week. He is invoked with Water ; of which three handfuls are poured out to him as he is just rising, or four when he has risen. The water is designated Arghya. There are three forms of worship paid him : 1st, when worship is addressed to him directly, which is done thrice every day by the more rigid class of Bráhmáns,—2nd, when he is worshipped in his representative of the Suryakánt ; and 3rd, when he is worshipped as represented by a triangular figure engraved on a copper-plate, yantra\* His annual festival is Makar Sankránt. He has a temple dedicated to him in Baroda, where he is known as Surya Náráyan. He has altogether twenty four names.

*Agni*.—Fire is reckoned by the Hindus as an element residing in every object. In many of the Puránas, Krishna and several other deities are represented as declaring that Agni is of the same divine nature with themselves. He is also styled “the mouth of the gods,” as most offerings made to them are cast into the fire. Agni is worshipped in three different forms : 1st by the sacrifice of a ram, at which there must officiate twenty-four Bráhmáns ; only a certain portion of the animal is used ; part is burnt in offering ; and the remainder is eaten by the officiating priests. This rite, curiously enough, involves a sin, for which, as will presently be seen, atonement has afterwards to be made. It is believed that, in former times—in the golden age, that is—the Bráhmáns were possessed of the power of reanimating the ram, after reserving the portion of flesh required for the sacrifice ; but that the present, being the Kali-yuga, they have lost that power ; and that, consequently, in order to expiate the offence of killing an animal, the sacrificer is obliged to feast a large number of Bráhmáns,—in fact as many Bráhmáns as there are “hairs on the ram.” This however being a very expensive form of worship, none but kings could afford its celebration ; and it is now no more celebrated, “there being no Kings.” A second form of worship is distinguished by the appellation of Agni hotra ; and the following is an account of the ceremonial employed. In the place of worship, there are erected three altars,—the one a square (havan) another semicircular (dakshan agni) and the third circular (gárapatya). Sometimes a fourth altar (griha-agni) is added.† On all these fire is kindled. The fire on the three former altars is obtained from the friction of pieces of the pípal or khairtree ; that on the fourth is common fire. The fourth description of altar may be found in the house of all respectable Bráhmáns ; but the other three altars must be served at only by the bhikshuk Bráhmáns. This worship also is rarely performed, being very troublesome ; and although

\* This is performed by pouring water, coloured red, over some stalks of *durva* grass, a few grains of rice, and some red flowers placed over the yantra, and repeating the act twenty-four times.

Agni receives very general worship, there is only one temple in Bombay in which it is paid him in this form. This temple is in the vicinity of the English Burial ground. The place enclosed by the three altars is called vedhí. All the sacrificial instruments are made of wood. The articles offered in sacrifice are ghí, milk, and twigs (six inches long) of pípal, kháir, or umbr; there must be a certain quantity of ghí and of milk, and a certain number of twigs, neither less nor more. Agni has two days of every month sacred to him. The third-form of worship is only a substitute for the troublesome agni-hotra: it consists simply in burning a small quantity of boiled rice and ghí divided into twelve portions (hárt-hís) in a copper vessel (kund) in which a few live coals are placed.

*Samudra*.—The Sea is worshipped under this name; principally on Sundays, on the thirtieth day of every lunar month (purnimá) and on Sankránt. On the occurrence of an eclipse the people bathe in the sea, to which those who can afford it, offer fruit and flowers; and those who cannot, throw some sand from the beach into the water: this last is, according to the Shástras, the most proper offering. On these occasions, the Hindus dive under the water three times; after which, they offer three handfuls of water to the memory of each of their ancestors. At the time of making *shrádhh* for a father, balls of rice are thrown into the sea,—"because the sea is regarded holy." The *dharma shástras* forbid the Hindus crossing the sea; but the people are beginning to pay little regard to this. On "Cocoanut day," cocoanuts are offered to the sea, but there is no mention of this *pújá* in the Shástras.

