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- ART. I.—1. *Report from the Select Committee on Public Libraries, together with the Proceedings of the Committee, Minutes of Evidence, &c.* Ordered by the House of Commons to be printed. July 23d, 1849. Folio. pp. 317.
2. *Evening Schools and District Libraries. An Appeal to Philadelphians in behalf of improved means of Education and Self-culture, for Apprentices and young Workmen.* pp. 27. Philadelphia: King & Baird. 1850.
3. *Free Reading Room of Spring Garden, for Young Men and Apprentices.* pp. 12. Philadelphia: Collins & Co. 1850.

ON the fifteenth of March, 1849, the English House of Commons appointed a select committee of fifteen "on the best means of extending the establishment of libraries freely open to the public, especially in large towns in Great Britain and Ireland, with power to send for persons, papers and records, and to report observations and minutes of evidence to the House." So promptly and efficiently did they execute the important commission, that on the twenty-third of the follow-

rotteness enters into my bones (paralyzing all my strength,) and I tremble where I stand, that I must quietly wait for the day of trouble, for his coming up against the people who shall invade them in troops. It is the being obliged to await this righteous inevitable chastisement which gives rise to the feelings just expressed. The next verse expands the idea of the day of trouble by giving the consequences of the invasion; it is a prophetic picture of the desolation of the holy land by the wars with the Chaldeans and in part also, for the prophet does not chronologically separate them, its mournful condition during the Babylonish exile. But the confidence of faith triumphs over all, and with the exultation of victory the psalm closes.

ART. IV.—*Essays of Sir W. Jones and H. T. Colebrooke, Esq.*, published in the 1st, 5th, 7th and 8th vols, of the Asiatic Researches.

2. *Vedanta Sara*, translated by Rev. W. Ward. 1st vol. of Ward's "View of the History, Literature, and Mythology of the Hindus."
3. *Account of Indian Philosophy*, 1st and 4th vols. of "Ritter's History of Ancient Philosophy."
4. *Sketch of the Religious Sects of the Hindus*, by H. H. Wilson, LL.D., F. R. S. Boden Sanscrit Professor, Oxford, Calcutta, Bishop's College Press. 1846.
5. *Two Lectures on the Religious Practices and Opinions of the Hindus*; delivered before the University of Oxford, on the 27th and 28th of February, 1840, by H. H. Wilson, M. A., Boden Professor of Sanscrit, etc. Oxford, 1840.
6. *Calcutta Review*, Nos. VI, VII, and VIII, respectively for June, September and December, 1845.
7. *North British Review*, No. II, August 1844.
8. *Friend of India*, a weekly newspaper edited by J. Marshman, Esq., Serampore. Vols. of the years 1845 and 1849.*

* The writer makes the acknowledgment once for all that he is indebted to these sources for the materials of which his article is compiled.

Dr. Duff said with truth, that as in the history of the physical world chaos precedes the cosmos, so it is ever in the moral world that a moral chaos precedes the divine generation of the new spiritual order of the kingdom of heaven. It lies in the very idea of a creative energy that it may compass the end immediately—for what we call means are but the articulations of the one power which comprehends the end from the beginning. But in the design of Jehovah in all his works of creation and providence, the end proposed is not so much the attainment of certain results in the physical universe, and in his system of government, but principally the revelation of his own infinite wisdom, power, and goodness to his intelligent creatures, in forms suited to their comprehension—and for this end an explicit evolution of the method of his works is essential. In that sublime command, Let there be light, and in its immediate fulfilment, we have the revelation of a power whose sublimity may well excite adoration, and which in fact constitutes the ultimate ground to which we refer every exhibition of power, but which utterly transcends our sphere in kind as well as degree, and therefore cannot enlighten us as to its own nature, nor as to the intelligence by which it is determined. It is only when God works in, and (as men say) through a system of means infinitely multiplied and various, holding all in balance and directing all to his own ends, that we can trace and adequately appreciate the divine wisdom and the provisions of the divine goodness.

In the original generation of a new order in this physical world for the habitation of man, and the higher races of animals and vegetables provided for his use, we know, that when the Spirit brooded over the face of the waters, although the earth was without form and void, the energy exerted was nevertheless not an unconditioned creation—for it appears from the record itself that it was conditioned by the preëstablished laws of matter. Thus also is the work of the regenerating gospel in the bosom of any particular nation, not an unconditioned new creation; for beyond the universal conditions of human nature, there are always present those of preëxisting civilizations, systems of faith, social and religious institutions, as well as contemporary political relations. All these, in as far

as they are merely natural, will be assumed by the ordinating Spirit and wrought into the new creation, but, in as far as they are the results of the adverse powers of darkness, they will be utterly extirpated and cast out.

In this physical world, when the power of life is withdrawn from any organization, there is not always a disintegration of form, as is witnessed by the fossil remains of ancient strata, but the component elements always assume a relation of fixed equilibrium, which only a new life can invade and disturb. Stagnation is the result and evidence of death. When any form of life invades a sphere thus stagnant, the old equilibrium is instantly broken up, and there at once commences an action and reaction of, what appears to us, warring forces, the constant flux of elements thrown out of the sphere of chemical affinity in order that they may be brought into the higher sphere of vital harmony. This is of course true in a far higher sense in the spiritual regeneration of a community of men, for here not only a new, but a higher life is introduced, which has not only to subordinate to itself past and lower developments, but to meet and destroy essentially opposing powers. This has always been the fact, and always in proportion to the previous civilization, and the authority of preëxisting institutions among any people. Here the first effect of the preaching of the gospel is to break up the old stagnation, and to excite the most intense and apparently opposing action. The zealots of the old system are aroused to new energy, and cast about for new weapons of defence; and above all the passions of men are excited in new directions, and the most various and conflicting forms of opinion are generated by the contact of the old with the new. A period of transition ever gives birth to monsters, abnormal growths, which belong neither to the old nor the new order, which, as they are not born of law, cannot be referred to law, but which bear unequivocal witness that the old things are passing away, and behold all things are becoming new.

The phenomena attending the introduction of the gospel into India are probably more marked and instructive than in the case of any other modern nation,—for its preceding history and character, and from the manifold and mastering in-

fluences now brought to bear on it from without. Here in a continent, isolated by oceans and mountain chains from the rest of the world, and in the body of one of the most populous communities on the earth, that most comprehensive system of heathenism, reaching from the highest esoteric refinement to the lowest exoteric grossness, brought over from the central region of Iran in the infancy of the race, by the cunning and tyrannous Brahman tribe, has had for more than three thousand years full sway in moulding all the forms of society, and in determining the entire moral habits and religious life of the people. Whatever may have been the character or degree of their intercourse with western nations; however much their political system may have been broken, and however often their territory may have been invaded and its sovereignty assumed by foreign tribes of a different faith, it is certain that until the beginning of the present century no foreign leaven had penetrated the mass of the nation, or had in any essential degree modified either their opinions or social and religious forms and habits. To this day are the writings of their ancient sages received as the fountain of all religious light and all secular knowledge—the education of their youth is still conducted in all respects according to the directions of the *Dharma Shástra*, in the chapter on education—and all the relations of society, and the duties and business of life are defined and directed according to the Institutions of their most ancient law-givers, of whom *Manu* the grandson of Brahm, who spoke in the beginning of time, is the first and greatest. But it has pleased Providence, in connection with the radical and all-embracing revolutions which are in these days, under the maturing developments of a Christian civilization, taking place in the constitution of society and in the relations of nations, to bring even this ancient people within the general system, and to subject them to the moulding influence of the most intimate intercourse with Christian nations. Not only has the British Empire the political supremacy in India, but in all the Company's territory, the details of the police in the most remote districts are superintended by the English magistrate in person. The service of government, and an extending commercial intercourse has, especially in the large seaports,

