

tion — with addenda. “Whoever is willing to survey, with candor, the whole field of scientific theology, abstract, practical, and controversial, Latin, Lutheran, and Reformed, since the Reformation was firmly established and its first fruits gathered [we beseech the reader not to suppose that the writer of this Article claims for himself this learned achievement], will see small cause to be satisfied that the Critical, Speculative, or Philosophical methods” of the Nineteenth Century — as presented in the present work — “according to the general attainments of the age” — “are to be preferred to the arbitrary and artificial methods they would supplant,” which were pursued by the worthies of past ages, the founders of schools and the framers of the Church’s creeds, “or perhaps even” to that of Stapfer himself. These two volumes on theology are a misfortune to their author, and calculated to bring discredit upon the scholarship of the country. Such enormous pretension we have never before seen conjoined with so humiliating a performance.

And now, if there be any in whose bosoms the passions of past conflicts survive, and who still cherish unkindly remembrance of what seemed to them abuse and violence, we conjure them to bury such thoughts, in peace, forever. Dr. Breckinridge has written a book — this book. It is enough.

ARTICLE IV.

INDIA—THE BHAGVAT GEETA.

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It has been our good fortune to read one of the very few copies of a translation of the Bhagvat Geeta found in the country; and to realize, in reading it, all we had been led to anticipate from the fine tantalizing extracts we had, from

time to time, seen floating, as waifs, among our literature. We have thought we might do a pleasant service to literary and religious curiosity among many of our readers by giving to them the few facts we have been able to gather with respect to this gem of Sanscrit wisdom, together with a variety of extracts from it. We are fully aware that there are others who, were they so disposed, could give this picture a far richer setting. We have kept silence for years, hoping they would do this; and we now undertake, in their presence, a long neglected work which properly belongs to them, only as we hope that the lively interest recently awakened in everything pertaining to that vast, hazy country, may be some compensation for our lack of personal furnishing for the work.

The Encyclopedias inform us that the Bhagvat Geeta, or, as some write it, Bhagawat Gîta, is a chapter, or rather episode in a chapter, of the Mahabharat. This Mahabharat is a historical poem or epic, whose principal subject is Bhurrit the Great, and the house he founded in the early history of the country. The genealogy and history of this royal house, and particularly of the wars which occurred between two branches of it, the Kooroos and Pandoos, are celebrated in more than one hundred thousand metrical stanzas of two lines each.

The theatre of these marvellous events was Central India, not far from the scenes of the recent tragedies; and these events transpired, if at all, in ages so remote that the imagination of man can hardly run to the contrary; but this record of them in the Mahabharat was made, according to the best modern authority in Oriental literature, about 1200 B. C., or not far from the time when Joshua, and Gideon, and Samson were working their real wonders in Judea.

Little reliance can be placed upon the histories and chronologies of a people so fond of the marvellous as these Orientals are, especially when we find them claiming for some of their earlier dynasties a reign of ten thousand years, battles lasting eighteen days, and other things in keeping with these enormous periods.

Still these absurdities are no stumbling-blocks to the credence of the Orientals; and so we find the Hindoos not only regarding this Mahabharat as one of their sacred books, but attributing to it the highest inspiration. They call it a "fifth veda," as we sometimes speak of an "eleventh commandment." To them, Kreesna, its principal character, is not merely an incarnation of Vishnu, but is Vishnu incarnate — the eighth incarnation or avatar of that remarkable personage. A plausible explanation of that particular avatar is this. Kreesna may have been a veritable person of mark in their early history. His notable deeds became more and more wonderful as they rolled down, traditionally, from generation to generation of his imaginative admirers, until their prodigious magnitude necessitated a higher than human origin. They could no longer be believed except on the assumption that the worker was divine. This was a "*nodus vindice Dei dignus*;" so a god put his shoulder to the burden of achievement under which a poor mortal would have sunk; and thus, instead of a simple hero, Kreesna, they now have Kreesna an incarnation of Vishnu.

This episode in the Mahabharat — the Bhagvat Geeta, is in form a dialogue between Kreesna and his devout and favorite disciple Arjoon. A third person, Sanjay, occasionally puts in a word of explanation, inference, or conciliation, as Elihu did in the conference between Job and his three friends, or as the Chorus was wont to do in the Greek drama.

The doctrine of the book is in appearance monotheistic, yet really pantheistic. Brahm is not only in everything, but *is* everything; and hence the design of the book seems to be to unite all the various forms of worship, and centre them on the supreme Brahm.

