THE

# ÆSTHETIC AND MISCELLANEOUS

# WORKS

OF

# FREDERICK VON SCHLEGEL:

COMPRISING

LETTERS ON CHRISTIAN ART

AN ESSAY ON GOTHIC ARCHITECTURE

REMARKS ON THE ROMANCE-POETRY OF THE MIDDLE AGES AND ON SHAKSPERE

ON THE LIMITS OF THE BEAUTIFUL

ON THE LANGUAGE AND WISDOM OF THE INDIANS.

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TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN

BY

E. J. MILLINGTON.

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# TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE.

THE æsthetic works of F. von Schlegel, which form a portion of the present volume, have long been known, by reputation at least, to all true lovers of art, although now for the first time translated into the English language.

His ideas and opinions on the true scope and intention of Christian art will, perhaps, be new to some readers, and must unquestionably afford matter of high interest to all. Never has the proper sphere of painting been more beautifully defined, or its lofty ideality more intelligibly and intellectually developed.

The treasures of art, concentrated in Paris during the period of Napoleon's triumphant rule, first suggested the idea and supplied the *matériel* of the beautiful letters, now presented to the English reader; still our author's descriptions of the paintings of the old masters there assembled, vivid and exquisitely charming as they are in themselves, are but the groundwork of a glorious superstructure; for, by the aid of those inspired paintings, he unfolds to our minds all the simplicity and purity of Christian art; its profound yet expressive symbolism and exquisite spiritual loveliness. He thus leads us through all the varied characteristics of the old masters, from the tragic wildness of Giotto, and the devout inspiration of Fra Angelico, to the wondrous allegories of Mantegna, and the daring and sublime conceptions of the heaven-taught Raphael.

M. Rio, in his "Poésie de l'Art Chretienne," especially notices this work of F. von Schlegel, as well as his observations on Mantegna's wonderful style.*

The characteristics of Leonardo Da Vinci, Correggio, and others of that school, are dwelt upon at some length: Schlegel styles them "musical painters," from the exquisite harmony of combination displayed in their colouring; he unravels the mysterious signification of many of Correggio's designs, defends those striking contrasts of light and shade, beauty and deformity, which have been censured as inimical to correct taste, and opposed to the received laws of art, and traces them all to a lofty and inspired source, the influence of which is more or less distinctly visible in all the works of the old masters, — inseparable indeed from that better period, when painting had not yet been diverted from its first and holiest office, and was still the handmaid of religion, devoted chiefly to the adornment of the sanctuary, the beautifying of devotion, and to the purposes of instruction in scriptural subjects.† It is to an intention of illustrating the constant opposition or antagonism of the principles of good and evil, that we are to attribute the glaring contrasts in design and

* See note to Letter I. page 7.

† "Picturæ ecclesiarum sunt quasi libri laicorum," is the observation of a writer of the twelfth century. See Comestor; Historia Scholastica. Subjects were sometimes arranged in cycles, — among these were, THE JOYS OF THE VIRGIN: 1. Annunciation; 2. The Visitation; 3. Nativity; 4. Adoration of the Kings; 5. Presentation in the Temple; 6. Christ found by his Mother in the Temple; 7. The Assumption and Coronation of the Virgin. Secondly, THE SORROWS OF THE VIRGIN: 1. The Prophecy of Simeon; 2. The Flight into Egypt; 3. Christ disputing with the Doctors in the Temple, — missed by his mother; 4. Christ betrayed; 5. The Crucifixion (the Virgin and St. John only present); 6. The deposition from the Cross; 7. The Ascension (the Virgin left on Earth). And, thirdly, THE PRINCIPAL EVENTS OF THE PASSION, as the seven hours of the Passion, viz.: 1. The Last Supper; 2. The Agony in the Garden; 3. Christ before Caiaphas; 4. Christ before Herod; 5. Christ crowned with Thorns; 6. Pilate washing his Hands; 7. The Crucifixion (the Centurion and others present). — *Note to Eastlake's Literature of the Fine Arts.*

colouring of Correggio's church pictures; those, for instance, of "La Notte," and "St. Jerome," called also "Il Giorno." A flood of heavenly light and beauty is poured out upon those characters or themes which symbolize the predominant influence of good; while gloom, hideousness, and deformity, seem, on the contrary, to warn us of the presence of what is evil. This antagonism appears to have been a ruling principle of religious belief from the very earliest times. We trace it in the higher systems of Pagan philosophy, where it can scarcely have been borrowed immediately from the inspired pages; and this fact is forcibly illustrated by Schlegel, in the Treatises on Indian Philosophy and Religion, with which the present volume concludes.

The same principle, under the form of Dualism, gleams forth in Pagan philosophy, and returns like the dim memory of a purer faith; a fitful ray, emanating from the original fountain of light and truth, and gradually obscured and polluted, as men wandered farther from the traditions of their first fathers, till, receiving a new impulse from the divine doctrines of Revelation, it was admitted and embraced as a high moral truth by the earliest converts to Christianity.

Schlegel touches also on the peculiarities of the Spanish schools of Murillo and Spagnoletti; — on the appropriate choice of subjects for painting, and the true principles on which a division of the art into separate branches should be founded; he deprecates the puerile distinctions between landscape, portrait, flower, and still-life painting, and contends that each separate style is perfect only in its true position and office, namely, when contributing to the significance and adornment of that highest order of religious painting, in which a severe grandeur of design and conception is united with the loftiest spiritual symbolism.

In the fourth and last letter we have observations on painting by various masters of the early German schools,

with a critical analysis of the peculiar excellencies and characteristic features of those schools generally.

In fact, so glowing and yet precise are all the descriptions of pictures contained in these letters, whether of those exhibited in the Louvre or elsewhere, that they alone would render the work highly valuable and interesting to the general reader. The pictures referred to have been carefully collated with the catalogues used by Schlegel, and the present locality of most of those which have been removed from the Louvre is also noted.

In his concluding remarks, Schlegel offers a few suggestions to young artists of the present day; and his observations will be valuable, not only to those who seek to restore a better and purer taste in art; but also to amateurs, who desire to form a correct estimation of the paintings of the old masters, and to comprehend their deep meaning and intention.

The "Letters on Gothic Architecture," which follow those on Painting, will perhaps, among the numerous valuable works now published in that truly interesting branch of art, excite less attention than the preceding; still they are valuable, on account of the descriptions given in them of several ancient Gothic churches in Germany and the Netherlands; and also as displaying Schlegel's enthusiastic veneration for an art, which indeed harmonised most entirely with the prevailing bias of his own mind and genius, as well as with his ideas of the spirituality, or rather, perhaps, I should say, the spiritual character and universal symbolism of Christian art, whether in architecture or painting.

Remarks on Mediæval Literature seem appropriately to succeed a dissertation on the painting and architecture of the middle ages. And our Author's acknowledged critical and literary taste gives double value to his observations on the best known writers of that period, both in northern and southern Europe.

He dwells with peculiar fondness on the works of Boccaccio and of Camoens. He claims for the former a degree of poetic merit, which has not usually been conceded to him, and I must acknowledge that, in my opinion at least, these claims are not quite satisfactorily supported. That Boccaccio's soul was deeply imbued with the poetry of feeling and imagination, no one probably will deny, but still this faculty is traced in his prose works far more vividly than in his poetical compositions. The "Filostrato," of which Schlegel first speaks, I have never read; but, judging from its character, it can afford little scope for that depth of feeling, that glowing intensity of imagination and passion, without which poetry is but a name. The "Teseide" may probably be the first example of the "Ottava Rima," but it certainly has little merit beyond the melody of the versification; and the shorter sonnets and idylls interspersed in the "Decamerone," and the "Ameto," scarcely afford a sufficient basis on which to rear the lofty superstructure of a poet's fame. Yet the first page of the "Fiammetta,"—that exquisite romance which Boccaccio dedicated to the memory of his first happy love for Maria of Naples, and its too brief duration,—stamps upon every mind the irresistible conviction that the writer was, in the truest sense of the word, a poet. None but a poet could have so transformed his nature, so comprehended and so pourtrayed the passionate earnestness of a woman's love; the heart-rending loneliness of her desertion and despair, the deceptive hopes, the wayward fears, which at length subside into a yet more fearful calm, — that chilling apathy, which breathes less of resignation than despair. In this work there is less of that revolting licence with which his gayer tales are stigmatised; and in spite of its questionable morality, it has more of the refinement and spirituality of true feeling. It may, indeed, be doubted whether Boccaccio was worthy to offer, or the Princess

Maria to receive, so noble a tribute of unchanging affection; still, whatever may be our opinion on this point, the work itself still remains an eternal monument of genius, if not of faithful love.