created an ever increasing demand for the knowledge of European science and the English language. This innovation, which at first was met with the most bigoted prejudice, has since become a fashion, and the sons of Rajahs and Nawabs, who may be raised above the motives of interest, are in Bengal seeking an English education as a necessary accomplishment. Thus are the government schools, established in all the principal cities of their territories, and the far more effectively conducted schools of the missionaries every where introducing a new leaven; and in some centres of concentrated influence, as Calcutta, they have already revolutionized whole classes. In Calcutta—for we wish to be understood as confining our attention to the Bengal presidency—these schools find a most powerful correlative agency in a very active periodical press, conducted by European and native editors of all parties both in English and the vernacular.

Our appreciation of the great work which has been accomplished by these agencies will be enhanced when we remember that missionaries were not admitted into the Company's territory until after 1813, and that the present system of English schools supported by government, was not fully introduced before 1835. After the Company's establishment in India assumed a political character, and their agents began to recover from the surprise of their almost magical successes, the policy of training for the service of government a superior class of native subordinates by a more efficient system of education than the country then afforded, became evident to all. But at the same time so great was the sense of the insecurity of their tenure of power, that the most extravagant fear of exciting the religious and national prejudices of the natives gave character to their whole policy. They never conceived the glorious aim of communicating to their subjects the inestimable boon of the knowledge of true science and true religion; their plan comprehended only the restoration and more active dissemination of Hindu and Mahommedan science and literature.

On the occasion of the renewal of the Company's charter, in 1793, the friends of humanity and religion, of whom the most prominent leaders were Mr. Charles Grant and Mr.

Wilberforce, made the most earnest efforts to induce the Imperial Parliament to make provision for a more efficient system of education, and to authorize the promulgation of Christianity among their Indian subjects by European missionaries. These endeavours however at that time resulted in no positive order favourable to their wishes, although an impression was made upon the public mind, which gradually strengthening, attained the desired end at the next renewal of the charter in 1813. From that time missionaries have had free entrance, and Parliament then required the Company to appropriate a lakh of rupees, or \$50,000 annually, for the promotion of education among the natives. No application however was made of this appropriation until 1823, when a *General Committee of Public Instruction* was formed at Calcutta, with full powers of administering this money and the entire educational scheme. But it was not until 1835, under lord William Bentick, and in a great measure through the enlightened and zealous exertions of C. E. Trevelyan, Esq., that the system of using the learned Oriental languages as the medium, and in great part the matter of instruction was done away, and the glorious sun of English literature and science rose full into the Hindu horizon.

Up to 1835, the pupils in all government schools were encouraged to cultivate native literature by numerous scholarships and prizes—but since that date these have all been done away, and the encouragement turned in favour of English studies. English classes have been added to their original Oriental institutions, as the Calcutta Madrisa, and new English Colleges have been formed at Delhi, Agra, Benares, Murshedabad, and other principal cities, and preëxisting institutions founded by native liberality, as the College at Hoogly, and Hindu College at Calcutta have been adopted into the government scheme. And in all applications for office under government in any department, preference is now given to those who have made the largest acquirements in the English language and Western science. But in the face of the powerful competition of government patronage and rich endowments, the schools of the several missionary bodies, from their greater moral vitality, and the superior talent of the teachers, have

not only been more successful in their results, but actually more popular; and are exerting a wider as well as a deeper influence. The Church Mission have theirs—the Established Church of Scotland theirs—the Baptist Society theirs—the London Society theirs, for which the Rev. Dr. Boaz has lately secured a splendid endowment—and above all, the acknowledged model of all, the school of the Free Church of Scotland, numbering for years past a thousand pupils.

As might be supposed, all these agencies, political and commercial, educational and religious now brought to bear upon this ancient community—differing so much as they do in principle among themselves, yet all making correlative aggression upon the entire system of Hindu faith and manners—thus bearing not only upon the external territories of that system but upon its inmost centre and essential life—have made the most profound impression upon classes the most exposed to their influence, and have generated intense intellectual excitement, exhibiting itself in very various results. It must not be supposed that this leaven has so far penetrated the mass, that the lower orders of society are positively much affected. Yogis seeking absorption in Brahm through a course of the most extravagant self-torture may still be seen in the public stations attracting the wonder and obeisance of crowds of old women and doting men; entire classes, as Qulís, artisans, small shop-keepers, still wear the mark of the Beast upon their foreheads; pujás are celebrated in all form, and festival days are punctually observed; and the streets of Calcutta at present probably exhibit the same and as general evidences of a reigning superstition as ever before. But it is notoriously different among the educated classes. Some it is true with the maddening presentiment of approaching destruction cling even more desperately to the old faith, and like owls and bats are yet more blind because of the new light. But liberal sentiments are everywhere active, and everywhere prevail. They find expression and a scope for action through the medium of the press, and in numerous debating societies. It is of course known that the entire system of government education is wholly secular. All religious instruction, and as far as possible all notices of religion are carefully excluded. But as

the Hindu system embraces the most monstrous errors in physics and history as well as in theology, any kind or degree of true knowledge at once assumes an attitude of antagonism to it, and sets the seal of imposture upon the whole. While therefore some, who have been only to a superficial extent affected, have taken the alarm, have been thrown into a more conscious and active opposition, and now constitute the most prominent leaders of the conservative or orthodox Hindu party, the great mass of the more thoroughly educated on the contrary are thoroughly convinced of the silliness and vileness of the existing faith and religious practices of the people. This entire latter class, embracing various and dissimilar elements, passes under the generic designation of "Young Bengal"—in truth a chaotic gulf, the grave of an old, and womb of a new world.

The orthodox Hindu party is represented, its interests advocated, and all its movements as a party controlled and directed by the *Dharma Shabha*, literally *Holy Assembly*. This society was instituted in 1829, in opposition to the *Brahma Shabha* of the Vedantists, for the objects of preserving the existing Puranic system of mythology and idol-worship, in opposition to all foreign influences whatever, and especially to the pretended internal reform of the Vedantic philosophers. It soon increased greatly in numbers and power, and exerted for a long time a controlling influence in the native society. It still exists, and retains potentially all its elements of influence, although the energy and activity which characterized it under the exciting circumstances to which it owed its origin have given place to the native apathy, and want of any positive principle of union, so preëminently characteristic of the Hindu of this age. In its more active days it carried on an excited controversy on all the great interests in debate, through the press and in every sphere of society. It desperately opposed any liberal innovation, as the abolition of the rite of *Satî*, or burning widows with the corpse of their husbands, and more lately those most honourable orders of an enlightened government, which truly form a prominent epoch in the moral renovation of India, abolishing the tyrannous native law which inflicted the forfeiture of all hereditary property upon converts renoun-

cing the religion of their birth. The organ of the Dharma Shabha from the beginning has been the Churndrika, which still retains its place in the native periodical literature of Calcutta, under the management of its first editor Bhubany Churn Banerjea—one of the most active members of the Shabha.