Of the literary merits of the book, the extracts we give will be as good specimens as translations usually are of their originals. It may not be amiss however to quote, on this point, the testimony of three persons of different professions and nations who had ample opportunities for a correct judgment. An American missionary, long resident in India, says: "It is compared, for its beauty, to a deep and noble

forest, abounding in delicious fruits and fragrant flowers, shaded, and watered by perennial springs," etc. A French Professor of Oriental literature says it is the "fruits of a most poetic imagination, of the boldest meditations, of the most practised reason," etc.

Warren Hastings, under whose patronage this translation was made and published, says in the Introduction: "With the deductions, or rather qualifications, which I have thus premised, I hesitate not to pronounce the Geeta a performance of great originality; of a sublimity of conception, reasoning, and diction almost unequalled; and a single exception, among all the known religions of mankind, of a theology accurately corresponding with that of the Christian dispensation, and most powerfully illustrating its fundamental doctrines."

We incidentally mentioned the sacred regard of the Hindoos for the book from which the Bhagvat Geeta is taken. Towards this particular part of it, they cherish a still higher veneration. The Brahmins say it contains all the secrets of their religion, and they treat it accordingly. They have more commentaries upon it than we have upon the Apocalypse. At the same time they guard it with extreme jealousy, keeping it a secret from all other Religions, and even from the vulgar of their own faith. Their authority for this is no less than Kreesna himself, who, at the close of this revelation, having called it his "supreme and most mysterious words," adds: "This is never to be revealed by thee to any one who hath not subjected his body, by devotion, who is not my servant, who is not anxious to learn, nor unto him who despiseth me."

But these scruples of the Brahmins were gradually softened and worn away by the artful policy, mingled with the real kindness, of the Governor General, Warren Hastings. By the most careful toleration of all their religious opinions and practices, and by a special respect shown to their learned class, he got possession of this sacred book, and of whatever facts might be needed in introducing it to the English reader.

It was carefully translated by clerks in the employ of the Company, and under the immediate supervision of the Governor; commended by him to his fellow-countrymen in a prefatory Letter of no mean literary merit, and finally "published under the authority of the Court of Directors of the East India Company by the particular desire and recommendation of the Governor General, Warren Hastings."

It is a memorable incident in the history of this great bad man, this Anglo-Indian Napoleon, that in connection with his absorbing greed for gold, he had yet a sharp relish for literary luxuries; and that, in the midst of his wicked conquests of productive territory, in the name of the authorities at home, he could yet find time to search out, translate, and publish a book of no value whatever except as a literary or theological curiosity.

We only wish he had been as tender of the pecuniary rights of poor Nuncomar and of the Begum princesses as he affected to be of the religious scruples of the Brahmins; and that he had plundered more of curious Sanscrit antiquities and less of Hindoo gold; or at least, that he had expended more of the wealth he had at first extorted from these harmless and helpless natives, in acquainting the Christian world with the unique treasures of their ancient literature and religion. Had he done this, the ponderous and immortal sentences of Burke's glowing eloquence had fallen with a less crushing power upon his unshielded head, and there had been, to-day, a much less fearful unanimity of indignation in the Christian world against his unscrupulous tyranny, as well as against all those, his successors in authority, whose arbitrary and avaricious course took both stimulus and direction from the success of his gigantic wickedness.

But it is time the reader were presented with a bouquet culled from this gorgeous blossoming of Oriental Paganism. Our first quotation shall be a declaration of Peace Principles, humane and Christian in spirit, yet in substance strong enough to satisfy a Worcester Convention, save that it is utterly lacking in that warlike twang with which Non Resistant usually enun-

ciate their principles by their heavy ordnance— Resolutions. The conference takes place on the field where the two armies are awaiting the fight.