*Vithobá*.—The temple of Vithobá may be met with in every village;—that at Pandharpur being the most celebrated. In the *dwápar yuga*, Vithobá was Krishna, an avatar of Vishnu; but it is reported of him (Krishna) that, being desirous of again meeting his worshippers—or as some accounts aver, his faithful votary Pundalik—he descended at Pandharpur under the name of Vithobá. On his left, is an image of his wife Rakhámi, who was Rádhá in the *dwápar yuga*. In the river Chandrabhága, and directly opposite the temple of Vithobá, at Pandharpur, is one raised in honor of Pundlik, who is there represented as doing obeisance to the former. Those worshippers of Vithobá who reside in the neighbourhood of Pandharpur, resort to his temple on every *ekádashí*; but those living away, go up only twice a year, in the months A'shadh and Kártik (*shuddh-ekádashí*.) On the *vadh-ekádashí* of these months, his followers repair to the tomb of Dnyánobha (in Alaudí near Puná) another of the faithful disciples of Vithobá.

*Lakshmi*.—There are many temples consecrated to this goddess over the country; but the worship offered her differs in different places. She is a rather celebrated goddess. She is worshipped in Bombay under different names, viz., Mumbádeví, Kálbádeví, Gámdeví and Mahá-Lakshmi. The most important fanes erected to her, are those of Mumbádeví, and Mahá-Lakshmi. The mode of worship in these two temples is as follows:—The worshippers break the cocoanuts, which they have brought in offering, on the figure of a tiger at the entrance of the temple. They then

pour some ghí into the lamps which are kept burning near the idol. Tuesdays and Fridays are sacred to her. In the month of A'shvin, from the 1st to the 10th, a great fair is held in honor of this goddess. During these nine days, she is washed daily with warm water and anointed with oil. The *ghat* is placed before her, with a cocoanut and a garland of mari-golds, the flowers being each day renewed. On the 1st day, various kinds of grains are deposited in a vessel and some loose earth is sprinkled over them; and on the 10th day, when they are beginning to sprout, the sprouts are pulled up and worn in the turbands. Hindu females generally make their vows to this goddess: they vow, for instance, that if she will grant their wishes, they will burn lights to her honour during her nine great days. Besides these special observances, daily worship also is paid to her in the following manner: The worshipper has to mention the year, place, incarnation, month, shuddh, day, and constellation; then to wash the goddess, first with water, then with the five nectars of the Hindus, then again with water; after which the image is wiped; it is then consecrated; an appropriate mantra being repeated at each stage of these observances. The forehead of the idol is then painted with red turmeric, and offerings of kajal, haldi etc. are made to it. The forehead is rubbed a second time with sandalwood; flowers are strewn over the idol; frankincense is burned; a wick fed with ghí is lighted; food and sugar are placed before the image; and the whole ceremonial is closed with the performance of pradakshan. Lakshmi has temples of note at Tuljápúr, where she is worshipped as Bhawání, and at Kolápúr and Násik.

*Kártik Swámi*.—This is Shiva's son; but his worship is kept quite distinct from that of his progenitor. He has a separate temple, to which no females are permitted to resort. On the night of Kártik-shuddha—chaturdashí, divine honors are paid by all classes of Hindus to Shiva; and on the next day to Kártik-Swámi, should Krittiká the third important star, happen to be the ruling star on that day. There is in the Puránas a shloka to the effect, that whoever on this day shall pay their homage to Kártik-Swámi, will in the next seven births be a Bráhma, rich, and well versed in the Vedas. The hope of this reward has gained him a considerable number of worshippers. He is described as having six faces. He was produced from an arrow. By some he is represented as the son of Agni. His chief temple is in Dharwar.