To return however to the innovating classes which constitute Young Bengal, we find among them, as we should naturally expect the most endless diversity. A class, very small as compared with the whole, graduates of the mission schools, or those who have received illumination from other more accidental sources have been convinced of the truth of Christianity, and more or less openly profess their faith in it. These may be seen, four or five in a group every Sunday at all the Christian churches. The great mass however of the educated have by no means gone so far. Most indeed have no earnest care for any religion. Rejoiced to be freed from the hard service of their old superstition, they have changed their liberty into licentiousness and add foreign vices to those inherited from their fathers. These men for the most part conform to all the superstitious rules of their caste, so far as they are not too irksome, some to avoid persecution, others for the love of the fun and licentious pleasure connected with their religious rites, and their most comprehensive distinguishing marks, are an irreverent contempt of all sacred things, card playing, beef-eating, and wine-drinking, at their club houses in Bow bázár, or in private apartments in the English hotels. This class of universal skeptics and scoffers are armed with all the weapons of both the Indian and European schools of infidelity. The works of Tom. Paine have in time past been sent to Calcutta by the ship load from America, and with the kindred works of Volney and Gibbon have always found there a ready market.

Among the more studious and respectable of the educated natives there are two general classes. Those who have been most thoroughly imbued with English literature, and whose training in the forms of Western civilization has been most complete, have without reserve renounced all faith as well in the esoteric philosophy as in the popular mythology. They have declared themselves to be be-

lievers in one God, but to be not fully satisfied that he had made any revelation of himself other than the universal one in nature and the heart of man. They do not however assume the attitude of skeptics in opposition to any positive creed, but of simple seekers for the truth. The organs of this party at the first were the *Inquirer* and *Gyananeshun*, the former in English, the latter in Bengálí, both conducted by native editors. The highly educated and able editor of the former, Krishna Mahana Banerjí, was with a number of others of like standing, convinced of the truth of Christianity through the instrumentality of Rev. Dr. Duff as a public lecturer on the evidences of revealed religion, and having been hopefully converted, has since become a highly respected minister of the government establishment. This party is at present represented by the *Theophilanthropic Society*, whose position, as having renounced idolatry and the divisions of caste, and as searching for further illumination, is said by the able editor of the *Friend of India* to be fitly set forth in that passage of Paul's speech at Athens. "God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is the Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands, neither is worshipped with men's hands, as though he needed anything, seeing he giveth to all life and breath, and all things; and hath made of one blood all the nations of men to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation; that they should seek the Lord if haply they might feel after him and find him, though he be not far from any one of us."

But there is another party, embracing many of the most respectable though less thoroughly anglicised of the educated natives, who, while they are as much convinced as the others of the debasing vileness of the popular superstitions, and the utter falsehood of the entire system of historical and theological myths, nevertheless shrink from entirely rejecting the religion of their fathers. The rejection of their national religion appears to them equivalent to the rejection of their nationality. These consequently, while denying the authority of the *Puránas* and later books, which abound most in gross materialistic cosmog-

anies, infrahuman incarnations and monstrous mythic heroes, and inculcate idolatry in its most naked form—have sought in the monotheism and fragmentary teaching of spiritual truth scattered through their older books, and enshrined in the adyta of their philosophical systems, a means of reconciling their new enlightenment with their old profession. The particular system of Hindu philosophy which they profess is the vedantic, the most popular and influential in Eastern India. Ram Mohun Roy, the first and greatest of these reformers, was determined to the choice of this particular system, not because it is the most pure and furthest removed from the popular idolatry, but because he was best acquainted with it, and because it was the most available for his purpose. This party of Vedantists is now very extended and influential, embracing however men of very various degrees of honesty of purpose and intellectual illumination. Some are truly what the name imports, disciples of Vyása, philosophical pantheists; most however holding their opinions rather on the authority of reason than revelation. Others like Ram Mohun Roy himself, are simple Deists, who believe that the Koran of Mahomet, many portions of their Shástras, and the Gospel of Jesus alike teach much truth, and are so far all alike revelations of the God of truth. They prefer, however, for themselves to derive their own designation from the system taught by one of their own national sages, and to hold the truth which belongs alike to all, in the form in which they are able to glean it from their own most ancient books. These men are spreading through the country in every direction, and are wherever they go, in proportion to their individual honesty and earnestness of character, discouraging the popular superstitions. It is of very frequent occurrence for Bengálís, as they are travelling through the North Western Provinces, to call upon our Missionaries at the several stations there, and to introduce themselves to them as Vedantists, as if that profession brought both parties on somewhat of a common ground, at least relatively to the popular idolatry. And it is of these, their doctrinal basis, and their attitude as a sect, that it is the design of this article principally to speak. What then is Vedantism? And who are the Vedantists?

Hindu literature has been classified under three great periods—that of the Vedas, the original and supreme scriptures, received alike by all sects, and regarded as the normal source of all knowledge, referred by scholars to the twelfth or fourteenth or sixteenth century before Christ—that of the great heroic poems, the Rámáyana of Valmiki, and the Mahábhárata of Vyása, marking a transition stage of this ancient faith, mediating between the nature worship of the Vedas, and the degenerated hero-worship of the Puránas—and lastly, the period of commentaries upon the original scriptures, characterized by the deification of mythical personages, the multiplication of actual divine existences from the figurative personifications of the primitive worship, and the invention of idolatrous symbols and rituals. These latter are the work of ever multiplying and diverging sects, and consequently of canonical authority only in the estimation of their respective sections. The Vedas are represented as essentially one and eternal, coeval with the breath of Brahmá the creator, and infinite in volume. The supreme ruler, however, communicated as much as was necessary for the divine illumination of the human race, to Krishna Dwai-páyana, who compiled the existing four Vedas—Rik, Yajush, Sáma and Atharva—and delivered one to each of his principal disciples, thence receiving the titular name of Vyása, the compiler, by which he is most commonly designated. Prof. Wilson fixes his era at the thirteenth century before Christ. These writings, with the exception of the last Veda, exist in an original rude dialect of the Sanscrit, which preceded its classical maturity, and are consequently read with extreme difficulty by the most accomplished Sanscrit scholars, and at the present day are studied by very few even of the most learned Brahmans. Each Veda consists of two parts, the one practical and ritual, the other doctrinal and argumentative. The entire collection of hymns and prayers of any Veda, is called its Sanhitá—the doctrinal parts appended to the former, and consisting of precepts, arguments, theological and philosophical aphorisms, are called the Bráhmaṇa. These are regarded by scholars to be of much later date than the ritual, which has become practically obsolete, and of a less homogeneous character; they were