“ Having beheld, O Kreesna, my kindred thus standing anxious for the fight, my members fail me, my countenance withereth, the hair standeth on end upon my body, even my bone escapeth from my hand, and my skin is parched and dried up. . . . When I shall have destroyed my kindred, shall I longer look for happiness? I wish not for victory, Kreesna; I want not dominion; I want not pleasure; for, what is dominion and the enjoyments of life, or even life itself, when those for whom dominion, pleasure, and enjoyment were to be courted, have abandoned life and fortune, and stand here in the field ready for battle! Tutors, sons and fathers, grandsires and grandsons, uncles and nephews, cousins, kindred, and friends! Although they would kill me, I wish not to fight them; no, not even for the three dominions of the universe, much less for this little earth! . . . Now, O Kreesna, can we be happy hereafter, when we have been the murderers of our race? What if they, whose minds are depraved by lust of power, see no sin in the extirpation of their race, no crime in the murder of their friends; is that a reason why we should not resolve to turn away from such a crime, we who abhor the sin of extirpating the kindred of our blood? In the destruction of a family, the ancient virtue of the family is lost. Upon the loss of virtue, vice and impiety overwhelm the whole race. From the influence of impiety, the females of a family grow vicious; and from women that are become vicious, are born the spurious brood called Varna Sankar [i. e. they who people hell]. Woe is me! What a great crime are we prepared to commit! Alas! that for the lust of the enjoyments of dominion, we stand here ready to murder the kindred of our own blood! I would rather patiently suffer that the sons of Dhreetarashtra, with their weapons in their hands, should come upon me and, unopposed, kill me unguarded in the field!”

When Arjoon had ceased to speak, he sat down in the chariot between the two armies; and having put away his bow and arrows, his heart was overwhelmed with affliction.

Kreesna reproaches him for this unmanly and disgraceful weakness; tells him it is contrary to duty, and the foundation of dishonor, and bids him stand up. Whereupon Arjoon continues:

“ How, O Kreesna, shall I resolve to fight against such a Bheeshma and Dron, who, of all men, are most worthy of my respect? I would rather beg my bread about the world, than be the murderer of my preceptors, to whom such awful reverence is due. We know not whether it would

be better that we should defeat them, or they us. . . . My compassionate nature is overcome by the dread of sin.

Tell me truly what may be best for me to do, . . . for my understanding is confounded by the dictates of my duty [as a soldier], and I see nothing that may assuage the grief which drieth up my faculties, although I were to obtain a kingdom without a rival on earth, or dominion over the hosts of heaven."

Having thus spoken, and having declared, moreover, that he would not fight, Kreeshna endeavored to stimulate his courage and overcome his scruples, by what we will venture to call an Indo-Platonic discourse upon —

The Nature of the Soul, Death, and Immortal Happiness.

"The man who believeth that it is the soul which killeth, and he who thinketh that the soul may be destroyed, are both alike deceived; for it neither killeth nor is it killed. It is not a thing of which we may say — it hath been — it is about to be — or is to be hereafter; for it is a thing without birth; it is ancient, constant, and éternal, and is not to be destroyed in this its mortal frame. . . . The weapon divideth it not, the fire burneth it not, the water corrupteth it not, the wind drieth it not away; for it is indivisible, inconsumable, incorruptible, and is not to be dried away; it is eternal, universal, permanent, immovable; it is invisible, inconceivable, and unalterable; therefore believing it thus, thou shouldest not grieve.

"But whether thou believest it of eternal birth and duration, or that it drieth with the body, still thou hast no cause to lament it. Death is certain to all things which are subject to birth, and regeneration to all things which are mortal; wherefore it doth not behoove thee to grieve about that which is inevitable. . . . The spirit being never to be destroyed in the mortal frame which it inhabiteth, it is unworthy for thee to be troubled about all these mortals."

After pressing the reluctant Arjoon still further with the argument of duty to his tribe, and the fact that the gates of heaven would be opened to those who engage in such a glorious fight, just according to their wish; also that he would be accused of cowardice should he refrain from fighting, or retire from the field, Kreeshna continues :

"If thou art slain, thou wilt obtain heaven; if thou art victorious, thou wilt enjoy a world for thy reward; wherefore arise and be determined for the battle. Make pleasure and pain, gain and loss, victory and defeat the

same, and then prepare for the battle; or if thou dost not, thou wilt be criminal in a high degree. Let thy reason be thus applied in the field of battle."

Here follow some sensible observations upon the superior importance of Motive over the visible results of action.

"The determined judgment of such as are attached to riches and enjoyment, and whose reason is led astray by this doctrine, is not formed upon mature consideration and meditation. . . . Let the motive be in the deed and not in the event. Be not one whose motive for action is the hope of reward. Let not thy life be spent in inaction. Depend upon application, perform thy duty, abandon all thought of the consequence, and make the event equal, whether it terminate in good or in evil. . . . The action stands at a distance inferior to the application of wisdom. Seek an asylum, then, in wisdom alone; for the miserable and unhappy are so on account of the event of things. Men who are endued with true wisdom are unmindful of good or evil in this world. Study, then, to obtain this application of thy understanding; for such application in business is a precious art. Wise men who have abandoned all thought of the fruit which is produced from their actions, are freed from the chains of birth, and go to the regions of eternal happiness."