The story of "Florio and Biancafiore" is exquisitely related; full of simplicity and tenderness. A precisely similar romance is given in Ellis's "Metrical Romances," under the name of "Florice and Blaunchflour." Ellis, however, makes no allusion to Boccaccio's novel, but supposes the romance to be either of Spanish origin, or more probably translated into Spanish from some French metrical romance. I have in my possession a copy of Boccaccio's novel, printed in 1570, which differs in some trifling points at the conclusion of the tale, from the sketch of it given by Schlegel; the latter, however, assimilates more to Ellis's version.

Schlegel recapitulates the other works of Boccaccio; and, after some comments on the genius of Petrarch, Tasso, and various Italian poets, passes in review the Provençal MSS., then in the royal library at Paris, and draws attention to the exquisite musical beauty of the Castilian and Portuguese ballads, romances, and love-songs. Of Camoens, he speaks with all the enthusiasm that such a theme might well inspire. The gifted, the noble, the chivalrous, — and, alas! that we must add — the ill-fated and unhappy; his personal history might well kindle into enthusiasm a colder heart than Schlegel's: — his hopes, disappointed both in love and glory; his country's ingratitude, and still more her declining fame, do indeed invest the "Lusiad," that first, last strain of the Lusitanian muse, with undying glory and interest.

Schlegel's admiration of our own Shakspeare is no less warmly expressed than that of his brother, A. von Schlegel, in his "Lectures on Dramatic Literature." He insists, perhaps rather pertinaciously, on the authenticity of those old

plays, which our critics have almost universally rejected; but this is a question on which it is unnecessary here to enter.

The account of German paintings, exhibited at Rome in the year 1819, is interesting, because it appears to illustrate the first development of those better principles by which the modern schools of Germany have for some time past been guided; and probably much of the enthusiastic veneration for early Christian art, since displayed in that country, may owe its rise to the earnest and eloquent appeals contained in the preceding Letters on Christian Art. The present school seems certainly, whether with intention or unconsciously, to have followed his counsels, and we will hope that the final result may justify his most ardent aspirations.

The "Tale of Merlin," which, in Schlegel's collected works, is printed in the same volume with that of "Lother and Maller," has been so well rendered by Ellis, in the early Metrical Romances *, that it was considered unnecessary to repeat it here. Those familiar with mediæval romance will observe many little similarities of detail in the story of "Lother and Maller" with several of the same period; seeming to prove that the author was familiar with other romantic fictions of the day. The same remark will apply also to some of the tales of Boccaccio. I allude particularly to Maller's sudden disappearance at the close of the tale, which reminds us of a similar circumstance recorded in the life of Guy of Warwick. The poison prepared for King Orschier by the servant of Otto,—the false accusation to which Zormerin is subjected in consequence,—her condemnation, and sentence to be burnt alive,—the execution of which is prevented only by the sudden appearance of Lother, who proves her innocence by vanquishing the accuser,—strikingly resemble a passage in "Morte Arthur," where Guenever, thus

* Published in one of the late volumes of the "Standard Library."

accused and condemned, is rescued only by her gallant lover, Sir Lancelot. In Boccaccio's "Florio and Biancafiore," also, the latter, falsely condemned on a similar pretext, is bound to the stake, and owes her life to the prowess of the youthful Florio.

A treatise on the language and wisdom of the Indians, with which the volume terminates, will be read with deep interest by all who have given any attention to this branch of study. It is, however, but a mere outline of what Schlegel wished to effect; for, well convinced of the importance of Oriental traditions, both philosophical and religious, and of their bearing upon revealed truth, he had long desired to make them familiar to European readers, but was prevented by the difficulty of procuring correct types for the Indian and Persian characters. There is, indeed, a great want of distinctness in the type employed for the Persian characters in the volume before us; and it is therefore hoped that any inaccuracy in the Persian words (which in the translation are printed in English type), will be pardoned.

Nothing can be more elevating than the tendency of Schlegel's opinions on almost all points connected with philosophy, literature, or the arts. His remarks on Oriental Philosophy, Pantheism, Dualism, the migration of nations, and other important points, throw great light on historical researches and investigations; and harmonise completely with the opinions set forth in his "Lectures on the Philosophy of life," and on the "Philosophy of History."

In the literary Life of F. von Schlegel, prefixed to the translation of the latter work, the "Letters on Christian Art," here published, are mentioned in terms of the highest praise, and the subject of each letter sketched with a masterly hand. The analogy between the three arts, of sculpture, music, and painting, there referred to, is, however, only slightly noticed in these letters; but this new and fascinating

theory will be found more fully developed in the "Philosophy of Life," lecture xii. p. 261.; "On the Symbolical Nature and Constitution of Life with reference to Art and the Moral Relations of Man."

In the little treatise on the "Limits of the Beautiful," which in the present volume follows the highly interesting descriptions of "Schloss Karlstein," and the "St. Cecilia," (a grand altar-piece painted by Ludwig Schnorr,) Schlegel more fully carries out that principle of the union between nature and art,—the real and the ideal,—which is slightly touched upon in the "Letters on Christian Art." The subject is handled in this treatise with all the warmth and enthusiasm which such a theme would naturally excite in a mind like Schlegel's; and his arguments are enforced with masterly vigour and energy. Few, indeed, will read it without feeling that a new sense of beauty has dawned upon their hearts,—that their minds have been awakened to higher and more glorious ideas of art; while many of its costliest treasures, though not unprized before, will henceforth be judged by a new standard, and be invested with new interest, both for the intellect and the imagination.

Schlegel continues repeatedly to urge that the lofty intention of art can only be fully realised when the contrasting elements of soul and sense, the lofty spirituality of feeling and expression, and the more earthly attributes of human love and earthly beauty are kept in equipoise; in other words, that harmony and a carefully balanced proportion of nature and spirituality from the perfection of art. This is the thesis from which our author takes his departure; and is the point on which he so strongly insisted in his advice to modern German artists.

Schlegel clearly defines the limits that should be assigned to each division, and shows that those limits cannot be exceeded, without infringing on the province of other equally

important elements of artistic beauty. He points out the numerous errors and false paths, into which even men of genius have been beguiled, by confining themselves to one particular attribute alone, or in becoming mere copyists. To use our Author's own eloquent words, in reference to the destructive influence exerted upon art, by an exclusive imitation of mere material forms, whether in nature or sculptured marble: "As in the moral world there is but one virtue, so in art there is but one true path. Perfection consists in the union of the idea and vitality; every thing that breaks this union, — every deficiency on the one side or the other — is a fault; and if further developed, or adopted as a principle, will lead to mannerism. The idea, if suffered to predominate, produces works that are cold and inanimate, or, at least, in some measure, deserve the reproach of hardness. The attempt, on the other hand, merely to copy nature and life, may in cases produce strong effects, as many of the naturalisti have done; but, with the loss of ideality is banished all deep meaning, and even that internal character, which forms a most essential condition of art."* And, again, in attempting to fathom the mysterious source of genuine Christian beauty, how nobly does he contrast its spiritual and immortal loveliness with the character of earthliness stamped by pagan superstition upon all its creations, whether the theme chosen for representation be suggestive of unbounded enjoyment, or of deep and hopeless agony? It is a system of sensualism, as apart from spirituality, that pervades all existing monuments of classic art, and may be traced also in all known systems of mythology, whether emanating from the gloom and terror of the Scandinavian north, or the softer regions of luxurious Asia. The passage alluded to is in the fourth Letter on Christian Art. "In what, then, does this exalted (Christian) beauty consist? It

* Page 295.

is of the first importance to analyse the good and evil tendency of all theories of the art. . . The true object of the art should be, instead of resting in externals, to lead the mind upward into a more exalted region and a spiritual world; while false and mannered artists, content with the empty glitter of a pleasing imitation, soar no higher, nor ever seek to reach that lofty sphere, in which genuine beauty is pourtrayed according to certain defined ideas of natural characteristics. The path to which they limit themselves is the most vivid development of all sensible forms, — the fascination of grace, the highest natural bloom of youthful beauty, yet endowed rather with sensual attractions than the inspired loveliness of the soul. When heathen artists attempt to take a higher range, they wander into exaggerated forms of Titanic strength and severity, or melt into the solemn mournfulness of tragic beauty; and this last is the loftiest point of art they can ever reach, and in this they sometimes approach to immortality." *

Little remains to be said in conclusion. The fame of Schlegel's works is already too widely diffused to need comment from the translator's pen. His opinions are quoted by Kügler, Rio, Montalembert, and many others. Montalembert especially notices in eloquent terms the lofty faith and genuine devotional feeling by which his remarks are invariably distinguished; and although members of a different communion may find it impossible to concur in all his opinions, still his refined taste and elevated views will be echoed by the hearts of all who desire to see art elevated to its highest point of perfection; and in their reverential love for holy things, would have them as pre-eminent in external grace and beauty as they are rich in the hidden treasures of spirituality and devotion.