grafted upon the primitive scriptures by Brahmans of various philosophical opinions, in order to secure for them a co-ordinate divine authority. The Upanishads are theological and philosophical tracts appended to the Vedas, of comparatively modern origin, and of very various doctrinal character, for the most part however teaching the spiritual pantheism of the Vedantic philosophy, and forming the scriptural basis upon which that school rests the divine authority of its doctrine. The religion of these original scriptures consisted essentially in the recognition of one God, yet not sufficiently apprehending him as a person distinct from his creation, but rather directing worship to him mediately in his attributes personified, and the visible manifestations of his power in the elements and order of the physical universe. Colebrooke, the highest authority in all subjects connected with Indian science and law, says "The real doctrine of the whole Indian scriptures is the unity of the deity, in whom the universe is comprehended; and the seeming polytheism, which it exhibits, offers the elements, and the planets and stars as gods." Dr. H. H. Wilson, Boden Professor of Sanserit, Oxford, and since the death of Colebrooke occupying the first rank in this department of Oriental learning, says, "The elements were worshipped as types and emblems of the divine power, for there can be no doubt that the fundamental doctrine of the Vedas is monotheism." "It is true (preface to the Rik Veda*) that the prevailing character of the ritual of the Vedas is the worship of the personified elements; of Agni or fire; Indra or the firmament; Váyu, the air; Varuna, water; of Aditya, the sun; Soma, the moon; and other elementary and planetary personages. It is also true that the worship of the Vedas is for the most part domestic worship, consisting of prayers and oblations offered—in their own houses, not in temples—by individuals for individual good, and addressed to unreal presences not to visible types. In a word the religion of the Vedas was not idolatry." The three principal personages of Hindu mythology are barely mentioned in the Vedas; but there they are represented only as personifications of the attributes in

* See a very learned article on the "Sacred Literature of the Hindus," *North British Review*, August, 1844.

action of the one indivisible Supreme—Brahmá of his creative, Vishnu his sustaining, Siva his destroying, or, what in Hindu philosophy is the same, his regenerating energy. But the literal incarnation of the deity is said to be asserted in no genuine passage, and the worship of deified heroes forms no part of their system. This latter, which has given birth to the whole mythological scheme of modern Hinduism, and in the later Puránas and Tantras has degenerated into the grossest idolatry, first found articulate expression in the great heroic poems of the second period of Indian literature. The two most popular objects of worship at present in all India, with the exception of several female deities, are the incarnations of the God Vishnu in the persons of Rama and Krishna. "The history of these two incarnations gives to the adoration paid to them every appearance of Hero-worship. They are both of royal descent and were both born on earth like true knights errant to destroy fiends, giants, and enchanters, and rescue helpless maids and matrons from captivity and violence. Poetry exaggerated their exploits, and mythology deified the performers."* Rama is the hero of the great poem Rámáyana, and Krishna of the Mahábhárata. After the Vedas and heroic poems, the sacred writings of the Hindus, embracing the whole cycle of their sciences, are classified under the heads of the six Angas, or bodies of learning, and the Upangas or inferior bodies of learning, and the Tantras. The Angas treat respectively of astronomy, and of the grammar, prosody, the signification of difficult words and phrases, the proper tone and manner of reading, and the details of the ritual of the Vedas. The Upangas comprise the philosophical Shástras, the Dharma Shástra, or Institutes of law, and the Puránas, legendary and mythological treatises. These books are the actual scriptural authorities of the Hinduism of the present day, the primitive and simple ritual of the Vedas having become entirely antiquated and superseded by these more modern compilations. Although their ancient laws ordain that the first period of the youth of all twice born men, i. e. of the three higher castes, shall be spent in learning the text and interpretation of the scriptures, yet in these degenerate days

* Prof. Wilson's "Two Lectures before the University of Oxford."

even the Brahmans, whose exclusive function it properly is to learn and expound them, with extremely few exceptions, never see any portion of the text, except the little that is contained in manuals and breviaries of very recent compilation. These are considered sufficient for all services, and are read by the priest as mere formulas, with reference only to the sound.

The Puránas, although the signification of the name itself is *the old*, and claiming for themselves the very highest antiquity, have been conclusively proved by Prof. Wilson to be in their present form of quite modern origin, the oldest not dating farther back than the ninth century of our era, and the latest not being more than two or three hundred years old. He describes them however as containing many fragments of a much greater age, and as representing that stage of Hinduism which immediately succeeded the great mytho-heroic poems, from which these writings very much derived their character. They differ from the Vedas essentially, in ceasing as a whole to be the scriptural rule of the entire Hindu faith. They have an essentially sectarian character, advocating the claims of one or the other deity, or individualized manifestation of the one God, to the exclusion of the rest, and are received or rejected by the several sects of Vaishnavas, Saivas, Saktas, as they advocate or oppose the exclusive worship of their respective gods. The worship of the elements as the visible signs of God's power has given place to the worship of heroes, who were probably historical characters, and who were deified by being represented as incarnations of that one God himself Brahmá, Vishnu, Siva are no longer set forth as personifications of the energy in action of the supreme Brahm, but as Brahm himself incarnate. His marvellous exploits in this character are recounted, hymns are written in his praises, rites are instituted for his worship, symbols are designated as monuments of his advent, and as objects fitted to direct and stimulate the worship of his less intelligent followers. But it must be remembered that even to the last the fundamental monotheism of the ancient faith was never lost in their recognized literature. The particular divine beings, which the Puránas severally exalt, are always represented, not as co-ordinate gods, but as the One, who can know no fel-

low—the one universal soul individualized, revealing himself for the apprehension of men, in a personal and always anthropomorphic form. Wherever this is not distinctly kept in view, and several co-ordinate divine individualities are recognized, they are absolutely divine only as all other persons and things are divine, since Brahm is every thing and every thing is Brahm. As individuals their divine power and immortality is only relative to the weakness and ephemeral life of man. When the cycle of a hundred years of Brahmá is fulfilled, he himself, the myriads of gods, and the divine sages will be merged as indistinguishable parts into the one indivisible universal soul from which they emanated.

Prof. Wilson describes the Tantras as coming next to the Puránas in the degenerating scale, and the principal authorities for whatever is most gross and demoralizing in the existing religious rites. Although they are written in the classical language they have not found admission to the usual lists of the several classes of Indian scripture, nor have they been generally known to European scholars. They are, for the most part, the rule of faith and ritual of the various Saktá sects, or worshippers of the female deities, who were originally the personified energy of the supreme God, or of the several mythological characters, and represented as originating with the deity, and co-existing with him as his bride and part of himself. It is from these books and these sects that the most cruel and obscene rites have originated, which though extensively popular refuse to confess themselves in open profession, and lurk under the name and insignia of less abominable superstitions. Under this head are to be classed the bloody sacrifices offered to Káli, the barbarities and indecencies perpetrated at the great Durgá Pujá, and the world famous Churuk Pujá or hook swinging festival.

