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978-1-108-00795-5 - Indian Wisdom: Examples of the Religious, Philosophical, and Ethical Doctrines of the Hindus

Monier Williams

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Indian Wisdom

First published in 1875, this book reflects a growing nineteenth-century British interest in South Asian culture and literature. In it Monier Williams, the Professor of Sanskrit at Oxford outlines the patterns of thought and customs of the Hindu religion. He also describes the character and content of Sanskrit literature, which had not previously been attempted in English. According to Williams, Sanskrit literature holds the key to a full understanding of Hinduism. He makes it unequivocally clear that Britain's colonial hold over India involves a particular responsibility and indeed opportunity to study the three religions confronting Christianity there, namely Brahmanism, Buddhism and Islam. Monier Williams writes about the Vedas (the sacred texts of Hinduism), the different traditions of philosophy and the five schools of Hindu law. He elaborates on the epic poems and the doctrine of incarnation embedded in them, and compares this ancient poetry with that of Homer.

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Indian Wisdom

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MONIER WILLIAMS



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INDIAN WISDOM
OR
EXAMPLES
OF THE
RELIGIOUS, PHILOSOPHICAL, AND ETHICAL
DOCTRINES OF THE HINDŪS:

WITH A BRIEF HISTORY
OF THE CHIEF DEPARTMENTS OF SANSKRIT LITERATURE,
AND SOME ACCOUNT OF THE
PAST AND PRESENT CONDITION OF INDIA,
MORAL AND INTELLECTUAL.

BY
MONIER WILLIAMS, M.A.
BODEN PROFESSOR OF SANSKRIT IN THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD.

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P R E F A C E.

THE present volume¹ attempts to supply a want, the existence of which has been impressed upon my mind by an inquiry often addressed to me as Boden Professor:—Is it possible to obtain from any one book a good general idea of the character and contents of Sanskrit literature?

Its pages are also intended to subserve a further object. They aim at imparting to educated Englishmen, by means of translations and explanations of portions of the sacred and philosophical literature of India, an insight into the mind, habits of thought, and customs of the Hindūs, as well as a correct knowledge² of a system of belief and practice which has constantly prevailed for at least three thousand years, and still continues

¹ The volume is founded on my official lectures.

² Mr. Hurraychund Chintamon (*sic* for *Haricandra Ćintāmani*), who came from India to be present at the Congress of Orientalists held in London last September, writing to the *Times* (December 21), in support of Miss Carpenter's efforts to create warmer personal sympathy with the natives of India, says, 'The great difficulty in the way of an increase of sympathy between Great Britain and India is the want of means of an increase of knowledge—the want of means of a dissipation of mistake. India is not so represented here as to enable Englishmen, however desirous, to form an impartial view. Condemnatory expressions are received with the inherent disposition of humanity to take the bad for granted, without examination. In my own experience among Englishmen I have found no general indifference to India, but rather an eager desire for information; but I have found a Cimmerian darkness about the manners and habits of my countrymen, an almost poetical description of our customs, and a conception no less wild and startling than the vagaries of Mandeville or Marco Polo concerning our religion.'

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to exist as one of the principal religions of the Non-Christian world¹.

It cannot indeed be right, nor is it even possible for educated Englishmen to remain any longer ignorant of the literary productions, laws, institutions, religious creed, and moral precepts of their Hindū fellow-creatures and fellow-subjects. The East and West are every day being drawn nearer to each other, and British India, in particular, is now brought so close to us by steam, electricity, and the Suez Canal, that the condition of the Hindū community—mental, moral, and physical—forces itself peremptorily on our attention. Nor is it any longer justifiable to plead the difficulty of obtaining accurate official information as an excuse for ignorance. Our Government has for a long period addressed itself most energetically to the investigation of every detail capable of throwing light on the past and present history of the Queen's Indian dominions.

A Literary survey of the whole of India has been recently organized for the purpose of ascertaining what Sanskrit MSS., worthy of preservation, exist in public and

¹ It should not be forgotten that although all the nations of Europe have changed their religions during the past eighteen centuries, the Hindūs have not done so, except very partially. Islām converted a certain number by force of arms in the eighth and following centuries, and Christian truth is at last slowly creeping onwards and winning its way by its own inherent energy in the nineteenth; but the religious creeds, rites, customs, and habits of thought of the Hindūs generally have altered little since the days of Manu, five hundred years B. C. Of course they have experienced accretions, but many of the same caste observances and rules of conduct (*ācāra*, *vyavahāra*, see p. 217) are still in force; some of the same laws of inheritance (*dāya*, p. 270) hold good; even a beggar will sometimes ask for alms in words prescribed by the ancient lawgiver (*bhikshām dehi*, Manu II. 49, Kullūka); and to this day, if a pupil absents himself from an Indian college, he sometimes excuses himself by saying that he has a *prāyaś-citta* to perform (see p. 278, and Trübner's Report of Professor Stenzler's Speech at the London Oriental Congress).

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private libraries. Competent scholars have been appointed to the task, and the result of their labours, so far as they have hitherto extended, has been published.

Simultaneously, an Archæological survey has been ably conducted under the superintendance of Major-General A. Cunningham, and we have most interesting results published and distributed by the Indian Governments in the shape of four large volumes, filled with illustrations, the last issued being the Report for the year 1871-72.

An Ethnological survey has also been set on foot in Bengal, and a magnificent volume with portraits from photographs of numerous aboriginal tribes, called *Descriptive Ethnology of Bengal*, by Colonel Dalton, was published at Calcutta in 1872. This was preceded by a valuable guide to the *Ethnology of India*, written by Sir George Campbell.

Even an Industrial survey has been partially carried out under the able direction of Dr. Forbes Watson, who proposes that a new Museum and Indian Institute shall be built and attached to the India Office.

Moreover, Sir George Campbell caused to be prepared, printed, and published, during his recent administration in Bengal, comparative tables of specimens of all the languages of India—Āryan, Drāviḍian, and aboriginal—the practical benefit of which requires no demonstration on my part.

But there are other official publications still more accessible to every Englishman who will take the trouble of applying to the proper authorities.