There is too much reason to regret, that in a translation it

* Pages 145, 146.

is impossible to do more than render with fidelity the sentiments and opinions of the Author. To clothe those sentiments in language as eloquent as his own, — to give to those opinions the stamp of earnestness and truth, which they bear in the original, would demand a mind of kindred genius, rather than the timid hand of an unpractised translator. Her present efforts have no other claims to indulgence than zeal and an anxiety to do justice to a theme so highly interesting and attractive; an earnest reverence for genius, and all the glorious associations connected with its development in early Christian art, and an ardent love of beauty, under every form and aspect, whether intellectual or material. These have supported her in a task which may, nevertheless, be considered as presumptuous as it has proved arduous.

The artistic portion of the work has been submitted to the revisal of Mr. Wornum, to whose critical judgment and discernment the translator feels highly indebted.

E. J. MILLINGTON.

Nov. 1848.

# AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

A TASTE for the imitative arts is not like that spontaneous poetical susceptibility, which nature herself has implanted in every mind. The traces and indications of poetical feeling may sometimes appear to be almost effaced; yet it is only because the fine spirit is dulled, and its perceptions blunted by the heavy external pressure of daily cares and the chilling, mechanical routine of actual life. Fancy, with her gushing feelings, her sympathies of memory and anticipation, is an intrinsic element of the human soul, ever ready to vibrate at the faintest touch, and start into responsive life: but, to discern the beauty of material forms, fancy and imagination alone will not suffice, they must have a peculiar bias and direction, and be blended and inter-penetrated with a high development of those sensual organs to which each of these arts peculiarly addresses itself. Nor does this taste depend upon the organisation alone; a person may be endowed with visual organs of the most perfect structure, nay, of more than ordinary acuteness, and yet no perception of beauty be associated therewith. The faculty by which the eye becomes endowed with a clear, inborn perception of the beautiful in painting and in material form, or the ear awakened to the spirit of sound and its delicate harmonious magic, lies rather in the mysterious depths of organisation and the special qualities of the soul in its un-

seen spiritual life, — in a combination and union of the senses and imagination, scarcely explicable even by the gifted individual himself.

We cannot, therefore, be surprised if learned inquirers, deep thinkers, and even poets of genius, are often deficient in the perception of beauty in the imitative arts, and perhaps, after a life-long occupation amid its themes and subjects, remain either insensible to its powers, or are for ever following contrary and opposing impulses. A taste for beauty in painting, no less than in music, must be innate; but when thus primarily existing in the soul, the feeling awakens and unfolds itself simultaneously with the sight of beauty; still continual contemplation of the art is required for a perfect comprehension and elucidation of the ideas connected with it.

Whoever wishes to introduce new opinions or peculiar ideas of Art, must first strive to initiate others into his own process of contemplation, and the full scope of his views; lest his meaning, obscured by general abstract terms and conventional phraseology, fail to address itself at once with truth and impressiveness to the understanding.

I date the starting point of my artistic contemplations from the antique collection at Dresden; and a few introductory words will suffice to explain its influence on my mind. In early youth, when about seventeen years of age, the writings of Plato, the Greek tragic poets, and Winkelman's intellectual works, formed the mental world in which I lived; and often, in my thoughtful and poetical solitude, I attempted, though in but a boyish manner, it is true, to call up before my soul the ideal forms and expression of ancient gods and heroes.

In the year 1789, my mind fraught with joyous aspirations, I arrived for the first time in a capital highly decorated with works of art, and was no less happy than surprised to see before me images of those ancient gods

and heroes, so long and ardently desired. Among them I wandered or mused for hours, particularly in that incomparable collection called the "Mengsischen Abgüsse,"* which were then placed, with little order or arrangement, in the garden of Bruhl; and where I frequently suffered myself to be locked in, in order to pursue my contemplations undisturbed. It was not, however, the magnificent beauty of the forms alone, although it satisfied and even surpassed my silently nursed anticipations, but rather the life and action of these Olympian statues, which filled me with astonishment, because, in my lonely dreamings, I had formed no such conceptions, nor even supposed their execution possible. These ineffaceable first impressions formed the firm enduring basis of my classical researches in succeeding years.

In the Dresden Gallery, at that early period, those paintings alone spoke to my heart and senses, which by grandeur of conception, and simple majesty of form, harmonised with the ideas of the antique, which then completely filled and influenced my mind. In a subsequent residence at Dresden, in the year 1798, after I had learned to understand and appreciate the romantic poetry of the Middle Ages, and the deep, spiritual love-sense with which it is imbued, I became alive to new and peculiar beauties in the paintings of the great masters. I felt the hidden charms of soul and expression, and that magic of colouring which we learn to comprehend by the teaching of love alone. The taste for painting, thus newly awakened in me, unfolded itself yet more fully during my last stay at Dresden, in the spring of the year 1802, immediately before my visit to Paris, where I had op-

* Plaster casts of antique statues made under the direction of Raphael Mengs, and now in the royal palace of Dresden, under the Picture Gallery. — *Translator.*

portunities of seeing the grand collection in the Louvre, which my frequently repeated visits, during the few succeeding years, enabled me to examine thoroughly and completely. Hence arises my continued recurrence, in the description of paintings at Paris, to the treasures of art at Dresden, which, with the principles of Gothic architecture imbibed at Cologne, mark the centrepoint of my copious studies of the Art; and both alike induced me to attempt a development of the long-lost, neglected, and now again reviving ideas of Christian Art and beauty, by the still existing examples of its perfection. I had, at a later period, contemplated annexing to this work reminiscences of a tour in Italy in the year 1819 (which, though short, was from circumstances rich in opportunity), and likewise a few lectures for artists, &c. upon the Idea of Christian Beauty; but my limits do not permit it, and they must be reserved for a subsequent volume of this collection*, which a careful revisal, and re-examination of some early principles, has already extended much beyond the limits I had originally prescribed to myself.

F. v. SCHLEGEL.

* This remark refers to the original German edition; the whole series of works here alluded to by the Author are inserted in a collected form in the present volume.

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ON

# THE INDIAN LANGUAGE, LITERATURE, AND PHILOSOPHY.

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## PREFACE.

THE anticipations of antiquaries in regard to Indian literature and monuments have become very highly raised, particularly since the prolific researches of Wilkins and Sir W. Jones disclosed so many important facts concerning the hitherto obscure history of the primitive world; while the appearance of the Sacontala gives all lovers of poetry just reason to hope that many similar and equally beautiful specimens of Asiatic genius, like that, the offspring of loveliness and love, will ere long be presented to us.

I venture, then, to look with confidence for the sympathy of the public in the subject of my present work, the fruit of studies which, since the year 1803, have been devoted to the Sanscrit language, and Indian literature and antiquity. For whatever information I possess, I am indebted to the friendship of Mr. Alexander Hamilton, a member of the British Society of Calcutta, and at present professor of the Persian and Indian dialects in London, who favoured me with personal instruction during the spring of 1803–1804. What further assistance I required in the prosecution of my labours, I obtained through the kindness of M. de Langlés, keeper of the Oriental MSS. of the Imperial Library, and whose numerous and valuable works have made his name familiar to the public. This gentleman gave me free access to all the treasures of the public library, besides placing his own at my disposal, which is equally valuable, on account of the richness of its contents, and the good taste and systematic order of its arrangement.