In no respect has the Indian mind been more prolific than in the number and variety of philosophical schools which it has originated. These have been distinguished as orthodox, i. e., conformable in their results to the normal divine revelation—or the reverse—but no adequate ground for such a classification can be found in the internal character of the systems themselves, since some of those reputed orthodox by no means recog-

nise the system of the universe taught in the scriptures, and consequently the reason of the distinction must be sought in extrinsic circumstances. The fact is that the most extreme latitude of speculation has been allowed as long as it confined itself to the sphere of the abstract, and did not intrude upon the province of positive institutions, nor the authority of the received canon. Every system therefore which repudiated the Vedas, and the distinctions of caste, with the supremacy of the Brahmans—as above all the Buddhist—was branded as atheistical, and followed by the most zealous opposition, while the Sánkhyá, which, although of more than doubtful theistical character, presents a complacent front to the positive monuments of the national faith, has been generally, though not always, received among the orthodox. It is usual to enumerate under the head of Upangás, or inferior bodies of learning, six philosophical Darshanas. Three of these are said to sustain the relation of principal respectively to one of the others, which was subsequently attached to it by way of supplement, or deduced by way of consequent from it. Taking therefore the name of the principal for the designation of the pair, we have the Sánkhyá, the Nyáyika, and the Minánsá. There are two principles which characterize all these schemes alike, and which consistently run through the whole. The first is the doctrine of the Metempsychosis, and the second the maxim that ‘*ex nihil, nihil fit*’—that the effect must not only potentially but essentially be contained in the cause. The idea of absolute creation therefore lies entirely without their mode of thought, which admits only of generation, an explicit evolution of that which from the first was implicitly in the principle. These systems are chiefly differenced therefore by the number and character of these ultimate self-existing principles from which they develop the existing forms and phenomenal order of the universe. The Sánkhyá is a dualistic scheme, characterized by the pointed opposition which it maintains between spirit and matter—both uncreated—spirit conscious, intelligent, but capable neither of action nor production—matter unconscious unintelligent, but ever producing, by a blind formative energy evolving itself from its primitive condition of transsensible subtlety, through a scale of elements

becoming more and more gross and palpable, and their manifold combinations, and thus with the myriad individual spirits which in its circling flow it bears upon its bosom—as bubbles float among the ripples of an eddy—produces all the phenomena of the existing world. With all this, spirit has nothing to do, it is a spectator only, and ‘stranger in the world.’

The Nyáyika is also a dualistic system, although it is not so prominently characterized as the Sánkhyá by the opposition asserted between spirit and matter. The first portion is said to be principally occupied with discussing the laws of reasoning and the sources of knowledge, the latter portion assumes the existence of eternal indestructible atoms, which in their infinite combinations produces the phenomenal world, being impelled in their mutual attractions and repulsions by the power, and directed in their combinations by the intelligence of a separate and coördinately eternal Supreme Spirit.

These are in the proper sense of the word philosophies—that is speculative schemes, acknowledging indeed, but not moulding themselves upon the dogmas of traditionary and canonical authority. The Mimánsá, on the other hand, which is chronologically posterior to the others, appears to have arisen from a desire to give a scientific development and justification to the dogmatical aphorisms of the Vedas, and to reconcile the apparent materialistic character of the frequent assertions that Brahm is the world, with absolute spiritualism. This system therefore is preëminently the orthodox, making constant reference to the text of the Vedas, and principally founded upon the Upanishads or supplementary doctrinal tracts. It is divided like the other systems into two sections—the Purva Mimánsá, or prior investigation, occupied with practical and ethical disquisitions arising immediately from the interpretation of the scriptures—and the Uttara Mimánsá, or posterior investigation, called usually the Vedánta, or philosophic resolution of the end or scope of the Vedas. The reputed author of the system is the same Vyása before referred to as the compiler of the primitive scriptures and the author of the Mahábhárata and Puránas.

The Vedánta is preëminently non dualistic, a pure spiritual

pantheism. It asserts the existence of but one principle from which the whole system of the universe is evolved, of but one essence, whether self-existent or created, and that an infinite uncompounded spirit, the supreme Brahm. Vyása declares that not only the essence of God may not be apprehended by the senses, but that the finite understanding can make no approach to a just comprehension of the mode of his existence. And consequently their definition of the Supreme does not attempt logical self-consistency, for they first describe his being by a list of negative predicates so comprehensive as to exclude every possible positive conception, and then inconsistently enough assert that light, truth, wisdom and almighty power are his essence. It is a preëstablished assumption, which conditions every scheme of Indian philosophy and theology, that all modes of passion and action are incidents only of the passing phenomenal world, and therefore conditions only of imperfect being. Consequently in their endeavour after the realization of ideal perfection every form of these must be denied, while at the same time the potential existence, at least, of every positive excellence must be ascribed. These must be taken together, like every other effort of the human mind to conceive, and of human language to express the conditions of infinite being, not as defined positions, but rather as the projection of certain lines of direction, which, like the lines of a truncated pyramid, indicate a point of solution high in the inaccessible spheres above us. He is affirmed to be incorporeal, immaterial, without beginning or end, without cause and incapable of change—secondless, without a fellow, and without any external conditions of a coördinately self-existent substance—uncompounded, without parts or qualities—impassible, without affections, motives, or purpose—*incomprehensible*. Nevertheless he is all-knowing, all-powerful, the material as well as efficient cause of all, pervader, sustainer, controller of all, in his essence infinite light, wisdom and power.

Though they thus taught that simple spirit is the sole principle of all things, the older vedantists did not deny the objective reality of the objects of sensuous perception. The phenomenal world is real because it is a veritable emanation from

the essence of Brahm—and therefore the ground of these phenomena is not a material nature as the other schools assert, but in some ineffable manner they are simulations of form and mode by spirit, which, according to their definition, is incapable of mode. These modes, which are the conditions of the phenomena, are not in Brahm—he is neither long or short, swift or slow, hot or cold, and yet there is nothing in the world but Brahm. He is all that appears, yet that which appears is not Brahm, “as the crystal may assume any colour, and yet all the while remains essentially colourless.” He is said to be both the potter and the clay, for to suppose him to be merely the fashioner of an independently existing substance, would be to make the ever-blessed Lord beholden to another. It is declared that it is not beyond analogy that the effect should be phenomenally different from, and even opposite to its cause—as various vegetables grow out of the same soil, insensible hair and nails from the sentient body, and living worms from inanimate matter, and even from corruption the process of death. As the spider spins out its thread from its own substance, and draws it into itself again, so has the supreme Spirit from eternity caused the procession of an infinite series of worlds from his own essence, and their absorption again into the source whence they emanated. Yet the procession of all things out of God follows an order of gradual evolution, the more palpable from the more subtle. From the divine spirit immediately proceeded ether, from ether air, from air fire, from fire water, and from water earth—and from the various combinations of these the gross elements and all the objects of sense are formed.