Those whose horizon of Eastern knowledge has hitherto been hopelessly clouded, so as to shut out every country beyond the Holy Land, have now a clear prospect opened out towards India. They have only to study the Report of the *Moral and Material Progress and Condition of India during 1872-73*, published by the India Office, and edited by Mr. C. R. Markham. At the risk of being thought impertinent, I must crave permission to

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record here an opinion that this last mentioned work is worthy of a better fate than to be wrapped in a blue cover, as if it were a mere official statement of dry facts and statistics. Its pages are full of valuable information on every subject connected with our Eastern Empire—even including missionary progress—and the carefully drawn maps with which it is illustrated are a highly instructive study in themselves. The revelation the Report makes of what is being done and what remains to be done, may well humble as well as cheer every thoughtful person. But emanating as the volume does from the highest official authority, it is in itself an evidence of great advance in our knowledge of India's needs, and in our endeavours to meet them, as well as an earnest of our future efforts for the good of its inhabitants.

The same must be said of Sir George Campbell's exhaustive Report on his own administration of Bengal during 1872–73. This forms a thick 8vo volume of about nine hundred pages, and affords a mine of interesting and valuable information¹.

Most significant, too, of an increasing interchange of Oriental and Occidental ideas and knowledge is the circumstance that almost every number of the *Times* newspaper contains able articles and interesting communications from its correspondents on Indian affairs, or records some result of the intellectual stir and ferment now spreading,

¹ Another very instructive publication, though of quite a different stamp from the official documents mentioned above, is M. Garcin de Tassy's Annual Review (*Revue Annuelle*) of the literary condition of India, which is every year kindly presented to me, and to many other scholars, by that eminent Orientalist. It is delivered annually in the form of a discourse at the opening of his Hindūstānī lectures. Though it deals more particularly with the development of Urdū and other linguistic studies, it gives a complete and reliable account of the intellectual and social movements now going on, and of the progress made in all branches of education and knowledge.

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as it has never done before, from Cape Comorin to the Himālaya mountains.

Another noteworthy indication of growing inter-community of thought between the East and West is the fact that every principal periodical of the day finds itself compelled to take increasing account of the sayings and doings—wise or unwise—of young Bengal, Madras, and Bombay. Our attention is continually drawn by one or another publication to the proceedings of native religious societies—such as the Brahma-samāj, Sanātana-dharma-samāj, Dharma-sabhā, &c.¹—or to the transactions of literary and scientific clubs and institutions; while not unfrequently we are presented with extracts from vernacular journals², or from the speeches of high-minded Hindūs, who occasionally traverse India, not as Christian missionaries, but seeking, in a spirit worthy of Christianity itself, to purify the Hindū creed and elevate the tone of Indian thought and feeling. All this is a sure criterion of the warm interest in Oriental matters now taking possession of the public mind in Western countries.

But still more noteworthy as an evidence of increasing personal intercourse between England and India is the presence of Hindūs and Muslims amongst us here. Many of the more intelligent and enlightened natives, breaking through the prejudices of caste and tradition that have

¹ There appear to be two sections of the Brahma-samāj or Theistic society established in India. One clings to the Veda and seeks to restore Hindūism to the pure monotheism believed to underlie the Veda. These theists are followers of the late Rammohun Roy. The other society rejects the Veda and advocates an independent and purer theism. Its present leader is Keshab Ācandra Sen.

² The increase in the number of journals and newspapers in the vernacular languages, conducted with much ability and intelligence by native editors, is remarkable. An Urdū and Hindī paper called *Mangala-samūcāra-patra*, printed and published at Besvān, by Ṭhākur Guru Prasād Siṅh, is, through his kindness, regularly transmitted to me.

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hitherto chained them as prisoners to their own soil, now visit our shores and frequent our Universities to study us, our institutions, laws, and literature. Some of them, too, have already received a thorough English education at Indian colleges. It is even asserted that they sometimes come amongst us knowing our language, our history, and our standard authors better than we know them ourselves. Be this as it may, thus much, at least, is clear that Englishmen and Hindūs are at length holding out the right hand of fellowship to each other, and awaking to the consciousness that the duty of studying the past and present state—intellectual, moral, and physical—of their respective countries can no longer be evaded by educated men, whether in the East or in the West.

In truth, it cannot be too forcibly impressed upon our minds that good laws may be enacted, justice administered, the rights of property secured, railroads and electric telegraphs laid down, the stupendous forces of Nature controlled and regulated for the public good, the three great scourges of war, pestilence, and famine averted or mitigated—all this may be done—and more than this, the truths of our religion may be powerfully preached, translations of the Bible lavishly distributed; but if, after all, we neglect to study the mind and character of those we are seeking to govern and influence for good, no mutual confidence will be enjoyed, no real sympathy felt or inspired. Imbued with the conciliatory spirit which such a study must impart, *all* Englishmen—whether resident in England or India, whether clergymen or laymen—may aid the cause of Christianity and good government, more than by controversial discussions or cold donations of guineas and rupees. Let us not forget that this great Eastern empire has been entrusted to our rule, not to be the *Corpus vile* of political and social experiments, nor yet for the purpose of extending our commerce, flattering

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our pride, or increasing our prestige, but that a vast population may be conciliated, benefited, and elevated, and the regenerating influences of Christianity spread through the length and breadth of the land. How, then, have we executed our mission? Much is now being done; but the results effected are mainly due to the growth of a more cordial feeling, and a better understanding between Christians, Hindūs, Buddhists, and Musalmāns. And these good results may be expected to increase if the true character of the three principal systems of religion opposed to Christianity, and now existing in India, British Burmah, and Ceylon, are fairly tested by an impartial examination of the written documents held sacred by each; if the points of contact between Christianity, Brāhmanism, Buddhism, and Islām become better appreciated, and Christians while loyally devoting themselves—heart and soul, body and mind—to the extension of the one true faith, are led to search more candidly for the fragments of truth, lying buried under superstition and error.

Be it remembered, then, that Sanskrit literature,—bound up as it has ever been with all that is sacred in the religion and institutions of India,—is the source of all trustworthy knowledge of the Hindūs; and to this literature Englishmen must turn, if they wish to understand the character and mind of nearly two hundred millions (or about five-sixths) of India's population (see pp. xvi–xx of Introduction).