Besides the personal instructions referred to, I was greatly

assisted in acquiring the Indian language by a MS. in the Imperial Library, at Paris, (No. 183. of the printed Catalogue,) written by a Missionary, whose name is not mentioned. It contains, first, a short Grammar of the Sanscrit language, after the Mugdhabódha * of Vópadéva; secondly, the Amaracosha †, a practical vocabulary by Amarasinha, with a Latin interpretation; and, thirdly, a vocabulary of the Roots Kovikolpodruma, that is, the Poet-treasure-tree. All are very legibly written, the Indian in the Bengalese character, — and in some few instances, where the original cannot be rendered by any Latin words, the French and Portuguese languages have been employed. Judging from the vocabulary of roots, a copy of which Mr. Alexander Hamilton had the goodness to revise for me and point out the errors, there are very few mistakes or oversights, although in the first edition of so comprehensive a work it is scarcely possible to avoid them entirely.

It had been my intention to publish an Indian "Chrestomathie," in the original character and in Latin, which should contain, besides the elementary principles of the language, a selection of extracts from the most important Indian works, with a Latin translation, notes, and a glossary. Every thing was prepared for this publication; and besides the grammar and the two vocabularies, I had also copied in the original character and prepared for insertion, a more than sufficient number of such pieces. Besides the various extracts in the appendix, selected from the Bhágavatgita, Rámáyana, and Menù's Book of Laws, I also possess a copy of the first Act of the Sacontala of Calidás, transcribed in a very delicate Bengalese character, with notes, in which the Pracrit of the text is translated into Sanscrit, and a portion of the Hitopadesa, or amicable instruction ‡, a work which is of high importance to the beginner. The Paris edition, however, is not very correct, and often varies considerably from that employed by Wilkins for his translation. The edition printed

* Mugdhabódha, or the "Beauty of Knowledge," written by Goswami, named Vópadéva, and comprehending in 200 short pages all that the learner of the language can have occasion to know. — *Sir William Jones's Works*, vol. i.

† Coshas or dictionaries.

‡ Lately translated by the Sanscrit professor at Haylebury College, Hertford. — *Trans.*

at Calcutta I have not seen. I endeavoured, by carefully copying the finest MSS. both in the Dévanágarí * and Bengalese character, to attain such perfection as would enable me to furnish in writing very good models for the use of the type-cutter. But I found, notwithstanding, that the preparation of the types would require far more efficient assistance than it was in my power to procure. The sacrifice of personal predilections for the sake of any particular scientific object brings its reward with it; but it is vexatious to be compelled to pause midway in attaining the desired goal, from the want of extraneous assistance.

I must, therefore, be content in my present experiments to restrict myself to the furnishing of an additional proof of the fertility of Indian literature, and the rich hidden treasures which will reward our diligent study of it; to kindle in Germany a love for, or at the least a prepossession in favour of that study; and to lay a firm foundation, on which our structure may at some future period be raised with greater security and certainty.

The study of Indian literature requires to be embraced by such students and patrons as in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries suddenly kindled in Italy and Germany an ardent appreciation of the beauty of classical learning, and in so short a time invested it with such prevailing importance, that the form of all wisdom and science, and almost of the world itself, was changed and renovated by the influence of that re-awakened knowledge. I venture to predict that the Indian study, if embraced with equal energy, will prove no less grand and universal in its operation, and have no less influence on the sphere of European intelligence. And wherefore should it be otherwise? The period of the Medici, so illustrious in science and the arts, was warlike, restless, and even destructive to the country of Italy; yet the efforts of a few individuals accomplished so much because their zeal was genuine, and in the immeasurable grandeur of the public institutions, and the noble ambition of certain sove-

* The polished and elegant Hindú character for writing; the Indian characters are called Nágari, from Nagará a city, with the word Déva sometimes prefixed, because they are believed to have been taught by the Divinity himself, who prescribed the artificial order of them in a voice from heaven.—*Sir William Jones's Works*, vol. i.

reigns, met with that support and encouragement which are requisite for the success of such a study in its earliest commencement.

I shall here enumerate those German writers who have devoted their talents to the cultivation of Indian literature.

The first with whom I am acquainted is Heinrich Noth, who in the year 1664 studied the Sanscrit, in order that "he might be capable of disputing with the Brahmins." The Jesuit Hanxleden, who visited India in the year 1699, and for more than thirty years (his death happened in 1793) laboured in the Malabar mission, gained great renown in that department; he produced many works in prose and verse in the old Indian (the Gronthon), and the common language (the Malabar), besides compiling dictionaries and grammars. The vestiges of many valuable works of his are still to be found in Rome. Paulinus St. Bartholomew, well known by many learned writings on Indian antiquity, frequently refers to the works and manuscript remains of Hanxleden.

Captain Wilford, in the English service, but a German by birth, is well known by his treatises, published in the collection of the British Society of Calcutta.

I may also remark that my elder brother, Charles Augustus von Schlegel, who died at Madras on the 9th of September, 1789, having in the latter years of his life made many journeys into the country, and had much intercourse with the natives, had commenced a study of the country, the literature and genius of the Indian people, which was prematurely terminated by his early death.

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## BOOK I.

### CHAP. I. — ON THE INDIAN LANGUAGE GENERALLY.

THE old Indian language, *Sanscrit*, that is, the *formed* or perfect, and *Gronthon*, the dialect employed in writing and literature, has the greatest affinity with the Greek and

Latin, as well as the Persian and German languages. This resemblance or affinity does not exist only in the numerous roots, which it has in common with both those nations, but extends also to the grammar and internal structure; nor is such resemblance a casual circumstance easily accounted for by the intermixture of the languages; it is an essential element clearly indicating community of origin. It is further proved by comparison, that the Indian is the most ancient, and the source from whence others of later origin are derived.

The affinity of the Indian language with the Armenian, the Sclavonian, and the Celtic, is, on the contrary, very unimportant, in comparison with the striking uniformity of other languages supposed to be derived from that stock. Still that connexion, trifling as it is, must not be completely overlooked, since in classifying these languages we discover many points of resemblance in the construction of some of the grammatical forms which cannot be numbered among the casualties to which every language is exposed, but rather appertain to its internal structure and organisation.

Indian roots may be found in the Coptic, and in many dialects belonging to the Hebrew language; still these may have been merely the result of intermixture, and do not prove any original connexion. The grammars of that language and of the Basque are fundamentally different from the Indian.

There is no relationship between the Indian branch and the great undefined variety of the northern and southern Asiatic and the American languages. The grammatical construction of those dialects differs essentially from the Indian; and although a similarity of construction is apparent in some particular points, the roots are throughout so entirely different, that it seems impossible to refer both to the same source.

The great importance of the comparative study of language, in elucidating the historical origin and progress of nations, and their early migration and wanderings, will afford a rich subject for investigation in the sequel. It must be our care, in this first book, to establish the truth of the opinions just asserted, by the simple but lucid results of scrupulous investigation.

## CHAP. II. — ON THE AFFINITY OF THE ROOTS.

A FEW examples will be sufficient to prove distinctly that the general resemblance of languages cannot always be founded upon etymological rules, many of which were invented before the true source had been discovered; but should rather be sought in such simple matters of fact as will become apparent upon the most cursory investigation.

No change or transposition of the letters in the orthography can be allowed, but an entire similarity in the primitive words will alone be admitted as the test of their origin. Certainly, if we are to be guided by reference to history alone, "giorno" (day) ought necessarily to be derived from "dies" (Latin); and since the F, in Latin, so frequently becomes H, in Spanish, while P, in the Latin, is changed into F, in the German, and C not unfrequently becomes H, we may venture, by means of this analogy, to trace other circumstances, not perhaps so strikingly apparent, still, as has been already observed, the general or particular analogy ought to be confirmed by historical facts. Nothing must be invented according to pre-conceived theoretical principles; but the uniformity of the whole should be so great and striking that all minor differences may easily be overlooked.

I shall next mention a few Indian words which are identical with the German. *Shrityoti, er schreitet* [he strides], *vindoti, er findet* [he finds], *schliszyoti, er umschlieszet* [he embraces], *onto, das ende* [the end], *monuschyo, der mensch* [the man], *shoosa, shoostri, die schwester* [the sister], *rotho, das rad* [the wheel], *bhruvo, die brauen der augen* [the brown of the eye], *torsho, der durst* [thirst], *tandovon, der tanz* [the dance], *ondani, die enten* [the ducks], *noko, der nagel* [the nail], *sthiro, stier* [immoveable], *oshonon, das essen* [eating], &c. &c.