Individual souls on the contrary are not emanations from the universal soul, but parts of him—“as the vacuum between the separate trees of a forest and universal space are one, so Brahm and individuated spirits are one.” The relation they sustain is said not to be that of servant and master, subject and ruler, but of part and whole. It is a doctrine common to all these systems, that the individual understanding, which combines and analyzes phenomena and judges of the relation of means to ends, and the self-consciousness, which individualizes the soul, and teaches it to say—I do, I suffer—are not

intrinsic faculties of spirit itself, but entirely extrinsic to it, a product on the contrary of external nature. The Sāṅkhya says that these are an emanation from the formative material principle of things—the Nyāyika that they are the resultant of a certain composition of atoms—the Vedānta that they are emanations from the universal soul, yet related to him not as the individual souls of men, which are simple parts of him, but as the other emanations of the phenomenal world. The five elements, before enumerated, in their combination form the five senses, through which we receive impressions from the external world, and the five organs of action, through which we react again upon the world,—these are not the members of the gross body of flesh, but of interior subtle bodies, which act through the external organs as their vehicles. The individuated soul then, beside the gross body in which it is incarnate, is ensheathed in three subtle bodies—the first is the understanding united with the senses, constituting that body which is made up of knowledge—the second is the self-consciousness, the individualizing power, causing the soul to regard itself as in fact a doer and sufferer in the world—and the third sheath is composed of the two former with the organs of action. These like a sphere of repulsion invest the soul, individualizing it from the universal spirit of which it is a part, and deceiving it both as to its own separate agency, and as to the real character of external phenomena, it draws it within the ever-involving toils of nature. These subtle bodies, investing the soul at the first origin of its separate existence, attend it through all its incarnations, whether infrahuman, human or superhuman, and are dissolved only when the part is resolved into the whole, when the individual is absorbed in the universal soul.

As long, however, as the soul continues under their influence it must continue under a delusion both as to itself and the world. As the mirage, and a chord mistaken for a snake, have an objective reality, so are all the phenomena of the world real, but the soul is under a delusion as to their true nature, not discerning that all is the mere sport of Brahm, and that he is the real cause of the acts, which the self-consciousness appropriates to itself. This is the origin of the

doctrine of the later writers of this sect, that all is *Máyá*—illusion—which they figuratively describe as the energy of Brahm, coëxisting with him, and constituting the material cause of the universe, while he himself is the efficient cause. The meaning of this is that although the facts of consciousness, and of the objective world are real, yet to the understanding looking through the senses, and to the self-consciousness they are a pure illusion—the one assuming them to be just what they appear, and the other referring action and sensations to itself as subject—while all is in reality only the essence of Brahm, yet so manifested as to reveal in no manner his true nature; as the red rays of the sun piercing through a fog do not discover the true colour of their source. So although all the phenomenal world is only Brahm, yet the soul that would know him must look elsewhere, for “this is only Brahm’s play.”

It is this delusion which entangles the soul in nature, and which causes it, as one gross body dies, to migrate to another—the present condition, and stage of being of any individual being determined by the merit or demerit contracted in previous stages. Since therefore this delusion, ever more and more involving the soul in nature, and beclouding it with the passions of sense, is the parent of all evil, and the cause of endless transmigration, the great end of all religion is to deliver the soul from its power, that by the knowledge that all action, and passion, and change are extrinsic to itself, it may be forever freed from them. For this end two methods are indicated—the one imperfect, for the mass of mankind, the other perfect, for the truly wise. In the first the common mass by the strict fulfilment of all the relative duties of life, by obedience to the Brahmans, the worship of the gods, and the punctual observance of ceremonial forms, may accumulate such a stock of merit in this world, that in the next life the individual shall be born—still invested and individualized by the subtle bodies—in the heaven of the particular deity (hypostatized Brahm) which he had worshipped on earth, and there enjoy the felicity of his communion for a longer or shorter period, until the merit is exhausted—when he must be again born into some form of flesh, and commence anew a round of

transmigrations. This is the point of divergence of the whole exoteric system.

But he that would be entirely and forever free from the power of illusion and the Metempsychosis, can find such freedom only in the true science of the Vedanta. He must so abstract himself from the senses, so deny the delusive notices of the understanding and self-consciousness, and so meditate on the being of Brahm, as the All, that he shall at last attain to an abiding realization of Brahm in all; so that his own acts and feelings are to him only the pulses of the universal life, and so that he perceives only Brahm in all the changing phenomena of the external world; as before a fixed abstracted gaze the superficial reflection of external forms upon a lake fades away, and the colourless water only is perceived. Thus may the truly wise continue to live in the world, yet in the most absolute sense not of it. He must still remain until the consequences of former births have expended themselves, which however affect him no longer, but pass by him "like an arrow in its flight"—and then the gross flesh being laid aside, and the subtle investitures of the soul being dissolved, its individuality shall be lost by its absorption into the one who is the all—the bubble has burst into the air, the drop has dissolved in the sea.

In answer to the question, What is Vedantism? the late Dr. Yates gave an account of the above philosophical system in the Calcutta Review; but this account answers very imperfectly to the second question, Who are the Vedantists of Young Bengal? What is the true position of these, who, while they assume the attitude of reformers, still arrogate to themselves par excellence this most orthodox title of ancient Hinduism? This doctrine as taught in the schools of Vyása had been received as the most orthodox esoteric scheme ages before any illumination from a foreign source had penetrated the native horizon. But, as before remarked, since this new light has arisen, hundreds, while constrained to repudiate the whole mythological system and idolatrous ritual, have through national pride, and with the flexibility characteristic of their indefinite creed, sought to derive from, or at least engraft upon their primitive scriptures, the more enlightened and spiritual views they have received from their

conquerors. Some of these are in fact pantheists, and consequently in the strict sense of the word Vedantists, but by far the most are simple deists, who have adopted the word Vedant, rather in its etymological than its technical sense—the end and scope of the teaching of the Vedas, their oldest and purest scriptures, in opposition to the Puránas and Tantras, later and less genuine compositions. These primitive scriptures are said to contain many passages asserting the being of but one God, and discouraging idolatry. Prof. Wilson has translated the following among others. “There is in truth but one deity, the Supreme Spirit.” “Adore God alone, know God alone, give up all other discourse.” “The Vedant says, ‘It is found in the Vedas, that none but the Supreme Being is to be worshipped, nothing excepting him should be adored by a wise man.’” “The fools who think God is in images of earth, stone, metal or wood, practising austerities, obtain only bodily pain but do not secure the highest peace.” And even in the Bagavat Gíta, an episode of the Mahábhárata, one of the great mytho-heroic poems, such texts as the following occur: “The idiots who forsaking me, the God animating all things, worship images, only spill ghí on ashes.” It was by this class of passages that Ram Mohun Roy the most prominent originator of the reform movement, and others of like mind, justified their declaration that the original and genuine canon of the Hindu faith taught as absolute a monotheism, and as spiritual a worship, and was as utterly opposed to the popular Polytheism and idol-worship, as either Christianity or Mahomedanism. Simple deists themselves, some of them perhaps cared as little for the Vedas as for the Koran or the Gospel, but upon this basis of internal reformation they hoped to attack the popular delusions with infinitely more authority, and consequent advantage than would be possible from any exterior ground.