Some departments of Sanskrit literature have been fully described of late years by various competent and trustworthy scholars. Good translations, too, of isolated works, and excellent metrical versions of the more choice poems have from time to time been published in Europe, or are scattered about in Magazines, Reviews, and ephemeral publications. But there has never hitherto, so far as I know, existed any one work of moderate dimensions like the present—accessible to general readers—composed

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by any one Sanskrit scholar with the direct aim of giving Englishmen who are not necessarily Sanskritists, a continuous sketch of the chief departments of Sanskrit literature, Vedic and Post-vedic, with accompanying translations of select passages, to serve as examples for comparison with the literary productions of other countries¹.

The plan pursued by me in my endeavour to execute a novel and difficult task in a manner likely to be useful to Oriental students, yet intelligible to general readers, and especially to those men of cultured minds who, not being Orientalists, are desirous of accurate information on subjects they can no longer ignore, will be sufficiently evident from a perusal of the lectures themselves, and their appended notes. To avoid misapprehension and exaggerated ideas of my scope and aim, as well as to understand the extent of my obligations to other scholars, let the reader turn to pp. 1-4 with notes, p. 15, note 2. I will merely add to what is there stated, that as Vedic literature has been already so ably elucidated by numerous scholars in Europe, and by Professor W. D. Whitney and others in America, I have treated this part of the subject as briefly as possible. Moreover, my survey of so vast and intricate a field of inquiry as Indian philosophy, is necessarily a mere sketch. In common with other European scholars, I am greatly indebted to Dr. Fitz-Edward Hall for his contributions to this and other departments of Sanskrit literature, and especially for his translation of Nehemiah Nilakantha's 'Rational Refutation of the Hindū Philosophical Systems.'

I should state that, although the present volume is intended to be complete in itself, I have been compelled to reserve some of the later portion of the literature for fuller treatment in a subsequent series of lectures.

¹ Great praise is, however, due to Mrs. Manning's valuable compilation called 'Ancient and Mediaeval India,' published by W. H. Allen and Co.

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It is possible that some English readers may have given so little attention to Indian subjects, that further preliminary explanations may be needed by them before commencing the perusal of the following pages. For their benefit I have written an Introduction, which I hope will clear the ground sufficiently for all.

Let me now discharge the grateful duty of tendering my respectful thanks to the Governments of India for the patronage and support they have again accorded to my labours. Let me also acknowledge the debt I owe to two eminent Sanskritists—Dr. John Muir of Edinburgh, and Professor E. B. Cowell of Cambridge—for their kindness in reading the proof-sheets of the present series of lectures. These scholars must not, however, be held responsible for any novel theories propounded by me. In many cases I have modified my statements in accordance with their suggestions, yet in some instances, in order to preserve the individuality of my own researches, I have preferred to take an independent line of my own. Learned Orientalists in Europe and India who are able adequately to appreciate the difficulty of the task I have attempted will look on my errors with a lenient eye. As I shall welcome their criticisms with gratitude, so I shall also hope for their encouragement; for, often as I have advanced in my investigations, and have found an apparently interminable horizon opening out before me, I have felt like a foolhardy man seeking to cross an impassable ocean in a fragile coracle, and so have applied to myself the well-known words of the great Sanskrit poet :—

तितीर्षुर्दुस्तरं मोहादुदुपेनास्मि सागरम् ॥

Titīrshur dustaram mohād udupenāsmi sāgaram.

M. W.

Oxford, May 1875.

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THE INDO-ROMANIC ALPHABET

WITH THE

EQUIVALENT SANSKRIT LETTERS AND RULES FOR
PRONUNCIATION.

VOWELS.

A, a, for अ, pronounced as in rural; *Ā, ā*, for आ, ॐ, as in *tar, father*; *I, i*, for इ, ॠ, as in *fill*; *Ī, ī*, for ई, ॡ, as in *police*; *U, u*, for उ, ॣ, as in *full*; *Ū, ū*, for ऊ, ।, as in *rude*; *Ri, ri*, for रु, ॥, as in *merrily*; *Ři, ři*, for ऋ, ॠ, as in *marine*; *E, e*, for ए, ॢ, as in *prey*; *Ai, ai*, for ऐ, ॣ, as in *aisle*; *O, o*, for औ, ।, as in *go*; *Au, au*, for औ, ।, as in *Haus* (German); *ṇ* or *m*, for ण, i. e. the Anusvāra, sounded like *n* in French *mon*, or like any nasal; *h*, for ह, i. e. the Visarga or a distinctly audible aspirate.

CONSONANTS.

K, k, for क, pronounced as in *kill, seek*; *Kh, kh*, for ख, as in *inkhorn*; *G, g*, for ग, as in *gun, dog*; *Gh, gh*, for घ, as in *loghut*; *N, n*, for ङ, as in *sing* (*sin*).

Ć, ć, for च, as in *dolce* (in music), = English *ch* in *church, lurch* (*lurć*); *Čh, čh*, for छ, as in *churchhill* (*ćurćhill*); *J, j*, for ज, as in *jet*; *Jh, jh*, for झ, as in *hedge-hog* (*hejhog*); *Ń, ń*, for ञ, as in *singe* (*sińj*).

T, t, for ट, as in *true* (*tru*); *Ṭh, ṭh*, for ठ, as in *anthill* (*anťhill*); *D, d*, for ड, as in *drum* (*đrum*); *Dh, dh*, for ढ, as in *redhaired* (*redhaired*); *N, n*, for ण, as in *none* (*nuṇ*).

T, t, for त, as in *water* (as pronounced in Ireland); *Th, th*, for थ, as in *nut-hook* (but more dental); *D, d*, for द, as in *dice* (more like *th* in *this*); *Dh, dh*, for ध, as in *adhere* (more dental); *N, n*, for न, as in *not, in*.

P, p, for प, as in *put, sip*; *Ph, ph*, for फ, as in *uphill*; *B, b*, for ब, as in *bear, rub*; *Bh, bh*, for भ, as in *abhor*; *M, m*, for म, as in *map, jam*.