Here is the Oriental *Wisdom*, or the *Philosophy of true Happiness* — the original of the Grecian Stoicism; suggesting the idea that Zeno, in his "pre-existent state," had his Porch somewhere on the luxuriant banks of the Ganges.

"A man is said to be confirmed in wisdom, when he forsaketh every desire which entereth into his heart, and of himself is happy, and contented in himself. His mind is undisturbed in adversity, he is happy and contented in prosperity, and he is a stranger to anxiety, fear and anger. . . . The wisdom of that man is established, who in all things is without affection; and, having received good or evil, neither rejoiceth at the one nor is cast down by the other. His wisdom is confirmed, when, like the tortoise, he can draw in all his members, and restrain them from their wonted purposes. The hungry man loseth every other object but the gratification of his appetite; and when he becometh acquainted with the Supreme, he loseth even that. The man who hath his passions in subjection, is possessed of true wisdom. The man who attendeth to the inclinations of the senses, in them hath a concern; from this concern is created passion; from passion, anger; from anger is produced folly; from folly, a depravation of the memory; from the loss of memory, the loss of reason; and from the loss of reason, the loss of all.

"A man of a governable mind, enjoying the objects of his senses, with

all his faculties rendered obedient to his will, and freed from pride and malice, obtaineth happiness supreme. In this happiness is born to him an exemption from all his troubles; and his mind being thus at ease, wisdom presently floweth to him from all sides. . . . The man whose passions enter his heart, as waters run into the unswelling, passive ocean, obtaineth happiness; not he who lusteth in his lusts. The man who, having abandoned all lusts of the flesh, walketh without inordinate desires, unassuming, and free from pride, obtaineth happiness. This is divine dependence. A man being possessed of this confidence in the Supreme, goeth not astray; even at the hour of death, should he attain it, he shall mix with the incorporeal nature of Brahm."

This further expression of the idea of practical wisdom or true happiness, is commended to the special attention of restless, greedy, insatiable Americans.

"Wise men call him a Pandeet [Pundit], whose every undertaking is free from the idea of desire, and whose actions are consumed by the fire of wisdom. He abandoneth the desire of a reward of his actions; he is always contented and independent; and although he may be engaged in a work, he, as it were, doeth nothing. He is unsolicitous, of a subdued mind and spirit, and exempt from every perception; and as he doeth only the offices of the body, he committeth no offence. He is pleased with whatever he may, by chance, obtain; he hath gotten the better of duplicity, and is free from envy. He is the same in prosperity and adversity; and although he acteth, he is not confined in the action."

. . . "The man who hath his passions in subjection, and with his mind forsaketh all works, his soul sitteth at rest in the nine-gate city of its abode, neither acting nor causing to act."

Here is the Hindoo's easy solution of the problem upon which the Christian Apostle reasons so eloquently and so pathetically in the 7th chapter of his Epistle to the Romans — the conflict between the higher and the lower self in the soul.

Arjoon. "By what, O Kreeshna, is man propelled to commit offences? He seems as if, contrary to his wishes, he was impelled by some secret force.

Kreeshna. "Know that it is the enemy lust, or passion, offspring of the carnal principle, insatiable and full of sin, by which this world is covered as the flame by the smoke, as the mirror by the rust, or as the fetus by its membrane. The understanding of the wise man is obscured by this inveterate foe, in the shape of desire, who rageth like fire and is hard to be appeased. It is said that the senses, the heart, and the understanding are the places where he delighteth most to rule. By the assistance of these, he

overwhelmeth the reason and stupefieth the soul. Thou shouldst, therefore, first subdue thy passions, and get the better of this sinful destroyer of wisdom and knowledge.”

In a discourse upon the destiny of the soul, good or evil, we find this remarkable but somewhat redundant catalogue of virtues and vices.

“The man who is born with divine destiny is endowed with the following qualities: exemption from fear, a purity of heart, a constant attention to the discipline of his understanding; charity, self-restraint, religion, study, penance, rectitude, freedom from doing wrong, veracity, freedom from anger, resignation, temperance, freedom from slander, universal compassion, exemption from the desire of slaughter, mildness, modesty, discretion, dignity, patience, fortitude, chastity, unrevengefulness, and a freedom from vain-glory — whilst those who come into life under the influence of the evil destiny, are distinguished by hypocrisy, pride, presumption, anger, harshness of speech, and ignorance. The divine destiny is for *Moksh* or absorption in the divine nature; and the evil destiny confineth the soul to mortal birth.”