*Trimbakeshwar*.—Many years ago Gautama, a holy Bráhma, was worshipping in Trimbak near Násik; when a river sprang up to enable him to perform his ablutions. At the source of the stream, he placed a linga; and from that day the worship of Trimbakeshwar is dated. He has three different services in his honor during the day,—a morning, midday, and an evening service. On each occasion five different kinds of sweetmeat are placed before him. The chowguda is beaten for one hour at each service. On the night of Shivarátri he is worshipped with similar ceremonies as those celebrated in honor of Shiva. Trimbakeshwar is a god of great wealth and consequence. A golden image of him is carried in procession on Mondays, at ekádashí and purnimí. People making a

pilgrimage to Násik must perfect the meritoriousness of that act, by repairing to the temple of Trimbakeshwar, to worship him and to feed his Brahmans. At his shrine the religious ceremonies known under the name of tirthavidi, are performed : these consist of shaving the head, the moustachious and beard, feeding the Brahmans, and offering rice cakes to the manes of deceased ancestors.

*Krishna*.—This god is an *avatar* of Vishnu. From the 1st day of Shrávan-vadya, to the 8th, a great festival is held in his honor. His birth is celebrated at midnight, by high flown panegyrics ; for which purpose a cocoanut is placed on a piece of cloth, and the worshippers bring themselves to believe that it is Krishna himself, and all on hearing his praises touch him. On the 9th day, they sport with curds, ghí, milk, etc. throwing these delicacies upon each other and into each other's mouths.

*Khandobá*.—His chief place is Jejuri in the Puná Collectorate. He delights in offerings of turmeric, dry cocoanuts, ghí, and sugar-candy. His image is besmeared with turmeric. He is the god of success. He is also held to bestow great personal strength on his worshippers, whom he enables to burst bonds of iron. He has many female attendants (*muralyá*). He is the family god of most Maráthas. The Guicowar has built a temple in honor of this god, in Baroda. Sundays and Wednesdays are his days. He is Shiva's servant.

*Shánti-durgá*.—Her place is Mahádal near Goa. She is the tutelary deity of the shenis. She is worshipped with the same rites as Lakshmi, with this addition, that she is attended by dancing women and vestals.

*Wajrabú*.—Every year in Kártik Vadya Amáváshá, there is a fair held in honor of this deity, at a village in the Bassein taluka, sixty miles from Bombay. Pilgrims repairing to her shrine, bring away, from a mountain in its vicinity, quantities of earth, which they apply to their bodies, holding it to have been rendered sacred by the fact of a Brahman having, at some time or other, sacrificed on the summit.

*Hari-Hareshwar*.—Is Vishnu and Shiva in union, and worshipped as partaking of the nature of both, but as being neither the one nor the other ; in short, as a distinct deity, although with the nature of Shiva predominating. His shrine is at Suvarndurg in the Southern Konkan. Shivarátrí is his great day. People supposed to be possessed of a devil are forwarded there, as he is believed to have the power of exorcism. Pilgrims to his shrine also, perform tirthvidi. Some Brahmans attempt to explain the nature of this God by the following proposition founded on a divine revelation. "The heart of Vishnu is Shiva ; the heart of Shiva is Vishnu ; and, therefore, those who say they differ do err."

*Vyankobá*.—His chief place is on the Shrishail mountain. People everywhere make vows to this god. There is a religious work in the Prákrit language concerning him, and entitled Venkatesha-stotra, which is studied by most Hindus. In it various rewards, such as having a son, acquiring wealth, etc., are offered for the perusal of certain portions of the work. Many are, in consequence, allured to the study of his praises, and to be his adorers. The Shástras declare those who repair to his shrine

at Shrishail to be exempt from the application of the law which limits Hindu marriages to certain months. A great fair is held in his honor in A'shwín and Kártik. He has another temple in Násik, where he is known also as Bálájí. His worshippers there maintain themselves and his service by begging; they also feed any Brahman who may be on a visit to Násik. At the shrine of Vyankobá, at Pandharpur, caste is in abeyance; "all the inhabitants of the world are deemed alike." Pilgrims resorting there purchase prepared food from shops opened in the vicinity. The votaries of Vyankobá fast only on ekádashí and shivarátrí throughout the whole twelve months. Food is sent to distant parts of the country to the worshippers of this god, as gifts (*prasád*) from him to them; and should the bearer of the food even be a Mahár or a Shúdra, the most scrupulous Bráhmañ will not decline its acceptance or forego partaking it.