As Ram Mohun Roy was the prototype of an increasing class—none the less because he was in the full flower and matured fruit what most are only in the germ, nor because he excelled all as much in the truthfulness and energy of his moral nature, his entire emancipation from prejudice and in his universal philanthropy, as in the power of his intellect or the greatness of his acquirements—it is a subject of great

interest to determine what in fact was his religious creed, and the object of his efforts as a reformer. While yet a boy he had been sent to receive under the tuition of the learned Maulavís, of Patna, a Persian and Arabic education. It was from this source that he received his first religious enlightenment, and captivated with the simplicity and beauty of the monotheism of the Koran, contracted an ever growing disgust for the popular superstitions of his country. He had also been thoroughly instructed by the Pandits of Benares, in the sacred language and literature of his own nation, and he subsequently attained to the highest eminence as a Sanserit scholar and theologian. He afterwards æquired the Hebrew and Greek, as well as a practical use of the English, and in their original tongues read the Old Testament with a Jewish Rabbi, and the Gospels with some Christian Divine in order to satisfy himself as to the amount of truth taught in them. Although he was never convinced of their being in any specific sense a divine revelation, yet he very much admired the spiritual excellence of their precepts. He published in 1820, a work entitled, "The Precepts of Jesus the guide to Peace and Happiness." In his preface he says, "This simple code of religion and morality is admirably calculated to elevate men's ideas to high and liberal notions of one God—and to regulate the conduct of the human race in the discharge of their various duties to God, themselves and society." When he left India on his embassy to England, where he died, he said to some of his friends that when he died the professors of all the different religions would claim him, but that in truth he was neither Hindu, Mahommedan nor Christian. As from the study of the Koran at Patna, when he was yet a boy, he was confirmed in his faith in one spiritual and holy Creator, Preserver and Judge of all, while he altogether rejected the claims of Mahomet to the prophetic office, and all that distinguishes his doctrine from natural theism, so he appears never through his whole life to have altered or advanced his creed. He ever was a firm, and increasingly devout believer in what is called among us natural religion. He called his press, from which most of his writings were issued, 'The Unitarian Press'—but that term was assumed in opposition to

polytheism, and not in the sense of Christian humanitarian, as with us. In the early years of his life he appears to have been chiefly alive to the impious and degrading character of idol-worship, but as he grew older, and saw springing up around him a new race, who had learned to despise the superstition of their fathers only to deny all religion, he became more and more impressed with the danger of the opposite and growing evil of universal skepticism. He was therefore ever most careful to oppose no religion which was based upon the few and simple doctrines which alone he held essential, and the enlightened and devout worshippers of the one God, of every name he loved as brethren. It is recorded of him by a friend who knew him well that—"He often deplored the existence of a party that had sprung up in Calcutta, composed principally of imprudent young men, some of them possessing talent, who had avowed themselves sceptics in the widest sense of the term. He described it as partly composed of East Indians, partly of Hindu youth, who from education had learned to reject their own faith without substituting any other. These he thought more debased than the most bigoted Hindu, and their principles the bane of all morality."

In perfect consistency with his disposition to embrace all religions which are purely theistical in doctrine, and spiritual in precept and ritual, was the whole method of his attempt to reform the superstition of his benighted countrymen. It was neither his policy nor was it consistent with his principles to denounce Hinduism root and branch. He had the interest both of a native of Hindustán, and of a scholar in the more ancient scriptures, and more elevated doctrines concerning God and man, from which the present gross idolatry of his people had degenerated. His design was therefore to lead them back to the fountains by translating their scriptures into the vernaculars. He is charged however with having attributed to the Vedas, much of what he had learned from other sources, and thus of having inculcated an altogether one-sided view of the Vedant system—as was indeed natural for him a believer in a personal God, and an admirer of the Gospels, and no Pantheist. He said himself—"The ground I have taken in all my controversies was not of opposition to Brah-

manism, but to a perversion of it; and I endeavoured to show that the idolatry of the Brahmans was contrary to the practice of their ancestors, and the principles of the ancient books and authorities which they profess to revere and obey." He published most of his controversial tracts and translations at his own expense, and circulated them gratuitously among the people. He commenced with a translation of the Vedant into Bengálí, which he afterwards retranslated into Hindustání, and again into English in 1816, His own preface to this work states very distinctly his design in this series of translations.

"In pursuance of my vindication, I have to the best of my abilities, translated this hitherto unknown work, as well as an abridgment thereof into the Hindustání and Bengálí languages; and distributed them free of cost among my own countrymen, as widely as circumstances have possibly allowed. The present is an endeavour to render an abridgment of the same into English, by which I expect to prove to my European friends, that the superstitious practices, which deform the Hindu religion, have nothing to do with the pure spirit of its dictates.

"I have observed, that both in their writings and conversation many Europeans feel a wish to palliate, and soften the features of Hindu idolatry; and are inclined to inculcate that all objects of worship are considered by their votaries, as emblematical representations of the Supreme Divinity. If this were indeed the case, I might perhaps be led into some examination of the subject; but the truth is, the Hindus of the present day have no such views of the subject, but firmly believe in the real existence of innumerable gods and goddesses, who possess, in their own departments, full and independent power; and to propitiate them, and not the true God, are temples erected, and ceremonies performed. There can be no doubt however, and it is my whole design to prove, that every rite has its derivation from the allegorical adoration of the true Deity; but at the present day, all this is forgotten; and among many it is even heresy to mention it. . . . I have therefore been moved to make every possible effort to awaken my countrymen from their dream of error; and by making them acquainted with their scriptures, enable them to contemplate, with true devotion, the unity and omnipresence of nature's God."

In like manner Ram Mohun Roy published for gratuitous distribution translations in Bengálí and English of a number of Upanishads and other selections from the Vedas, and with indefatigable perseverance maintained the aggressive in the violent controversy which he had excited in that until now stagnant world. He was denounced not only as heretic but as atheist, yet this rage of opposition only the more evidenced his power—he was soon surrounded by disciples, and the founder of a

sect. In 1828 he instituted the Brahma Shabha, in opposition to which the party of orthodox Hindus instituted the Dharma Shabha, before alluded to. These two congregations became not only the seminaries of their respective opinions, but also the centres of an excited controversy, which then penetrated and moved the entire community, and which has not yet spent itself, but awaits only the voice of another prophet to break in a tempest on a wider sphere, and with ever accumulating resources. The Brahma Shabha, from the first, has held regular meetings for worship every Wednesday evening. The favourite portions of the Vedas are read and expounded, and the religious and ethical doctrines of the sect are advocated in discourses in the vernacular before audiences composed of all castes and religions. In a number of the *Friend of India*, July 5th, 1849, we find an apologetic account of this institution as it exists at present from a native correspondent. "Here passages from the holy Veda are recited and expounded by the ministers, (Pandits of Benares) and discourses and sermons are read and delivered glorifying the great God and his attributes; then the young gentlemen altogether in a sweet low tone, pray heaven to forgive them the trespasses they have done, when divine songs are sung and the service ends. The members of this Samaj, or Young Bengál, have entered into a covenant never to worship any idol, nor perform any idolatrous ceremony; they have likewise bound themselves to abstain from using spirituous liquors, or other intoxicating drugs, on penalty of being excommunicated from the Samaj. A monthly publication is issued from the Samaj, edited by its members, in which are published essays and discourses on moral and religious subjects, such as the existence of the Deity, death and the immortality of the soul, together with passages selected from the Ved, and is widely circulated both among Old and Young Bengál." The "Reformer," Ram Mohun Roy's original paper, still continues to be issued by a native editor with great ability in the English language. The monthly journal alluded to in the above extract, as the organ of the Brahma Shabha, is the *Tuttubodhinee Putrika*, or *Advocate of Spiritual Knowledge*, edited both in Bengálí and English. A mission-