Other roots correspond rather with the form of the word as seen in the congenial dialect: *yuyon*, in English, *you; shoopno, der schlaf*, Icelandic, *sveffn* [sleep]; *lōkote* [he stands], in the old German, *lugen; upo, auf* [up], agrees with the lower German; so also, *vetsi, vetti, du weiszt, er weisz* [thou knowest, he knows], allied also with the Latin *videt*, though in a somewhat different signification. The lower German is generally of importance in regard to the etymo-

logy, the old form being often exactly retained. *Roksho* and *rakshoso* may be the ancient *recke* [giant].

I have here mentioned only a few peculiar German roots, in order by those examples to meet any objections that may be raised; not such roots as the Latin language has, in common with other derived branches; as *nasa, die nase*, the nose; *mishroti, er mischt*, he mixes; *namo, der nahme*, the name; or particularly with the Persian, as *tvari, die thur* [the door], P. *dur; bondhon, das band*, [the band], P. *bund; ghormo* [warm], P. *gurm*; *gauh, die kuh* [the cow], P. *gâo*. I omit the epithets of *vater*, father; *mutter*, mother; *bruder*, brother; and *tochter*, daughter; in the Indian *pita, mata, bhrata, duhita*, of which I remark only that they all take an *r* in the accusative, and a few other cases, *pitoron*, the father, &c. &c. Other remarkable facts connected with these common words will be noticed hereafter.

I shall select from the Greek language such examples only as are either simple fundamental roots or parts, or will serve to demonstrate the resemblance between the two languages. *Osmi, osi, osti* [I am, thou art, he is], fully agrees with the Greek *esmi, essi, esti*, if in the first instance we take Gr. *eimi* and *eis* for the older form. The *o* is not emphatic; it is the short vowel, and, unless it be an initial letter, is never even written. In the grammatical system it is expressed by a short *a:* but in the existing language indicated by a short *o*, and in some few words pronounced as *e* short. One single example may suffice to produce the resemblance. *Dodami, dodasi, dodati* [I go, thou goest, he goes] exactly resembling Gr. *didōmi*, &c. The long *a* rather resembles that in the Latin das, dat. *Ma* is an Indian negation, answering to the Greek *mē*. The short vowel *o* is prefixed to words in the same signification as the Gr. *a*, privativum. *Dur* is prefixed in the same intention as the Greek *dus;* in the Persian *dush*, as *dushmŭn* [the evil-minded, the fiend], in the Indian *durmonoh*.

The Indian language resembles the Greek, Latin, and German, not only in its power of varying the original meaning of the verbs by particles prefixed; but in the particles employed with that intention, nearly all of which may be found again in the languages referred to. The following words are common both to the Greek and the Indian: *son*, sufficiently resembling the Greek *sum; poti* is

*poti*, the old Gr. for *pros; onu* signifies after, as Gr. *ana*. *Pro* is found with the same meaning both in Latin and Greek;— *ā* has the signification of the Latin *ad*, and the German *an:* the negative particle *no* agrees with the Latin and German; *upo* is the German *auf* [up], in the lower German dialect; *ut*, the German *aus* [out], in the same.

All those who have employed themselves in the study of languages must be aware of the numerous coincidences to be traced even in the most simple and fundamental parts of speech. I therefore pass over without hesitation many words in which the affinity is marked by a similarity in the primitive roots alone, without any other circumstance worthy of notice; as *osthi*, Gr. *osteŏn* [bone]; *prothomo*, Gr. *prōtŏs* [the first]; *etoron*, Gr. *hĕtĕrŏn* [another, a second]; *udokon* [water], Gr. *hudōr; druh* and *drumoh* [the tree], Gr. *drus; labho* [the taking, receiving], *lobhote* [he takes], synonymous with Gr. *labō*, *lambanō; piyote* [he drinks], Gr. *piēi; sevyote* [he honours, and is honoured], Gr. *sebein*, &c.; *masoh* [the month], Gr. *meis; chonro* [the moon], called also *chondromah*, where the last syllable is indeed the root, derived from *masoh*, and also from the Persian *mâh;* as also the German *mond* [moon], in lower German, *mahn*.

From the Latin language, in which the number of Indian roots is perhaps greater than in either of the others, I shall cite but a few examples, those only in which the resemblance is most singular. *Vohoti*, L. *vehit; vomoti*, L. *vomit; vortute*, L. *vertitur; svonoh*, L. *sonus; nidhih*, L. *nidus; sorpoh*, L. *serpens; navyon*, L. *navis; danon*, L. *donum; dinon*, L. *dies* [the day]; *vidhova*, L. *vidua; podon*, L. *pes, pedis; asyon*, L. *os* [face]; *yauvonoh*, L. *juvenis; modhyoh*, L. *medius; yugon*, L. *jugum*, from *yunkte*, L. *jungit*, and *jungitur*, a widely extended root, which in its derived signification holds an important place in the philosophical terminology of the Indians. Further, I shall mention *rosoh* [the juice], L. *ros; viroh*, L. *vir* [the hero]; *dontah*, L. *dentes*, Persian *dundan* [the teeth]; *soroh*, L. *series; keshoh* [the hair], found again in *Cæsa-ries*, whence *Cæsar*, as well as *crinitus*, may be more correctly derived, than from the ordinary root; *ognih* [the fire], L. *ignis; potih* [the possessor, or something possessing, and therefore mighty], seems to be as much employed in the formation of compound words as the Latin *potens*. I pass over many words, the derivation of which may be traced by the sound

alone; as *shushvoti*, L. *sugit; mormoroh*, L. *murmur; tumuloh*, L. *tumultus;* as well as numerous others, the affinity of which would not probably appear doubtful if carefully investigated, but which are not so immediately striking as the preceding.

Indian words, found also in the Persian language, are, in conformity with the peculiar character of that language, most arbitrarily abbreviated, and very rarely retained without mutilation, as *rōjo* [brilliancy, shining], into P. *roshŭn.* The termination is frequently retrenched, and dissyllables become throughout monosyllables; as in *apoh* [water], P. *âb; ospoh* [the horse], P. *asp; bhishmoh*, or *bhimoh* [terror], P. *beem; shiroh* [the head], P. *sir; shakhoh* [a branch], P. *shâkh; kamoh* [desire], P. *kam.* Frequently even important syllables are curtailed, as, P. *pâ* [the foot], from *podo*, or *pado;* P. *pur* [full], from *purnon;* P. *tun* [the body], from *tonūh*, or *tonuh;* P. *deh* [ten], from *doshoh;* P. *seeah* [black], from *shyamoh.* The monosyllable P. *pâk* [pure], comes from the trisyllable *pavokoh* [the purifier], also an epithet of fire. We should hardly recognise *mitroh* [the friend], also an epithet of the sun, in P. *mur*, unless the Mythras of the ancients, and the general analogy in many other similar cases, came to our assistance. If we compare other examples, it may yet further lead us to the conclusion, that from P. *dŭm* [the breath], comes the Indian *atmoh* [the spirit], &c., which is still preserved in Gr. *atmē* and German *athem* [breath]. It will greatly facilitate our inquiries into Persian derivation if we consider the new and frequently abbreviated form which the ancient Sanscrit takes in the Pracrit and Hindostanee dialect.

The Persian language itself presents a striking example of the result of so strong a propensity to abbreviations, extending even to the roots and primitive syllables. It approaches the onomatopoëtic*, and usually leads the genius of the language back to that point. Among all the languages which stand in an equal degree of affinity to the Indian, none clings so fondly to the derivation by sound, or has so many words sportively playing as it were with sound, as the Persian.

* Onomatopoëtic, from the Greek word onomatopoieiō, to invent words, more especially words *imitative* of the sense. Donnegan's Lexicon. Words imitative of the sense by the sound, as "crash," "crack," "hist," "hush," the booming of cannon, &c.—*Trans.*

The Indian words in the Latin, Greek, and German languages suffer far less change than the Persian. Yet here also a close comparison frequently proves the Indian form to be the oldest. The German *Roth* [red], is easily derived from *Rōktoh*, or *rohitoh*; G. *schleim* [slime], from *schleshmo*; and G. *viel* [much], from *vohulon*; since in words, as well as in money, the stamp of the coinage may become obliterated by constant use and circulation, although it cannot easily be altered.