Y, y, for य, as in *yet*; *R, r*, for र, as in *red, year*; *L, l*, for ल, as in *lie*; *V, v*, for व, as in *vie* (but like *w* after consonants, as in *twice*).

S', ś, for श, as in *sure, session*; *Sh, sh*, for ष, as in *shun, hush*; *S, s*, for स, as in *sir, hiss*. *H, h*, for ह, as in *hit*.

Fuller directions for pronunciation will be found in a 'Practical Grammar of the Sanskrit Language,' by Monier Williams, third edition, published by the Delegates of the Clarendon Press, Oxford, and sold by Macmillan & Co., and by W. H. Allen & Co., 13, Waterloo Place. Also in a Sanskrit-English Dictionary, published by the same.

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IN this Introduction¹ I shall endeavour, first, to explain how Sanskrit literature is the only key to a correct knowledge of the opinions and practices of the Hindū people; and, secondly, to show how our possession of India involves special responsibilities and opportunities with reference to the study of the three great systems of belief now confronting Christianity in the world—Brāhmanism, Buddhism, and Islām.

To clear the ground let me review very briefly the past and present history of the great country whose teeming population has been gradually, during the past two hundred and fifty years, either drawn under our sway, or, almost against our will, forced upon our protection.

The name India is derived from the Greek and Roman adaptation of the word Hindū, which was used by the Persians for their Āryan brethren, because the latter settled in the districts surrounding the streams² of the Sindhu (pronounced by them *Hindhū* and now called Indus). The Greeks, who probably gained their first conceptions of India from the Persians, changed the hard aspirate into a soft, and named the Hindūs *Ἰνδοί* (Herodotus IV. 44, V. 3). After the Hindū Āryans had spread themselves over the plains of the Ganges, the Persians called the whole of the region between the Panjāb and Benares Hindūstān or 'abode of the Hindūs,' and this name is used in India at the present day, especially by the Musalmān population³. The classical name for India, however, as commonly

¹ Some detached portions of the information contained in this Introduction were embodied in a lecture on 'The Study of Sanskrit in Relation to Missionary Work in India,' delivered by me, April 19, 1861, and published by Messrs. Williams & Norgate. This lecture is still procurable.

² Seven rivers (*sapta sindhavaḥ*) are mentioned, counting the main river and the five rivers of the Panjāb with the Sarasvatī. In old Persian or Zand we have the expression *Hapta Hendu*. It is well known that a common phonetic interchange of initial *s* and *h* takes place in names of the same objects, as pronounced by kindred races.

³ The name Hindūstān properly belongs to the region between the Sutlej and Benares, sometimes extended to the Narbadā and Mahā-nadī rivers, but not to Bengal or the Dekhan.

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employed in Sanskrit literature and recognized by the whole Sanskritic race, more particularly in Bengal and the Dekhan, is *Bhārata* or *Bhārata-varsha*—that is to say—‘the country of king Bharata¹,’ who must have ruled over a large extent of territory in ancient times (see pp. 371, 419 of this volume).

It will not, of course, be supposed that in our Eastern Empire we have to deal with ordinary races of men. We are not there brought in contact with savage tribes who melt away before the superior force and intelligence of Europeans. Rather are we placed in the midst of great and ancient peoples, who, some of them tracing back their origin to the same stock as ourselves, attained a high degree of civilization when our forefathers were barbarians, and had a polished language, a cultivated literature, and abstruse systems of philosophy, centuries before English existed even in name.

The population of India, according to the census of 1872, amounts to at least 240 millions². An assemblage of beings so immense does

¹ Manu's name (II. 22) for the whole central region between the Himālaya and Vindhya mountains is *Āryāvarta*, ‘abode of the Āryans,’ and this is still a classical appellation for that part of India. Another name for India, occurring in Sanskrit poetry, is *Jambu-dvīpa* (see p. 419). This is restricted to India in Buddhist writings. Strictly, however, this is a poetical name for the whole earth (see p. 419), of which India was thought to be the most important part. *Bharata* in Ṛig-veda I. xcvi. 3 may mean ‘a supporter,’ ‘sustainer,’ and *Bhārata-varsha* may possibly convey the idea of ‘a supporting land.’

² Of these about 27 millions belong to the native states. In the Bengal provinces alone the number, according to the census of 1871–72, amounts to 66,856,859, far in excess of any previous estimate. Of these, only 19,857 are Europeans, and 20,279 Eurasians. A most exhaustive and interesting account of its details is given by Sir George Campbell in his Bengal Administration Report. This is the first real census of the country yet attempted. Sir William Jones in 1787 thought the population of Bengal, Behar, Orissa (with Benares also) amounted to 24,000,000; Colebrooke in 1802 computed it at 30,000,000; in 1844 it was estimated at 31,000,000; and of late years it was assumed to be about 40 or 41 millions. Now it is found that the food-producing area of Bengal numbers 650 souls to the square mile, as compared with 422 in England, and 262 in the United Kingdom. The three Presidency towns number 644,405 inhabitants for Bombay (called by the natives *Mumbaī*); 447,600 for Calcutta (*Kalikātā*); and 397,522 for Madras (*Cenna-pattanam*): but

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not, of course, form one nation. India is almost a continent like Europe. From the earliest times its richness has attracted various and successive immigrants and invaders, Asiatic and European. Its inhabitants differ as much as the various continental races, and speak languages equally distinct.

We have first the aboriginal primitive tribes, who, migrating from Central Asia and the steppes of Tartary and Tibet, entered India by successive incursions¹.