ary correspondent of the Calcutta Christian Herald, Dec. 1845, in a very interesting review of the native press of that city, says of this journal that, "It advocates Ram Mohun Roy's one-sided view of the vedant. What it finds not in purely native sources, it borrows without acknowledgement from Christianity. It is at once interesting and instructive to see how such as are so far enlightened by education as to reject the absurd abominations of the Puránic idolatry, would perforce find in Hindu theology—a materializing pantheism—something beyond monstrous physics or a debasing metaphysics—are compelled to have recourse, like the equally disingenuous anti-christian philosophers and transcendentalists of the West, to that very Christianity which they repudiate, yet from which they must after all, consciously or unconsciously, borrow all that is truly rational in principle, pure in sentiment, or good in practice." In like manner they are represented as more and more imitating the Christians in their habits of life and modes of worship. Distinctions of caste are not regarded, set sermons are preached, and the audience bow the head and cover the face in prayer, or when the scriptures are read.

The Hindu Theophilanthropic Society has since been instituted by enlightened native gentlemen, of the same general views as their illustrious countryman, who have been roused to a sense of the imminent danger to the best interests of their nation arising from the very general prevalence of atheism among that new race growing up under the influence of an English education from which all religion has been eliminated. They have themselves defined their object to be the search after and dissemination of religious truth, and their motive as arising from "a conviction irresistably forcing itself upon every reflective mind, that the great work of India's regeneration cannot be accomplished without due attention to her moral and religious improvement." The editor of the *Friend of India* speaks of these men as apparently diverging from the vedantist party, "although they yet linger in a fond regard for the sacred language of their country, and would fain find some portions of its shástras they might cling to."

In the fall of 1836, Rev. Dr. Howard Malcom of the United

States attended a meeting of the Brahma Shabha with the Rev. Mr. Lacroix of Calcutta as interpreter. He described the audience as very small, the number of regular attendants never being over thirty, and from this he forms his very disparaging estimate of the "boasted reformation" of Ram Mohun Roy. But it is evidently exceeding unfair to measure him or his work by his success simply as the founder of a sect. That specifically was never his object. His great aim was, by introducing his countrymen to a knowledge of their older and purer scriptures, to dissuade them from polytheism and idolatry, which he asserted to be an innovation of priestcraft, and to lead them to the knowledge and service of the one only living and true God. And, considering all things, he was, even in his own life time, eminently successful, and his writings still remain, and every year bear their testimony to a greater number. Hundreds read his books in their own vernacular who have never been brought under any mode of English influence, and hundreds have been won to the faith and practice of his doctrine who have never seen the Brahma Shabha.

In the words of the Calcutta Reviewer of 1845, "The life of Ram Mohun Roy was commensurate with one of the most important and stirring periods in the annals of this country. It embraces the commencement of that great social and moral revolution through which she is now silently but surely passing. When Ram Mohun Roy was born, darkness, even the darkness of ignorance and superstition, brooded over his fatherland. When he died, the spirit of inquiry was abroad in high places, and was triumphantly exploding antiquated errors. He lived to see a line of demarcation, which, since his death, has been considerably deepened, strongly drawn among the Hindus between the enlightened few and the benighted many. Ram Mohun Roy was the author of a great religious schism, which is destined to spread and widen. No native before had been enlightened and bold enough to open the eyes of his countrymen to the monstrous absurdities of their national creed. He was the first who thundered into their ears—which had for ages been accustomed to the invocation of montras, and her-

metically sealed against all true religion—the great truth that ‘God is One and without a second.’ But as yet we have only seen the dawn of a better and more promising era.”

This article would indeed have been written in vain if the impression is not left distinct and actuating in the reader’s mind, that, under the providence of God, and the new relations established among the nations of the earth, a great change is now working in all the elements of the Indian community which most eminently involves the responsibility of the Church, as the instrument of God in evangelizing the world. The Church of Christ is a special power, commissioned with the Gospel, and endowed with the Spirit, and so ordained to inform mediately with its own life, and to assume into its own economy the unfixed elements of the ever changing and disintegrating forms of the world of spiritual death. But this special work of the Church is embraced in, and must ever be conditioned by, the wider working of God in providence. This preparatory and coördinate work of God in providence does not consist chiefly in merely opening a wide door of access—as of late has been so much spoken of in the case of China—but when, by his all efficient inworking and all embracing direction of the merely natural principles of human society, in the fulness of his own time, he causes a new and foreign civilization to break in upon an old and effete world, disintegrating the old, and setting the elements free to take on new associations, and to create new forms, it is then eminently, and then only that he gives opportunity to the Church to inform the moral chaos with its own divine life, and direct the nascent elements in their inevitable combinations. In this view no other missionary field in the world so imperatively demands the immediate and energetic action of the Church as India. The question is not whether we will preach the Gospel to the millions of the present generation, or leave our children to preach to the millions of the next—the providence of God leaves no such alternative. The Church may indeed withhold her hand, but human society will no more stay its inevitable progress, than the stars their course in the heaven. A nation of polytheists may give birth to a nation of atheists—but those who come after us

may for ages expect in vain such another opportunity, as has in our age, for the first time since the dispersion from Babel, been afforded to the Church, of giving character to the forming stage of a radical moral revolution involving the entire mass of the Indian nation.

Adams

ART. V.—*Conscience and the Constitution.* By Moses Stuart.

THE past year has been one of great anxiety for the peace and union of our country. The danger, though greatly lessened, cannot be considered as entirely passed. There is still great dissatisfaction both at the north and south with regard to what are called "the compromise measures," adopted by Congress at its late session. We hope and believe that the great body of people in every part of the Union are disposed to acquiesce in those measures, and to carry them faithfully into effect. Still the agitation continues. At the South there is in the minds of many, a sense of injustice and of insecurity; and at the North not a few have conscientious objections to one at least of the peace measures above alluded to. This difficulty is not to be obviated by mutual criminations. The South will not be pacified by calling their demands for what they deem justice, treasonable; nor the North by denouncing their opposition to the fugitive slave bill as fanaticism. Both parties must be satisfied. The one must be shown that no injustice is designed or impending; and the other must be convinced that they can with a good conscience submit to the law for the delivery of fugitive slaves.

Every candid man must admit that the violent denunciation of slave-holders, in which a certain class of northern writers habitually indulge, it is not merely irritating and offensive, but in a high degree unjust and injurious. It is an evil of which the South have a right to complain. But it is to be considered that it is an evil incident to our free institutions, and cannot be prevented without destroying the liberty