Kreeshna thus assigns the best of reasons for his successive incarnations or avatars :

“Although I am not, in my nature, subject to birth or decay, and am the lord of all created beings; yet, having command over my own nature, I am made evident by my own power; and as often as there is a decline of virtue, and an insurrection of vice and injustice in the world, I make myself evident; and thus I appear from age to age for the preservation of the just, the destruction of the wicked, and the establishment of virtue.”

Some of our readers whose hard destiny it is, in the labor of their wits to eat their bread, will be under obligations to Kreeshna for this specific for concentrated and successful thinking :

“The *Yogee* constantly exerciseth the spirit in private. He is recluse of a subdued mind and spirit: free from hope and free from perception. [?] He planteth his own seat firmly on a spot that is undefiled, neither too high nor too low, and sitteth upon the sacred grass which is called *Koos*, covered with a skin and a cloth. There he whose business is the restraining of his passions, should sit, with his mind fixed on one subject alone, in the exercise of his devotion for the purification of his soul, keeping his head, his neck, his body steady without motion, his eyes fixed on the point of his nose, looking at no other place around. . . .

“The man who keepeth the outward accidents from entering his mind, and his eyes fixed in contemplation between his brows; who maketh his

breath to pass through both his nostrils, alike in expiration and inspiration ; who is of subdued faculties of mind and understanding, and hath set his heart upon salvation ; and who is free from lust, fear, and anger, is forever blessed in this life . . . he shall also obtain me and be blessed."

One of the most remarkable chapters in this book is that which relates a conversation between *Kreeshna* and *Arjoon*, concerning God. From this protracted dialogue, we select some characteristic passages, setting forth the nature of the Deity.

Arjoon. "Thou alone, oh first of men [i. e. in human form], knowest thy own spirit ; thou who art the production of all nature, the ruler of all things, the god of gods, and the universal lord ! Thou art now able to make me acquainted with those divine portions of thyself by which thou possessest and dwellest in this world. How shall I, although I constantly think of thee, be able to know thee ? In what particular natures art thou to be found ? Tell me again, in full, what is thy connection, and what thy distinction ; for I am not yet satisfied with drinking of the living water of thy words.

Kreeshna. " Blessings be upon thee ! I will make thee acquainted with the chief of my divine distinctions, as the extent of my nature is infinite. I am the soul which standeth in the bodies of all beings. I am the beginning, the middle, and the end of all things. . . Amongst the faculties, I am the mind ; and amongst animals, I am reason. . . Amongst floods, I am the ocean, and I am the monosyllable [name of god] amongst words. I am, amongst worships the *Yap* [silent repetition of the name of god] ; and amongst immovables, the mountain Heemalay. . . Amongst weapons, I am the thunderbolt. I am the prolific god of love ; and, amongst serpents, I am their chief. I am *Yam* [the judge of hell] amongst all those who rule ; and time, among computations. Amongst purifiers, I am the air ; . . and among rivers, I am *Ganga*. Of things transient, I am the beginning, the middle, and the end. Of all science, I am the knowledge of the ruling spirit, and of all speaking, I am the oration. I am, also, never-failing time ; the preserver, whose face is turned on all sides. I am all-grasping death ; and I am the resurrection of those who are about to be. Amongst females, I am fame, fortune, eloquence, memory, understanding, fortitude, patience. Amongst the Seasons, I am Spring ; amongst the frauds, I am gaming ; and of all things glorious, I am the glory. I am victory, I am industry, I am the essence of all qualities. Amongst rulers, I am the rod ; and amongst those who seek for conquest, I am policy. Amongst the secret, I am silence ; and among the wise, I am wisdom.

" I am, in like manner, O Arjoon, that which is the seed of all things in nature ; and there is not anything, whether animate or inanimate, that is without me. My divine distinctions are without end, and the many which I have mentioned are by way of example. And learn, O Arjoon, that every

being which is worthy of distinction and preeminence, is the produce of the portion of my glory. But what, O Arjoon, hast thou to do with this manifold wisdom? I planted this whole universe with a single portion, and stood still.

Arjoon. . . . “ It is even as thou hast described thyself, O mighty lord. I am now, most elevated of men, anxious to behold thy divine countenance; wherefore, if thou thinkest it may be beheld by me, show me thy never-failing spirit.

Kreeshna. “ Behold, O Arjoon, my million forms divine, of various species, and divers shapes and colors. . . Behold things wonderful, never seen before. Behold in this, my body, the whole world, animate and inanimate, and all things else thou hast a mind to see. But as thou art unable to see with these, thy natural eyes, I will give thee a heavenly eye, with which to behold my divine connection.