Then we have the great Hindū race, originally members of that primeval family who called themselves Ārya or noble, and spoke a language the common source of Sanskrit, Prakṛit, Zand, Persian, and Armenian in Asia; and of the Hellenic, Italic, Keltic, Teutonic, and Slavonic languages in Europe. Starting at a later period than the primitive races, but like them from some part of the table-land of Central Asia—probably the region surrounding the sources of the Oxus, in the neighbourhood of Bokhara—they separated into distinct nationalities, and peopled Europe, Persia, and India. The Hindū Āryans, after detaching themselves from the Persian branch of the family, settled in the Pañjāb and near the sacred river Sarasvatī. Thence they overran the plains of the Ganges, and spread themselves over the region called Āryāvarta (see p. xvi, note 1), occupying the whole of Central India, coalescing

the suburbs have been calculated in the case of Bombay, making it come next to London as the second city in the Empire. If this had been done in Calcutta and Madras, the numbers for Calcutta (according to Sir G. Campbell's Report) would have been 892,429, placing it at the head of the three cities. Almost every one in India marries as a matter of course, and indeed as a religious duty (see p. 246 of this volume). No infants perish from cold and exposure. As soon as a child is weaned it lives on rice, goes naked for two or three years, and requires no care whatever. The consequent growth of population will soon afford matter for serious anxiety. The Hindūs are wholly averse from emigration. Formerly there were three great depopulators—war, famine, and pestilence—which some regard as evils providentially permitted to exist in order to maintain the balance between the productive powers of the soil and the numbers it has to support. Happily, our rule in India has mitigated these scourges; but where are we to look for sufficient checks to excess of population?

¹ These aboriginal tribes, according to the last census, amount to 14,238,198 of the whole population of India. For an account of them see p. 312, note 1, and p. 236, note 2, of this volume.

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with and, so to speak, Āryanizing the primitive inhabitants, and driving all who resisted them to the south or towards the hills.

But India, even after its occupation by the great Āryan race, appears to have yielded itself up an easy prey to every invader. Herodotus (IV. 44) affirms that it was subjugated by Darius Hystaspes. This conquest, if it ever occurred, must have been very partial. The expedition of Alexander the Great to the banks of the Indus, about 327 B.C., is a familiar fact. To this invasion is due the first authentic information obtained by Europeans concerning the north-westerly portion of India and the region of the five rivers, down which the Grecian troops were conducted in ships by Nearchus. Megasthenes, the ambassador of Seleukos Nikator, during his long sojourn at Palibothra (see note, p. 231), collected further information, of which Strabo (see p. 281, note), Pliny, Arrian, and others availed themselves. The next immigrants who appear, after a long interval, on the scene are the Pārsīs. This small tribe of Persians (even now, according to the last census, not more than seventy thousand in number) were expelled from their native land by the conquering Muhammadans under the Khalif Omar in the seventh century. Adhering to the ancient religion of Persia—the worship, that is, of the Supreme Being under the symbol of fire—and bringing with them the records of their faith, the Zand-Avastā of their prophet Zoroaster (see p. 6), they settled down in the neighbourhood of Surat about 1100 years ago, and became great merchants and shipbuilders¹. For two or three centuries we

¹ The Pārsīs appear to have settled first at Yazd in Persia, where a number of them still remain. The Zand-Avastā consists of 1. the *five Gāthās*, or songs and prayers (in metres resembling Vedic), which alone are thought to be the work of Zoroaster himself, and form part of the *Fasna* (or *Yasna*=yajña), written in two dialects (the older of the two called by Haug the *Gāthā*); 2. the *Vendidad*, a code of laws; 3. the *Yashts*, containing hymns to the sun and other deities. There is another portion, called the *Visparad*, also a collection of prayers. Peshotun Dustoor Behramjee Sunjana, in a note to his *Dinkard* (an ancient Pahlavī work just published at Bombay, containing a life of Zoroaster and a history of the Zoroastrian religion), informs us that the Avastā has three parts: 1. *Gāthā*, 2. *Dāte*, and 3. *Mathre*; 1. being in verse and treating of the invisible world, 2. in prose and giving rules of conduct, 3. comprising prayers and precepts and an account of the creation. The Hindū and Zoroastrian systems were evidently derived from the same source. Fire

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know little of their history. Like the Indo-Armenians¹, they never multiplied to any extent or coalesced with the Hindū population, but they well deserve notice for their busy active habits, in which they emulate Europeans.

Then came the Muhammadans (Arabs, Turks, Afghāns, Moguls, and Persians), who entered India at different times². Though they

and the Sun are venerated in both; but Zoroaster (properly *Zarathustra Spitama*) taught that the Supreme Being created two inferior beings—Ormuzd (Ahura-mazda) the good spirit, and Ariman the evil. The former will destroy the latter. This dualistic principle is foreign to the Veda.

¹ The Armenians of India hold a position like that of the Pārsīs, but their numbers are less (about five thousand), and they are more scattered, and keep up more communication with their native country. There are often fresh arrivals; but some have been in India for centuries, and are dark in complexion. They are frequently merchants and bankers, and being Christian, generally adopt the European dress. They may be called the Jews of the Eastern Church: for, though scattered, they hang together and support each other. At Calcutta they have a large church and grammar-school. Their sacred books are written in ancient Armenian. Of the two modern dialects, that spoken S.E. of Ararat by the Persi-Armenians prevails among the Indo-Armenians.

² Muhammad's successors, after occupying Damascus for about one hundred years, fixed their capital at Baghdad in 750, and thence their power extended into Afghānistān. The Arabs, however, never obtained more than a temporary footing in India. Under the Khalif Walid I, in 711, Muhammad Kāsīm was sent at the head of an army into Sinde, but the Muslims were expelled in 750; and for two centuries and a half India was left unmolested by invaders from the west. About the year 950, when the power of the Arabs began to decline in Asia, hardy tribes of Tartars, known by the name of Turks (not the Ottoman tribe which afterwards gained a footing in Europe, but hordes from the Altai mountains), were employed by the Khalifs to infuse vigour into their effeminate armies. These tribes became Muhammadans, and gradually took the power into their own hands. In the province of Afghānistān, Sabaktagīn, once a mere Turkish slave, usurped the government. His son Mahmūd founded an empire at Ghazni in Afghānistān, and made his first of thirteen incursions into India in the year 1000. During the thirteenth century the Mongol or Mogul hordes, under the celebrated Jangiz Khān, overthrew the Turkish or Tartar tribes; and in 1398 Tīmūr, uniting Tartars and Mongols into one army, made his well-known invasion of India. After desolating the country he retired, but the sixth in descent from him, Baber (*Bābar*), conquered Afghānistān, and thence invading

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now form about one-sixth (or, according to the last census, about forty-one millions) of the entire population, a large number of them are supposed to be the descendants of Hindūs converted to Islām¹.