*Ráma*—Has a temple in Panchawatí near Násik; where he is worshipped with the sixteen different kinds of services offered to idols. Násik is his favourite locality; there when on earth, he had performed *tirthavidí*, and there he had killed the mythological golden deer. Adjoining his temple, is a grotto dedicated to his consort Sítá, in which her image is set up for worship. Every worshipper visiting the place, has to pay the officiating Brahman one pice. Overshadowing the spot are five Vad trees, which give its name to the place,—Panchawatí; about three or four miles from Panchawatí is a hill of sacred repute, because Ráma on one occasion slept there. From the 1st to the 9th of Chaitra-Shudhh a great festival is held in honor of his birth. With the difference that the whole affair takes place in the day, the ceremonies gone through, are exactly like those observed in commemoration of the birth of Krishna.

*Panchamukhi-Máruti*.—He was born on the 15th day of Chaitra Shudhh, and is an incarnation of Shiva, and a worshipper of Ráma. He is in a measure the god of strength. His worship is performed every Saturday. On the four Saturdays in Shráwan he is worshipped by all classes of Hindus. In his *pujá*, red ochre, oil, and agádá flowers are requisites. The several classes of Hindu ascetics, *Bairágís*, *Gosávís*, etc. worship this god as the god "of fatal revenge." *Pradakshaná* round his image is one of the chief portions of the service rendered him. He is devoted to a life of perpetual celibacy. The Hindus invoke him when they are lifting up any great weight, and he assists them by imparting a portion of the amazing strength which he displayed when on one occasion he cast a mountain into the sea to serve him as a bridge. In *tálmkhánás*, representations of this god are frequently to be met with painted on the walls. Mention is made of the temerity of a Pársí who some years ago ejected an image of Máruti from his compound, and, strange to say, without any serious consequences from his sacrilege.

*Sítaldévi*—Has a place in the yard of the temple of Bhuleshwar. During an attack of small-pox, the Hindu constantly invokes this goddess, and, on recovery, manifests his gratitude by liberal offerings to her. This practice extends to some Pársí families, whose gifts are received by the officiating Bráhmañs, but who are not allowed to approach the idol.



*Jagannáth*—Has a temple of some note in Gujarát, at which the institution of caste is in abeyance, Bráhmaṇ and Shúdra eating promiscuously of the food cooked there. A large snake, held sacred, is said to move freely about the temple, obstructed by no one and injuring no one. The idol is made of wood; and of the carpenter who carves the image it is popularly believed that as soon as his task is completed, he becomes Vishnu.

*Nársinh*—Is the fourth avatár of Vishnu; he was produced from a wooden pillar; he has a thousand arms; and has achieved immortality among men by tearing a giant in pieces with his talons. Images of him are to be met with in most villages. Into the wall of the temple, behind the image, a hole is usually dug, into which libations of sherbet are usually poured. His favorite drink is sherbet; but he always returns the worshipper half the quantity presented in offering.

*Dwárákánáth*.—This is a form of Krishna. He has a rather celebrated temple at Dwáráká in Kathiawar. On that island there are two images of him which draw a vast concourse of worshippers: one on the sea-shore, and the other in the temple referred to. Near the shore is situated a tank which is held to be holy, and from each person who bathes in it His Highness the Gaikawar receives a fee of from ten to twelve rupees. Most Hindus who visit this place allow themselves to be branded with the four weapons of Shiva (shankh, chakra, gadá, padma) as a token that they have been there on pilgrimage. It is believed that should an individual's bones (saved from burning) be cast into this tank, they are, after a few days, converted into small stones, which are the eyes of Vishnu: these are carried to different places, and sold as such. In the island itself, Krishna, in his form of Dwárákánáth, and his eight wives have separate temples set apart to each. There the pilgrims perform the usual pujá, present offerings to the gods, and feed the officiating Brahmins.