Sanjay. “ The mighty compound and divine being having thus spoken, made evident unto Arjoon his supreme and heavenly form: of many a mouth and eye; many a wondrous sight; many a heavenly ornament; many an upraised weapon; adorned with celestial robes and chaplets; anointed with heavenly essence; covered with every marvellous thing — the eternal god, whose countenance is turned on every side. . . The son of Pandoo then beheld, within the body of the god of gods, standing together, the whole universe, divided forth into its vast variety. He was overwhelmed with wonder, and every hair was raised on end. He bowed down his head before the god, and thus addressed him, with joined hands :

Arjoon. “ I behold, O god, within thy breast, the angels and every specific tribe of beings. I see Brahma, that deity sitting on his lotus-throne; all the saints and heavenly serpents. I see thyself on all sides, of infinite shape: formed with abundant arms, and bellies, and mouths, and eyes; but I can neither discover thy beginning, thy middle, nor, again, thy end. O universal lord, form of the universe! . . . I see thee, difficult to be seen, shining on all sides, with light immeasurable, like the ardent fire or glorious sun. Thou art the supreme being, incorruptible, and worthy to be known. . . Thou art the never-failing and eternal guardian of religion. . . I see thee . . . of valor infinite; of arms innumerable; the sun and moon thine eyes; thy mouth assuming fire, and the whole world shining with thy reflected glory. . . . The space between the heavens and the earth is possessed by thee alone. Of the celestial bands, some I see fly to thee for refuge; whilst some, afraid, with joined hands sing forth thy praise. The *Maharshees*, holy bands, hail thee and glorify thy name with adoring praises. The worlds, alike with me, are terrified to behold thy wondrous form gigantic! . . . Having beheld thy dreadful teeth, and gazed on thy countenance, emblem of Time's last fire, I know not which way I turn. I find no peace. Have mercy then, O god of gods, thou mansion of the universe!

The universe rejoiceth because of thy renown, and is filled with zeal for thy service. The evil spirits are terrified and flee, on all sides, whilst the holy tribes bow down in adoration before thee! And wherefore should

they not, O mighty being, bow down before thee, who, greater than Brahma, art the prime creator! . . . Reverence! reverence! be unto thee, a thousand times repeated! Again and again, reverence! Reverence be unto thee before an behind! Reverence be unto thee, on all sides, O thou who art all in all! Thou includedst all things; wherefore, thou art all things! Having regarded thee as my friend, I forcibly called thee *Friend!* But alas, I was ignorant of this thy greatness, because I was blinded by my affection and my presumption. Thou hast, at times, also, in sport been treated ill by me, in thy recreations, in thy bed, on thy chair, and at thy meals; in private and in public; for which, O being inconceivable, I humbly crave thy forgiveness! . . . I bow down, and, with my body prostrate upon the ground, crave thy mercy, lord, worthy to be adored! For thou shouldst bear with me, even as a father with his son, a friend with his friend, a lover with his beloved. I am well pleased with having beheld things before never seen; yet my mind is overwhelmed with awful fear!"

Kreeshna, in compassion to his weakness, then resumed his milder form, and thus assuaged the fears of his favorite servant. Whereupon Arjoon replies :

"Having beheld thy placid human shape, I am again collected; my mind is no more disturbed, and I am once more returned to my natural state."

MISCELLANEOUS MORAL AND RELIGIOUS MAXIMS.

"Remember the gods, that the gods may remember you. Remember one another, and ye shall obtain supreme happiness."

"He who enjoyeth what hath been given unto him by the gods, and offereth not a portion unto them, is even as a thief. Those who eat not but what is left of the offerings, shall be purified of all their transgressions."

"Those who dress their meat but for themselves, eat the bread of sin."

"The learned man, by industriously performing all the duties of life, should induce the vulgar to attend to them."

"A man's own religion, though contrary to, is better than the faith of another, let it be ever so well followed."

"It is good to die in one's own faith, for another's faith beareth fear."

"There is not anything in this world to be compared with wisdom for purity."

"Neither this world, nor that which is above, nor happiness, can be enjoyed by the man of a doubting mind."

"They whose minds are attached to my invisible nature, have the greater labor to encounter, because an invisible path is difficult to be found by corporeal beings."

"Neither this world, nor that which is above, nor happiness, can be enjoyed by the man of a doubting mind."