The distinct forms of the derived languages often appear to meet in the Indian words, as in their common root. From *putroh* (to which the Celtic *potr* is most clearly allied), L. *puer* may as easily be derived as P. *pisŭr*; *schweisz* [sweat], in the lower German dialect, may as easily be derived from *svedoh* as the Latin *sudor*; in *noroh*, the Persian *nur*, and the Greek *an¯r*, appear to meet; in *trasoh* [trembling and fear], the Greek *treō*, the Latin *tremo*, and the Persian *turseedăn*; *samudron* [the sea], unites the German *meer* [sea], and the Greek *hudōr* [water]. The German *Knie* [knee], would scarcely seem to be derived from *janu*, unless the Gr. *gonu* and L. *genu* marked the transition.

Still more importance may perhaps be attached to the circumstance, that some few words, which cannot be traced back to any root in the modern language, are easily derived from the Indian, and their compound form explained by reference to that language. *Prandium*, for example, may unquestionably be derived from the Indian *prahnoh* [the forenoon], which is compounded of the particle *pro* and *ohoh* [the day], in the fifth and sixth case *ohnoh*; *monile* in the same manner is derived from *moni* [diamond]; *sponte*, in the ablative, agrees in signification with *svante*, but *svanton* is compounded of the particle *svo* and *oton*, "*Quod finem suum in se habet.*"

The remarkable agreement frequently seen, even in a certain declension, is very striking. *Ayonton*, for example, and L. *euntem*, from *yati* [he goes], also *eti* [it]; or as it appears in the compound words, as *tvarsthito* [the doorkeeper], *ontortvari* [the inner door].

It seems well worthy of notice, that many names of heathen divinities, both Latin and Greek, which cannot be referred to any root in their own language, may be traced back to an Indian origin; and although too much importance has been

attached to such general similarities, their existence is at least worth mentioning. This point, however, seems to belong to a different sphere of inquiry, and must be dismissed with cursory notice, as my observations are now confined to such striking points as are too palpably evident to require much research or comparison. It is a singular fact, that the name of the city of Rome even is of Indian extraction. The Greek *Rōmē*, it is true, presents itself; but it is an almost isolated example, and little doubt can be entertained as to the language to which the word originally belonged, when we reflect how widely the root *romo*, *romoti*, whence come *roti*, *ramo*, &c. &c., is diffused in the Indian language. These words all imply joy in the abstract, and especially the rejoicing of a conqueror or hero, and in the old poem "Rāma," are frequently repeated in beautiful accordance with, and allusion to, the name of the hero celebrated.

The same Indian word frequently assimilates in one inversion with one of the connected languages, and in another inversion with a different language. *Chindonti*, for example, is almost exactly the same as L. *scindunt;* but the infinitive *chettun* is more like the German *scheiden;* *tonu* resembles L. *tenuis* rather than G. *dünn* [thin, or rather transparent]; the verb *tonōti* (the meaning of which comprises both *tonu* and *dünn*), agrees better with the German *dehnte* [to extend], than with the Latin *extendit*. Separated members of both derived languages are found united in the Indian, as in their general root; *ut*, used for *aus* [out], in the lower German dialect has been already mentioned; thence come the regularly formed comparative *uttoron*, the German *äuszern* [outer], the regular superlative *uttomon*, the Latin *ultimum*, but in signification resembling *summum* [extreme]. All the Latin, Persian, and German of the family of *mors*, *mortalis*, *mŭrd*, *moordŭn*, *morden*, *mord*, [murder], find their general regular root in the Indian *mri*, whence come *mrityuh*, *morttyah*, *moronon*, &c. The same observation applies to another family of words, *stehen* and *stand* [to stand], widely extended throughout each of those four languages, the Latin, Greek, Persian, and German; *tisthoti*, *er steht* [he stands], agrees most completely with the Greek; *sthanon* [the place], with the Persian *sitân;* *sthiro* [immoveable] the German *stier;* has already been mentioned; *janami*, L. *gigno*,

Gr. *gennaō*, is also a very fertile root. They are, however, too numerous to be all mentioned.

I shall select a few of the most remarkable words signifying mind, thought, science, as affording particularly clear evidence of their common Indian descent. *Monoh monoson*, in the Latin *mens*, the verb *monyote* [he thinks] is found in the German *meinet*. *Motih* is the Greek *mētis*. Another form, closely connected with this and with the German *muth* [spirit, courage], is found in *amōdoh* [pleasure], *anmuth;* the *a* in the Indian *amōdo* (which probably is also allied with the Persian *omêd* [hope]) is used merely as a prefix; from the same root we shall then have *unmadoh; un* being the regular form adopted for the sake of euphony, instead of *ut; unmadoh* [desperate, furious], literally the same as *exmens*, may have been contracted into the English *mad*. *Atmoh*, which signifies *ipse* and *spiritus*, has already been noticed in the Greek and German, *atmē* and *athem* [breath]. So likewise the root *vedo*, whence comes *vetti*, the German *wissen* [to know]. The Latin *video* is somewhat different in signification, but more closely resembling the Indian in form. The prolific root *ina*, signifying knowledge, science, and understanding, gives us the Persian *shuneedun*, *shunoodŭn*, *shinakhtŭn*. The root *dhi* signifies deep thought and reflection, whence comes *dhīyote*, in the German *dichtet* [to compose], which in its original signification expresses to meditate, or also to write poetry; *dhyayo*, *dhyayoti*, &c., are allied with the German *dachte* [he thinks]. The Latin *Vox* may have been derived from *vocho*, or from *vakyon;* both forms are in use. The root *re* signifies speech or language, *rede* in German. *Ganon* becomes in Latin *cantus*, from the root *gi*, *giyote* [he sings]; in the Persian *khŏndan* [to sing and read].

The Indian pronouns generally coincide with the Latin. Certainly *tvon* [thou] is common to all the derived languages; *vhon* [I] is, on the contrary, traced only in the Celtic *on;* the dative *moya* [to me] is nearest to the Greek *moi;* the *me*, which is used instead of *man* [me], and also in the fourth and sixth cases, is common to both Greek and Latin; but the root *svo* (whence L. *suus*, *-a*, *-um* [his] are derived, and is often prefixed as a particle in order to express self-reliance, or self-confidence, has in its declension cases which are precisely similar to the Latin, as *svon*, L. *suum*,

*svan*, L. *suam*, &c. &c. The pronoun *eschoh, eschah, etot* is, indeed, the common root of *is, ea, id* and *iste, ista, istud*, as in the derived cases of the two first families it generally takes a *t;* to the same root belongs *iti*, which sometimes corresponds with *id*, sometimes with *ita*. *Koh* (in construction generally *kos*) *ka, kon* corresponds with L. *qui, quæ, quod*, even in a few of the cases derived from them, as *kan*, L. *quam*, the interrogative *kim* and L. *quid:* the Persian *keh* is of the same family. The already-mentioned *yūyon*, on the contrary, corresponds with the German, in the English form *you;* the pronoun *soh* belongs to the Hebrew, Arabic, and also to the early German; the accusative *ton* is exactly the Greek *ton*, German *den;* the genitive *tosyo* the German *dessen;* the plural *te* the German *die; tot*, in which the short vowel may be an *a* as well as an *o*, corresponds with the German *das*, lower German *dat*. As *oyom*, in most of the cases, takes an *i*, which is often regularly changed into *y*, the Persian *een*, with which *jener* agrees, may be derived from it. Many others might also be cited, but to do so would lead us too deep into etymological inquiries.

The numerals also have the same affinity. *Eins, fünf, hundert*, and *tausend*, — 1, 5, 100, 1000, — *eko, poncho, shoto, sohosro*, — agree with the Persian *ek, punj, sŭd, hŭzar*. With the exception of the first, *chotur*, [four], in the Sclavonian *chetyr*, they are sufficiently similar to our own language, even to the numeral adjectives derived from them; *tvītiyoh, trītiyoh*, correspond most distinctly with the German *der zweite* [the second], and *der dritte* [the third]; *soptomoh* [seven], (the aspirated *h* at the end is frequently changed in the construction into *s*, and might thus form *soptomos*), *soptoma, soptomon*, most completely coincide with the Latin *septimus, septima, septimum;* so also *duadosho*, L. *duodecim*.