India about 1526, founded the Mogul empire, which his grandson Akbar (son of Humāyūn) established on a firm basis in 1556; a very remarkable man, Shīr Shāh Sūr, having previously usurped the empire of Hindūstān, and raised it to great prosperity. The power of the Moguls, which rapidly increased under Akbar, Jahāngīr, and Shāhjahān, until it culminated under Aurangzīb, began to decline under Shāh 'Ālam (Bahādur Shāh), Jahāndār Shāh, and Farrukh-siyar; and under Muhammad Shāh, the fourth from Aurangzīb, took place the Persian invasion of Afghānistān and thence of India, undertaken by Nādir Shāh (A.D. 1738) to avenge on the Afghāns their inroads into Persia. Hence it appears that in all cases the Muhammadan invaders of India came through Afghānistān, and generally settled there before proceeding to conquer the Hindūs. On this account, and from the proximity of Afghānistān, it has followed that the greater number of Muhammadan immigrants have been of Afghān blood.

¹ The total number of Muhammadans in the Bengal provinces alone is 20,664,775—probably more than in any other country of the globe; so that if England had merely these provinces, she would stand at the head of all Muhammadan powers, ruling more Mussulmāns than the present representative of the Khalifs himself (see p. xxxv, note 1). The great bulk of Indian Muhammadans are Sunnis (see p. xlii), very few Shi'as being found in Bengal, or indeed in any part of India (except Oude, and a few districts where there are descendants of Persian families). It is noteworthy that in Behar the mass of the people is Hindū, and singularly enough it is not in the great Mogul capitals of Bengal, such as Dacca, Gaur, and Murshidabad, that the Muslims are most numerous, but among the peasants and cultivating classes. Sir George Campbell has remarked that in Bengal the Musalmān invasion found Hindūism resting on weak foundations. Its hold on the affections of the people was weak. The Āryan element was only able to hold its own by frequent importation of fresh blood from Upper India. Hence it happened that when the Muslim conquerors invaded the lower Delta with the sword and the Kurān, they were not wholly unwelcome. They proclaimed equality among a people kept down by caste. Hence in Bengal great masses became Muhammadans, being induced to embrace Islām by the social elevation it gave them. In the North-west provinces and neighbourhood of the great Mogul capital Delhi, where the Hindūs have always been more spirited and independent, there are only about four million Musalmāns. In the Panjāb, however, there are nearly nine millions and a half.

One grand distinction between Islām and Hindūism is, that the former

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Politically they became supreme, but they were never able to supplant the Hindūs, as these had done their predecessors. Moreover, it was the policy of the Muhammadan conquerors to bend, in many points, to the prejudices of their Indian subjects. Hence the Muslims of India became partially Hindūized, and in language, habits, and character took from the Hindūs more than they imparted¹.

Nor has the Hindū-Āryan element lost its ascendancy in India, notwithstanding the accession and admixture of European ingredients. The Portuguese, the Dutch, the Danes, the French have one after the other gained a footing on its shores, and their influence still lingers at isolated points². Last of all the English have spread themselves over the whole country, and at this moment our political supremacy is everywhere greater than that which once belonged to the Musalmāns³. Yet the mass of the population is

is ever spreading and seeking converts, whereas the latter, theoretically, can never do so. A Brāhman is *born*, not *made*. Practically, however, any number of persons may form themselves into a new caste by community of occupation, and the Brāhmins of the present day are ready to accept them as Hindūs.

¹ Hence it happens that the lower orders of Indian Muhammadans observe distinctions of caste almost as strictly as the Hindūs. Many of them will eat and drink together, but not intermarry.

² In later times there has been a constant immigration of Chinese into India, but only of the male sex. The Portuguese still hold three places in India, viz. Goa, Damān, and the island of Diu on the western coast. The Dutch once held Chinsura on the right bank of the Hooghly, and Negapatam on the coast of Tanjore; but about the year 1824 they made both over to us, receiving in return our possessions on the coast of Sumatra. Our cession of the coast of Sumatra was afterwards considered a blunder, to remedy which the formal transfer of Singapore to the British was effected in 1824 by Sir Stamford Raffles (a treaty being made with the neighbouring Sultan) as an intermediate port for our trade with China. The Danes once possessed Tranquebar and Serampore, both of which were purchased from them by us in 1844. In 1846 they ceded a small factory to us at Balasore, where the Portuguese also, as well as the Dutch, held possessions in the early periods of European intercourse. The French still retain Pondicherry and Karical on the Coromandel coast, Chandernagore on the right bank of the Hooghly, Mahé on the Malabar coast, and Yanaon near the mouths of the Godāvāri.

³ Although our annexation of province after province cannot always be justified, yet it may be truly said that our dominion has been gradually

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still essentially Hindū, and the moral influence of what may be called the Indo-Āryan race is still paramount.

forced upon us. Our first dealings with India were merely commercial. The trading corporation entitled 'Governors and Company of London Merchants trading to the East Indies' was formed in 1600. The first Court of Directors was held on the 23rd September 1600, and the first charter was dated by Queen Elizabeth on the 31st of December in that year. The first factory was built at Surat, near the mouth of the Tapti, north of Bombay, in 1613. In 1661 the island of Bombay was ceded to the British by Portugal, as the marriage portion of the Infanta Catharine, on her marriage with Charles II, but its final possession was withheld for four years. It was handed over by Charles to the East India Company in 1669. Another factory was built on the Hooghly above Calcutta in 1636; Madras came into the Company's possession in 1640, and they purchased Calcutta itself in 1698. The battle of Plassy, from which dates the real foundation of the British empire, was fought June 23, 1757.