“ Know, O Arjoon, that all the regions between this and the abode of Brahm, afford but a transient residence.”

“ The enjoyments which proceed from the feelings, are as the wombs of future pains. The wise man who is acquainted with the beginning and the end of things, delighteth not in these.”

“ He who can bear up against the violence which is produced from lust and anger, is properly employed, and a happy man.”

“ Whatever thou doest, O Arjoon, whatever thou eatest, whatever thou sacrificest, whatever thou givest, whatever thou shalt be zealous about, make each an offering unto me.”

Charity.

“ That charity which is bestowed by the disinterested, because it is proper to be given, in due place and season, and to proper objects, is of the *Satwa Goon* [truth qualities].”

“ That which is given in expectation of a return, or for the sake of the fruit of the action, and with reluctancy, is of the *Raja Goon* [passion qualities.]

“ That which is given, out of place and reason, and to unworthy objects, and at the same time ungraciously and scornfully, is pronounced to be of the *Tama Goon* [darkness qualities].”

Worship.

“ That worship which is directed by divine precept, and is performed without the desire of reward, as necessary to be done, and with an attentive mind, is of the *Satwa Goon*.”

“ The worship which is performed with a view to the fruit, and with hypocrisy, is of the *Tama Goon*.”

“ The worship which is performed without regard to the precepts of the law, without the distribution of bread, without the usual invocations, without gifts to the Brahmins at the conclusion, and without faith, is of the *Raja Goon*.”

“ Those who worship the *Devas* [angels], go unto them; and those who worship me alone, go unto me.”

“ He who beholdeth me in all things, and all things in me, I forsake not him, and he forsaketh not me. I am extremely dear to the wise man, and he is dear unto me.”

“ Those whose understandings are in him [deity], whose souls are in him, whose confidence is in him, and whose asylum is in him, are, by wisdom, purified from all their offences, and go from whence they shall never return.”

Let us now hear the conclusion of the whole matter, in the words of the dispassionate, but deeply interested listener,

“ *Sanjay*. “ In this manner have I been an ear-witness of the astonishing and miraculous conversation that hath passed between the son of *Va-*

soodev, and the magnanimous son of Pandoo; and I was enabled to hear this supreme and miraculous doctrine, even as revealed from the mouth of *Kreeshna* himself, who is the god of religion, by the favor of *Vyas*. As, O mighty prince, I recollect again and again this holy and wonderful dialogue of *Kreeshna* and *Arjoon*, I continue more and more to rejoice; and as I recall to my memory the more than miraculous form of *Haree*, my astonishment is great, and I marvel and rejoice again and again! Wherever *Kreeshna*, the god of devotion, may be, wherever *Arjoon*, the mighty bowman, may be, there too, without doubt, are fortune, riches, victory, and good conduct. This is my firm belief."

The End of the Geeta.

We cannot dismiss this subject without raising the inquiry, What was the civilization which preceded and prepared the way for this remarkable book? for it could not have stood alone. It must have had kindred ancestors, as it had kindred though degenerate descendants. It narrows, somewhat, the gulf we had supposed to exist between the Book of Job and all contemporaneous works of uninspired men. The mind which wrought out the loftier parts of the Bhagvat Geeta, might have made some approximation towards the Book of Job, had it been set at work upon the deep problem of God's Providences.

The morality of the book rises as high, probably, as the human mind can rise, without divine help. We are told that Sanscrit poetry is generally licentious; but from that great mass of defilement, this book stands out in distinct and beautiful relief. Many interesting parallels, theological as well as moral, might be traced between this and the Christian Code. Hence that remarkable Hindoo reformer *Rammohum Roy*, in carrying out his great idea, translated into the vernacular tongues of India extracts from the Vedas and from the Bible, sending them forth as joint influences in the same good work. Now, is there any more plausible or rational explanation of this resemblance, than that these pure and lofty sentiments are fragments of an original divine revelation to the race,— as it were, scattered scintillations of a rocket which broke high in air, but whose remains continued to shine as they fell earthward? Are they not what we might expect the remote descendants of Cain or of Ishmael would show, in broken tradi-

tions of what their great ancestors, Abraham and Adam received direct from Jehovah? This supposition is the more plausible from the fact that all Hindoo traditions in respect to the origin of their people and religion, point toward the north-west: that is to say, towards a country in that neighborhood where the first divine revelations were made to the race, "the country of the origins," as Prof. Guyot calls it, that historic highlands from which arts and religions, as well as nations, seem to have flowed off and down in every direction.