I have hitherto alluded only to single instances in which the agreement of the separate words is immediately apparent. Should we pursue our investigations further to the relationship of the roots themselves, we shall find that, although requiring to be more strictly analysed, the connexion is nevertheless sufficiently certain; as, for example, *moho* and *maho* may be traced in L. *magnus*, G. *mächtig* [mighty], P. *meh;* and *volo, valo*, which signifies strength, are seen in

L. *validus; tomo* [dark] in G. *dämmern; lōhitoh* [red and burning] agrees with the German *lohe* [fire, ardour]; *chestote* [he seeks, desires] with *quæsitus* and P. *khwaheedŭn.* Many others may be derived from the different declensions of a single root, as from *goccho, goto, gomo, gamino;* G. *gehen,* E. *going;* G. *kommen;* L. *caminus;* but these investigations would swell our Treatise into a comparative vocabulary, and render it necessary to investigate a great portion of each of the languages named.

I have, for the same reason, omitted to notice many similar examples in which, although the meaning is slightly altered, the word itself remains unchanged, as *vījon* [the seed], L. *vis; guno* [attribute, character, in a different kind and manner], P. *goon* [the colour]. How can it be doubted that G. *morden* [murder], and P. *murdan* are the same word, although the first has an active and the second a passive signification? P. *deo* is unquestionably *devo,* in the Latin *divus* and *deus;* although P. *déo* is always used in reference to evil, and *devo* is applied only to good spirits. In *modhuroh,* in construction *modhuros, modhura, modhuron,* we cannot fail to recognize L. *maturus-a-um,* although the Indian word signifies sweet; the substantive *modhu* [honey] is the German *meth* [mead]. So *lōkoh* [the world, space], L. *locus; vesthitoh* [clothed], L. *vestitus; mordjharo* [the cat], the German *marder* [martin]. Names of animals often refer to very distant branches, as L. *vulpis* and G. *wolf* [wolf]; we should scarcely think of associating P. *mūrgh* [the bird] with *mrigo,* wild animals generally, and especially the deer, except that the Indian root also indicates the chace or a swift flight and pursuit. *Topo* and *tapo* are, in Indian writings, so generally employed in the sense of penitence, that their original signification, heat, is almost forgotten, although it is preserved in the Indian root, and even in the derived form *tapoyittun,* L. *calefacere,* in the Greek *thalpein.* Very different words and meanings are often associated in this manner, and may be most easily traced, if we know the intermediate links, and consider the connected languages in their regular combination. Thus the Persian *boo* [fragrancy], especially the breath of flowers, must, judging from P. *bostan* [the garden], have been derived from the Indian *pushpo* [flower], with which the German *busch* also claims

affinity; not to particularise many other instances which might suggest the general mode and progress of such transformations, and the laws by which similar changes in the signification of words are usually effected.

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## CHAP. III. — ON THE GRAMMATICAL STRUCTURE.

ALTHOUGH the proofs adduced in the preceding chapter of the affinity between the languages are striking, and in many instances may be considered well founded, still a question may arise as to whether they necessarily establish the proposition that the Indian is the most ancient, and, consequently, the common root of all? Might not that language also have arisen out of the intermixture of the others, and thus have become stamped with the same marks of similarity?

Not to dwell upon many facts already adduced which seem clearly to contradict such a supposition, I shall cite one further proof in evidence which completely decides the question, and establishes the presumed antiquity of the Indian language, on a basis of the most unquestionable certainty. The theory which would trace the Greek roots existing in the Indian language to the influence of the Seleucidæ in Bactria is scarcely more happy than that hypothesis which would attribute the formation of the Egyptian pyramids to some natural process of crystallisation.

There is, however, one single point, the investigation of which ought to decide every doubt, and elucidate every difficulty; the structure or comparative grammar of the language furnishes as certain a key to their general analogy, as the study of comparative anatomy has done to the loftiest branch of natural science.

The Persian language must first be separated from the general circle, since the intercourse which so long subsisted between that people and the Arabians led to the adoption among the former of the personal *suffixa*, and their grammar has in consequence far less affinity with the Indian than that of the Germans even, to say nothing of the Latin and Greek. Still, if all these various points of resemblance are considered

together, they will not be without a certain degree of importance.

There is little or nothing to be said of the declensions: the comparative P. *tur* must here be considered analogous to the Greek and Indian *taro*, and the diminutive is formed through *k*, as in the German and Indian. *Manovokoh*, for example, from *manovoh* [the man]; P. *duktŭrŭck*, G. *das Töchterchen* [the little daughter]. The conjugation of the verbs is far more important. The sign of the first person is *m*, which is lost in the Latin, but in Indian and Greek distinctly pronounced *mi*; *i* only remains of the *si* in the second person in the Indian and Greek languages; the sign of the third person is *t* or *d*, plural *nd*, as in Latin and German; in the Greek the ancient form is fully preserved, *ti* and *nti*. The Persian participle present and active in *ndeh* resembles the German in *nd*, formerly *nde*; the participle preterite and passive in *deh*, with a vowel preceding it, agrees with the Latin in *tus*, *a*, *um*, and with the old German form in the Teutonic; the same may be remarked of the Indian verbalibus, as *kritoh*.

I must not omit to mention that the Persian terminations *kar*, *war*, *dar*, which, in composition with adjectives, signify either one who does, or performs, any thing in a certain manner, or any object possessed, or constructed on a fixed model, correspond with the Indian *karo* and *koro*, *voro* and *dhoro*, in the same manner as the Persian termination *man* does with the Indian particle *mano*. The negative Persian particles *neh*, *ny*, and *ma*, are the Indian *no*, *ni*, and *ma*; the Persian particle *bé*, which is prefixed in a privative signification, is the same as the Indian *vi*; besides these, P. *andŭr*, and *anderoon* [within], like the Indian *ontor* and *ontoron*, and the Persian pronoun *keh*, already mentioned, in the Indian *koh*.

The Persian auxiliary verb *ăst*, Indian *osti*, [is]; P. *bood* [been], from *bhovoti* [he is], in the Pracrit *bhōdi*, in the preterite of the Sanscrit *obhut*; P. *kŭrdan*, G. *thun*, [to do], Indian *korttun*, are common in the Persian as well as in the modern Indian dialect; a few inflections of the Indian root *kri*, as *kriyan*, *kryote*, connect themselves rather with the Latin *creare*.

It is greatly to be desired that some individual, supplied

with all the necessary means for pursuing such investigations, would commence an inquiry into the first origin of the Persian language, discover what changes it may have undergone, and whether its affinity with the Greek and Indian was at any time greater than it is at present. The information thus obtained would be far more conclusive and satisfactory than any collection, however numerous, of according roots. It is, indeed, much to be regretted that the study of this beautiful language is not more popular in Germany; there is scarcely any, not even excepting the Greek, which is more rich in all the requirements of poetry*; besides which, the affinity between the Persian and German is so great, that we may not unreasonably hope to discover many facts and circumstances that may throw new light on the obscurer portions of the German history. The study of the Persian language should, however, be combined with that of the Sclavonian. A comparison between them, and examination into their chief points of resemblance or dissimilarity, will probably throw light on many unexplained circumstances recorded by ancient writers concerning the wars of the Persians and Scythians.

Besides those points in which the German grammar resembles the Persian, there are others marked by a more peculiar affinity with the Greek and Indian. *N* is the sign of the accusative both in the German and Indian, and *s* of the genitive. The termination *tvon* in the Indian forms a substantive expressive of creative power, answering to the German termination *thum*. The conjugation of the verbs is formed in part by the alteration of the vowel, as in most other languages which adopt the old grammatical construction. The formation of the imperfect, in one branch of the German verbs by the alteration of the vowel, is quite in agreement with other languages; in another branch, the imperfect is formed by the introduction of a *t;* this, like the *b* in the Latin imperfect, is, indeed, a distinctive peculiarity. The principle, however is the same, viz. that the variations of

* The Parisian library is not only very rich in Persian MSS., but possesses, in Monsieur Chézy, a man of great learning, who combines a perfect knowledge of the language generally, with a peculiarly fine and discriminating sense of the individual beauties and difficulties of the poetical structure and diction.

meaning in reference to time and other circumstances are not produced by particles annexed to distinct words, but by modifications of the root.

If we examine the grammar of the old dialects, considering the Gothic and Anglo-Saxon as examples of the German; and the Icelandic of the Sclavonian branch of our language,—we shall not only find a perfect with an augmentative, as in the Greek and Indian, but a dual, and also an exact definition of gender, and relation of participle, and declension, which are now lost; as well as many inflections, which are already somewhat modified, and less easy of recognition. The third persons singular and plural of the verb, for example, are in complete and perfect agreement. In short, the study of these old monuments of the German language will undeniably establish the fact, that their grammatical structure was originally the same as that of the Latin and Greek.