There are still a large number of native states in India. According to the India Office Report they exceed 460. Some merely acknowledge our supremacy, like Nepāl; but even this frontier country receives our Resident. Others are under a compact to govern well; others pay us tribute, or provide for contingents. Some have power of life and death, and some are obliged to refer capital cases to English courts of justice. Nearly all are allowed to adopt successors on failure of heirs, and their continued existence is thus secured. The Official Report classes them in twelve groups, thus: 1. The Indo-Chinese, in two subdivisions, comprising— A. the settled states, *Nepāl* (whose chief minister and virtual ruler is Sir Jung Bahādur), *Sikkim* (whose king lives at two cities, Tumlung and Chumbi, and who has lately ceded some territory to us), *Bhutān* (a turbulent hill-district), and *Kūch Bahār*; B. the hill-tribes, of Chinese character and physiognomy. 2. The aboriginal *Ghond* and *Kole* tribes in *Chota Nāgpur*, *Orissa*, the Central Provinces, and the *Jaiपुर* (in Orissa) Agency. 3. The states among the *Himālayas*, from the western frontier of Nepāl to Kaśmīr, ruled generally by Rājput chiefs. 4. The *Afghān* and *Belūchī* frontier tribes beyond the Indus. 5. The *Sikh* states in the *Sirhind* plain, occupying the classic ground between the Sutlej and the Jumnā, and once watered by the Sarasvatī. 6. Three Muhammadan states, geographically apart, but having much in common, viz. *Rāmpur* (a district in Rohilkhand, representing the Rohilla state of the days of Warren Hastings), *Bhāwalpur* (separated from the Panjāb by the Sutlej), and *Khairpur* (or Khyrpur) in Sind. 7. *Mālwa* and *Bundelkhand*, the former representing part of the Marāṭhī power, and including the impor-

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Nevertheless, however closely bound together this race may be by community of origin, of religion, of customs, and of speech, and however powerful the influence it may exert over the Non-Āryan population, differences distinguish the people of India as great as

tant states of Central India, viz. that of *Gwālior*, ruled over by Mahārāja *Sindia*; the district governed by *Holkar*; the state of *Dhār*, ruled by the third Marāṭhī family, called Puars; the Muhammadan state of *Bhopāl*; and Bundelkhand, including the district of *Rewah*. 8. The ancient sovereignties of *Rājputāna*, including fifteen Rājput states (such as Odeypur, Jaipur, &c.), two Jāt and one Muhammadan (Tonk). 9. The *Gujarātī* native states, north of Bombay, the principal being that of *Baroda*, ruled over by the *Guikwār* or *Guicowār*. [*Gui* is for *gai*, 'a cow,' and *kwār* or *cowār* (*kuwār*) is possibly a corruption of *kumār* = *kumāra*, 'a prince;' but there is a Marāṭhī word *Gāyakyā*, 'a cowherd.' He is of the herdsman caste, and descended from a Marāṭhī general.] 10. The *Marāṭhī* states south of Bombay, representing the remains of the Marāṭhī power founded by Sivājī. Of these *Satāra* was annexed in 1848, but *Kolapur* remains; nineteen others are under our management owing to the minority of the chiefs. 11. The Muhammadan state of *Haidarābād* (or Hyderabad), in the Dekhan, ruled over by the *Nizām*, at present a minor, the government being conducted by Sir Salar Jung and Shams-ul-Umra. 12. The state of *Mysore*, whose old Rāja remembered the siege of Seringapatam. He died in 1868, and was succeeded by a child for whom we are now governing the country. To this must be added the two neighbouring Malayālam states on the Malabar coast, called *Travancore* and *Cochin*, both of which are excellently governed by enlightened Rājas and good ministers. Here is a Muhammadan historian's account of the first settlement of the English in India: 'In the year 1020 (A.D. 1611) the Emperor of Delhy, Jahāngīr, the son of king Akbar, granted a spot to the English to build a factory in the city of Surat, in the province of Guzerat, which is the first settlement that people made on the shores of Hindūstān. The English have a separate king, independent of the king of Portugal, to whom they owe no allegiance; but, on the contrary, these two nations put each other to death wheresoever they meet. At present, in consequence of the interference of the Emperor Jahāngīr, they are at peace with each other, though God only knows how long they will consent to have factories in the same town, and to live in terms of amity and friendship.' (Quoted in Sir George Campbell's *Modern India*, p. 23.) An excellent account of the rise of the British dominions in India is given by Professor W. D. Whitney in the Second Series of his *Oriental and Linguistic Studies*, procurable from Messrs. Trübner & Co.

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or even greater than those which once divided and still distinguish the whole continent of Europe. The spirited Hindūstānī, the martial Sikh, the ambitious Marāthī, the proud Rājput, the hardy Gurkha¹, the calculating Bengālī, the busy Telugu, the active Tamil, the patient Pariah differ *inter se* as much as or more than the vivacious Celt, the stubborn Saxon, the energetic Norman, the submissive Slave, the enterprising Englishman, and the haughty Spaniard.

Many causes have combined to produce these distinctions. Difference of climate has had its effect in modifying character. Contact with the aboriginal races and with Muhammadans and Europeans has operated differently in different parts of India. Even in districts where the Hindūs are called by one name and speak one dialect they are broken up into separate classes, divided from each other by barriers of castes far more difficult to pass than the social distinctions of Europe. This separation constitutes, in point of fact, an essential doctrine of their religion. The growth of the Indian caste-system is perhaps the most remarkable feature in the history of this extraordinary people. Caste as a social institution, meaning thereby conventional rules which separate the grades of society, exists of course in all countries. In England, caste, in this sense, exerts no slight authority. But with us caste is not a religious institution. On the contrary, our religion, though it permits differences of rank, teaches us that such differences are to be laid aside in the worship of God, and that in His sight all men are equal. Very different is the caste of the Hindūs. The Hindū believes that the Deity regards men as *unequal*, that he created distinct kinds of men, as he created varieties of birds or beasts: that Brāhmans, Kshatriyas, Vaiśyas, and Sūdras are born

¹ The word *Gurkha* for *Gorkha*—a contraction of the Sanskrit *Goraksha*—means ‘cow-keeper.’ The aborigines of Nepāl are mostly of the Bhot or Tibetan family, and are therefore Buddhists; but tribes of Hindūs immigrated into this mountainous region at different periods within memory, and obtained the sovereignty of the country. They were probably of the cowherd caste from the adjacent country of Oudh and from the district below the hills, known as *Gorakhpur*. ‘The tutelary deity of Nepāl is a form of Śiva, denominated *Gorakhnāth*, whose priests are Yogis, and the same sect and worship had formerly equal predominance at Gorakhpur.’—*Asiatic Researches*, vol. xvii. p. 189.