*Dattatreya*.—Dattatreya is an incarnation of all the persons in the triad. He has no special worship. He was born on the 15th of Márgashírsh. His chief places of worship are in the village of Narsobáchi-Wádí in the territory of Patvardhan, and in Junágad in Gujarát. His followers generally devote themselves to a life of almsbegging. He is supposed to possess the power of curing his faithful followers of the most inveterate diseases, not excepting leprosy. There is extant a work concerning this god, entitled *Guru-charitra*, which is much read by his worshippers.

*Vetál*—Is the King of Demons. His worship prevails in the Sáwant Wádí Territories, where he is represented by images made of wood, and where exist many temples to him. He is worshipped chiefly by the lower orders. At midnight his votary repairs to some cremation ground, repeating stanzas addressed to him, and the *deva* in return, is believed to grant any request of his worshipper's, either in promotion of his own interests, or for the ruin or prosperity of his neighbour. There is a legend that Vikram A'ditya was beholden to Vetál for his elevation to the throne. Vetál is said to have tested his ability to hold the reins of government, the boon which Vikram sought, by proposing to him a number of ques-

tions. Vikram's answers quite pleased Vetál, who thereupon elevated him to the coveted dignity. The Vetálpanchisí, a Maráthí work on the subject, containing also a number of Sanskrit shlokas, has preserved this legend.

*Parshurám.*—Has a large temple dedicated to him in the Suvarádurg Táluká. He is regarded as the King of the Konkan. In the Puránas, it is said that Parshurám, having originally no place of residence, cleared a space 14 coss long and 16 coss broad in the bed of the sea, by shooting at the ocean with an arrow, which caused the waters to flee back to that extent. The third of Vaishákh is celebrated as his birth-day, when a great festival is held in his honor. He is much worshipped by the Konkanasth Brahmans. His temple at Suvarádurg is situated on a hill, surrounded by a large native town. Being himself a king, he exacts every demonstration of respect even from kings, the Rájás of Satará and Kolápur not being permitted to approach the sacred top, but to do homage to his shoes (made of stone) placed at the foot of the hill. These Rájás are also Kshatriyas, and Parshurám was always much opposed to Kshatriyas; between whom, whatever their rank, and his other worshippers, he has prescribed this invidious distinction.

*Trees.*—The Vad tree is worshipped by all Hindu females, in order that their husbands may be long-lived; the pimpal, in order to obtain children; the ashok, for the arresting of all evil; the umbar, for recovery from sickness; the tulasí for the destruction of enemies and the ensuring of the worshipper's own prosperity, and in order to keep Yama, the god of the infernal regions, from troubling the soul; the amalí is held sacred, and in the month of Kártik, Hindus of all castes dine under its branches: the meal thus partaken is termed amalí-bhojan. During the Dasará, the shamí and ápatá are universally worshipped, and their leaves distributed among friends as so much gold; at this festival every article in and about a house is worshipped by peasant and by king.

*Conclusion.*—With what reflections shall we close this review of the heathenism around us? Let your hearts suggest such as are suitable. Only, remember that Hinduism is "a living fact;" that while you, my friends, have, as is probable, been wearied by the bare recital of the details which I have laid before you to-night, the system with which you have no patience, is the life-buoy of millions, is their only passport to eternity. Think of the condition of those millions, to whom this superstition wears the aspect of religion. Think of its baneful influences on young and old,—how it perverts, cripples, and paralyses the best energies of the strong, how it extinguishes the hope which should light the dying to the tomb. And oh! let the thought move your hearts. Let all your jealousy for the honor of God, and your love for the souls of men be awakened; and by active efforts, by your prayers and sympathy, strengthen the hands of those who are carrying the torch of Truth into the dark domains of heathen error.





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