But these lofty truths are interpolated with much that is extremely foolish and absurd,— a natural consequence of a natural degeneracy for a period of 2500 years from primitive days to the time when the *Bhagvat Geeta* was written; and a *rate* of degeneracy, too, which would promise for the present time a vast preponderance of absurdity, and even of immorality,— as we find practical Hindooism now to be; even as there are now immense quantities of basest rubbish accumulated upon every small fragment of ancient art around the Forum or under the brow of the Acropolis.

The esteem which such a people as the modern Hindoos manifest for such a book as this, is attended with some paradoxes which, it should seem, might startle the credulity even of Orientals. For instance, the Brahmins, their learned class, believe all these fine doctrines of Vishnu; and on the authority of the same book, the *Mahabharat*, they believe that somewhere to the north of India is Mount Sumeru, the abode of the gods, 600,000 miles high; of which, Vishnu's estate is a circuit of 85,000 miles. They believe Vishnu to be a god, and yet believe stories of his birth which are too vile to be hinted at in Christian English.

They reverence him as he enjoins this pure morality upon his worshippers, and still they bedeck his temples and statues with the most obscene pictures imaginable. They guard, with extreme jealousy, the book which contains these pure sentiments, and yet they tolerate the worshippers of the author of these sentiments in the grossest licentiousness. They believe it contains the choicest secrets of their religion, and yet they withhold it from the great mass of the people, who

are trying to practise that religion. And so on to the end of the chapter. Much of this we might think utterly impossible, were it not that the Romish branch of the Christian church furnishes us with lively parallels, in holding to a Bible which must be withholden from the people, and which enjoins a morality which is openly set at nought by numerous doctrines and practices of both priesthood and people.

But as the worshipper of images in the Romish church, when pressed by argument, retreats to the theory that it is a something behind the visible representation which he worships, so we imagine a shrewd Brahmin, when crowded by the Christian Missionary, will carry the argument back of all the present absurdities and immoralities of his religion, to the doctrine of its primitive sacred books. And here he might stand a long siege, had these books committed themselves only on morality or poetry. But fortunately for the cause of Christian truth, their morality and poetry are closely interlaced with the most absurd and ridiculous pretensions as to history, geography, and physical science. Here is the vulnerable heel of their vaunted hero. Hereby all the educated Hindoo youth are easily made sceptics as to their native religion. A host of such have already graduated from the schools of the East India Company, and not a few from the missionary schools. They have cast their idols, Vishnu and all, to the moles and the bats, though they have not always installed, in their places, Jehovah and his incarnate Son. They have become very intelligent and thrifty worldlings, but very questionable Christians. Still, if light and truth does, at first, only this work of demolition, the Christian's duty in the premises is clear. He must labor on till the whole imposing structure of Hindoo idolatry is in the dust, trusting that the ever-progressing Providence of God will, in due time, raise up a Christian temple upon its ruins.

We close our remarks upon this rare book with the modest suggestion that "the Poet-Sage of Concord," who possesses one of the very few copies of it to be found in this country, and who has many points of sympathy with its peculiar philosophy and theology; whose broad and rich learn-

ing enables him, if so disposed, to throw collateral light upon it by a full Introduction or by copious Notes, and who surely is no high-caste Brahmin that he should desire to keep this rich vein of gold covered from the eyes of his curious countrymen, should now devote a portion of his "elegant leisure" to preparing an American Edition of the *Bhagvat Geeta* for the many who would read it not only with liveliest interest, but with substantial profit.

ARTICLE V.

THE ANGEL OF JEHOVAH.

BY HENRY A. SAWTELLE, M. A., LIMERICK, ME.

IN the early time, when the revelation of a spiritual sphere was dawning upon the race, and God was impressing his rightful claims, by striking visitations, upon a stupid world, the new forms that appear are often mysterious above later manifestations. The twilight confuses shapes which would otherwise be distinct. The fleeting agents of the strange unfolding speak not of themselves. They, for the time, carry their beholders to what is upward and onward; and would not, as instruments, be thought of, any more than is the word which is the sign of a thought. Certain it is that an activity is going on, the mode and incitement of which are above the ordinary process of nature. Clear and unmistakable is the immediate and practical object of each new supernatural appearance. And yet the sensible agency producing the effects, the messengers of the revelation, are not so certainly recognized in every case. In what order of existence do these agents belong? Or, if there be but one, is he divine, or is he less than divine? Such questions arise to the inquiring mind, as it first begins to reflect upon the revealer as well as thing revealed. As natural as it is for the