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and must remain distinct from each other; and that to force any Hindū to break the rules of caste is to force him to sin against God, and against nature. It is true, that the endless rules of caste in India principally hinge upon three points of mere social economy and order: 1. food and its preparation¹, 2. intermarriage², and 3. professional pursuits³; but among a religious people, who regard these rules as sacred ordinances of their religion, an offence against any one of them becomes a great crime. It is a remarkable fact, that the jails in India often contain hardened criminals, who have fallen in our estimation to the lowest depths of infamy, but who, priding themselves on the punctilious observance of caste, have not lost one iota of their own self-respect, and would resent with indignation any attempt to force them to eat food prepared by the most virtuous person, if inferior to themselves in the social scale.

A full account of the origin and development of caste—of the strictness of its rules, and of the power it still exerts as a religious rather than as a social institution—will be found at p. 218, p. 231, &c. Moreover, for a description of the rise of Buddhism and its influence in the opposite direction the reader must refer to p. 53, &c.

It remains to point out that the very nature of the Hindū religious

¹ The *preparation of food* is quite as vital a point as *eating together*. Food prepared by a person of inferior caste causes defilement. Some castes cook with their shoes on: but most Hindūs would abhor food thus prepared, because leather causes defilement. Food cooked on board a boat or ship is supposed to destroy caste; thus, a boat proceeding down the Ganges sometimes stops to allow native passengers to cook their food on shore; perhaps, because wood is regarded as a conductor of defilement. It cannot, of course, be said that the rules of caste are *confined* to these three points. A Hindū's ideas about unclean animals are very capricious. He dreads the approach of a fowl to his house or person, as a source of contamination; but he does not mind ducks. Happily caste can no longer hold its own against necessity and advantage—against railroads and scientific inventions. (See the quotation at bottom of p. 219.)

² See the note on the mixed castes, p. 218, and p. 232 with note.

³ It is the restriction of employments caused by caste which necessitates a large establishment of servants. The man who dresses hair feels himself degraded by cleaning clothes, and one who brushes a coat will on no account consent to sweep a room; while another who waits at table will on no consideration be induced to carry an umbrella.

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creed has been the source of great diversities among the people of India.

Every religion worthy of the name may be said to develop itself in three principal directions: 1. that of faith, 2. that of works and ritual, 3. that of doctrine or dogmatic knowledge; to one or other of which prominence is given according to peculiarities of mental bias or temperament. I have endeavoured to show at pp. 36 and 327–329 that the first two lines of development represent a religious exoteric or popular side, while the third exhibits its esoteric aspect, and is the only exponent of its more profound meaning.

Nothing can possibly be more simple than esoteric Hindūism. It is a creed which may be expressed by the two words—*spiritual Pantheism* (see p. 36). A pantheistic creed of this kind is the simplest of all beliefs, because it teaches that nothing really exists but the one Universal Spirit; that the soul of each individual is identical with that Spirit, and that every man's highest aim should be to get rid for ever of doing, having, and being, and devote himself to profound contemplation, with a view to such spiritual knowledge as shall deliver him from the mere illusion of separate existence, and force upon him the conviction that he is himself part of the one Being constituting the Universe.

On the other hand, nothing can be more devoid of simplicity, nothing more multiform and capable of divergence into endless ramifications than the exoteric and popular side of the same creed. This apparent gulf between esoteric and exoteric Hindūism is bridged over by the simple substitution of the word *emanation* for *identification*.

Popular Hindūism supposes that God may for his own purposes amuse himself by illusory appearances; in other words, that he may manifest himself variously, as light does in the rainbow, and that all visible and material objects, including superior gods (*īśa*, *īśvara*, *adhīśa*), secondary gods (*deva*), demons (*daitya*), demi-gods, good and evil spirits, human beings, and animals, are *emanations* from him, and for a time exist separately from him, though ultimately to be reabsorbed into their source. Both these aspects of Hindūism are fully explained at pp. 36 and 323–336 of the following Lectures. From the explanations there given, the multiform character and singular expansibility of the Hindū religious creed will be understood.

Starting from the Veda, it ends by appearing to embrace something

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INTRODUCTION.

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from all religions, and to present phases suited to all minds¹. It has its spiritual and its material aspect, its esoteric and exoteric, its subjective and objective, its pure and its impure. It is at once vaguely pantheistic, severely monotheistic, grossly polytheistic, and coldly atheistic. It has a side for the practical, another for the devotional, and another for the speculative. Those who rest in ceremonial observances find it all-satisfying; those who deny the efficacy of works, and make faith the one thing needful, need not wander from its pale; those who delight in meditating on the nature of God and man, the relation of matter to spirit, the mystery of separate existence, and the origin of evil, may here indulge their love of speculation. And this capacity for almost endless expansion and variety causes almost endless sectarian divisions even among those who worship the same favourite deity. And these differences are enhanced by the close intertwining of religion with social distinctions. The higher classes are supposed capable of a higher form of religion than the lower, the educated than the uneducated, men than women; just as the religions of Muhammadans and Christians are held (like their complexions) to be most suited to their peculiar constitutions, circumstances, and nationalities.

In unison with its variable character, the religious belief of the Hindūs has really no single succinct designation. We sometimes call it Hindūism and sometimes Brāhmanism, but these are not names recognized by the natives.

If, then, such great diversities of race, spoken dialect, character, social organization, and religious belief exist among a teeming population, spread over an extent of territory so vast that almost every variety of soil, climate, and physical feature may be found there represented, the question fairly arises—How is it possible for us Englishmen, in the face of such differences, to gain any really satisfactory knowledge of the people committed to our rule? Only one key to this difficulty exists. Happily India, though it has at least twenty distinct dialects (p. xxix), has but one sacred and learned language

¹ It is on this principle, I suppose, that Sir Mungoldas Nathooboy, K. S. I., of Bombay, is reported to have once argued with a zealous raw missionary that Hindūs being Christians by nature needed not to be converted; adding, 'But I thank God that you English were converted to Christianity, or you would by this time have eaten up the world to the bone.'