Many vestiges of the old form of speech are still to be found in the Teutonic languages, more perhaps in the proper German, than in either the English or Scandinavian; but although the general principles of modern grammar, conjugation by auxiliary verbs, and declension by prepositions, appear to govern all, this circumstance must not be suffered to lead us into error, the same modification having been undergone by every romantic language formed upon the basis of the Latin, and also by the Hindostanee dialect now spoken, which adheres as closely to the Sanscrit as the Italian does to the Latin. It is unnecessary to seek an explanation of this universal similarity in any extraneous influence. The artistic construction of the language becomes obliterated and worn off by common daily use, especially during a long period of rudeness and barbarity; and is at length completely lost sight of, either disappearing by slow degrees, or in some instances effaced, as it were, in a moment; a grammar, constructed by the aid of auxiliaries and prepositions, being in fact the shortest and most convenient, presenting an easy abridgment adapted for general use. It might almost be assumed as a general rule, that every language becomes the more easy of acquirement, in proportion as the structure is simolified and contracted into an abbreviated form.

The Indian grammar harmonizes so completely with the Greek and Latin, that it appears to be scarcely less closely connected with those languages than they themselves are with each other. The similarity of principle is a most decisive point; every degree of modification or comparison being expressed, not by the addition of separate words, whether particles or auxiliaries, but by inflexions, throughout which the peculiar form of the root is distinctly preserved. The future is formed, as in the Greek, by *s*; *korōmi* [I do], *korishyami* [I will do]; the imperfect by a short vowel prefixed, and the termination *on*; *bhovami* [I am], *obhovon* [I was]. The striking resemblance between the Indian declensions of the gender of adjectives and the Latin, that of the comparative, and the personal terminations of the verbs with the Greek, and the perfect tense marked by the affix augmentative, has been already noticed. It agrees with the Greek also in the formation of the first person of that tense, which is not terminated by *mi* or *on*, as in the other tenses, nor by *t* or *ti*, in the third person; but both persons terminate with a vowel. *Chokaro* [I have, and he has done]; *vobhuvo* [I have been, and he has been]. So decided an agreement in the most delicate peculiarities of structure must strike all who have studied the general formation of language as something more than a merely remarkable coincidence. The termination of the third person of the imperative is *otu*, in the plural *ontu*; the termination of the first participle in the masculine gender, *on*. It would, however, be superfluous to multiply examples, so many having been already found, whose striking similarity must enable us to form a decisive conclusion.

The Latin infinitive, with its termination in *re*, presents a remarkable deviation; this of course is a special peculiarity of the Latin, which thus deviates from other languages of the same family, in the formation of one of the most important parts of speech. Yet even here we discover a certain bond of similarity and point of union in the Indian infinitive ending in *tun*, which is as often and even more frequently employed in the signification of the supine, which it also resembles in form, than in the appropriate sense of the infinitive.

The declension of the fifth case, in *at*, corresponds with

the Latin ablative in *ate;* the seventh case of the plural in *eshu, ishu,* &c., with the Greek *essi,* and *oisi;* the fourth and fifth cases in *bhyoh,* which in construction often becomes *bhyos,* with the long vowel preceding, resemble the Latin dative and ablative in *bus.* The singular of the Indian dative in *ayo,* may be compared with the old Latin in *aï;* the termination of the dual, in *an* with the Greek, *ō.* The Indian declension agrees with the language above named in many peculiarities, and separate modifications of the fundamental rules; the neuter gender, for example, is universally the same, in the accusative as in the nominative; in the dual, many cases which in other numbers are distinct, have one and the same form.

I shall not here repeat what has been previously said of these points of agreement, and I must also pass over much which might be of importance in reference to others. Notwithstanding the harmony of grand essential points, there is, of course, considerable variety in the details, and many casual differences. The chief distinction, however, consists in this. The Indian grammar, though subject to the same laws of construction as the Greek and Latin, is, notwithstanding, more truly simple and artistic than either. The Greek and Latin languages are declined; that is, the varied proportion and value of the substantive is shown by inflection of the root, not by annexing or prefixing certain particles, as is generally the case with modern languages; still they are not sufficiently perfect in themselves to dispense with the employment of prepositions. In the Indian declensions prepositions are never required; and the differences indicated by *cum, ex, in,* which are so frequently used with the Latin ablative, are expressed in the Indian language by an appropriate case. I will not presume to assert that the Indian grammar has *no* irregular verbs; but certainly their irregularities in number and proportion are as nothing compared with those of the Greek and Latin. The conjugation of verbs is in itself far more regular. The imperative has a first person, and is thus in conformity with the series of regular and perfect languages; the second person of the imperative is less abbreviated and mutilated than is invariably found to be the case in the Persian, and very frequently in other languages. The manner in which a

simple verb becomes a frequentative or desiderative, or is formed into one signifying to cause an action, or to operate by the means of another, is generally uniform, and equally applicable to all primitive roots. The great number of words derived from the infinitive of the verb form a perfect series; nearly all the Indian adjectives are derived from verbs (*verbalia*). Of all existing languages there is none so perfect in itself, or in which the internal connexion of the roots may be so clearly traced as in the Indian.

It would, perhaps, be too much to assert without reservation that the Greek and Latin languages hold the same position in regard to the Indian as the Italian does to the Latin, although it is undeniably true that a certain irregularity of form, and the use of prepositions in those languages, already presage the transition to modern grammatical construction; and the regular simplicity of the Indian language in parallel cases is an incontrovertible evidence of greater antiquity. The following observation is also of importance. There is at least an appearance of probability that in the Greek, the annexed syllables, now blended inseparably with the primitive word, were originally distinct particles and auxiliaries; but this hypothesis cannot be carried out without the assistance of an etymological skill and subtlety which must be unhesitatingly rejected in every scientific investigation or historical contemplation of the origin of language; even then, indeed, the theory could hardly be maintained. Not the slightest appearance of any such amalgamation can be traced in the Indian language; it must be allowed that its structure is highly organised, formed by inflection, or the change and transposition of its primary radical sounds, carried through every ramification of meaning and expression, and not by the merely mechanical process of annexing words or particles to the same lifeless and unproductive root. The Indian grammar offers the best example of perfect simplicity, combined with the richest artistic construction. It is necessary, however, to pre-suppose one property of the mind, in order to explain, in a significant and intelligible manner, the origin of that language; a peculiarly fine feeling of the separate value and appropriate meaning, if I may thus speak, of the radical words or syllables; a perception of the whole activity and influence of which we can hardly be fully

sensible, the ear being now dulled and confused by a multiplicity of various impressions, and the original stamp of each word being obliterated by long use. Still it cannot be doubted that it once acted powerfully on the minds of men, as without its influence no language could have been framed, or at least none like the Indian.

This fine perception of the value of sounds and syllables would produce a system of writing almost simultaneously with the spoken language; not mere hieroglyphic paintings, images copied from the external forms of nature, but a system in which the intrinsic character of the letters, with the sound of which the ear was already familiar, might be indicated or presented to the mind by certain arbitrary signs or visible outlines.

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## CHAP. IV. — ON THE DIVISION OF LANGUAGES INTO TWO PRINCIPAL BRANCHES, FOUNDED ON ITS INTERNAL STRUCTURE.

THE peculiar principle predominating in the Indian language, and all others derived from it, will be most intelligibly illustrated by contrast and comparison. In very few languages is the grammar constructed with such astonishing simplicity as the Indian and Greek, the characteristics of which I attempted to elucidate in the preceding chapter. The features of most other languages are very different, and the laws by which they are governed of a completely opposite nature.

Modifications of meaning, or different degrees of signification, may be produced either by inflection or internal variations of the primitive word, or by annexing to it certain peculiar particles, which in themselves indicate the past, the future, or any other circumstance. On these two simple methods we found our distinction between the two principal branches of language. Every additional difference or variation appears, on closer inspection, to be nothing more than an inferior modification or secondary consequence of the two grand divisions. Every variety of the primitive roots existing in the illimitable and apparently inexhaustible province

of language is fully comprehended within those two broad contrasted features.

The Chinese presents a remarkable instance of a language almost without inflection, every necessary modification being expressed by separate monosyllabic words, each having an independent signification. The extraordinary monosyllabic form, and perfect simplicity of its construction, make the consideration of it important as facilitating the comprehension of other languages. The same may be said of the grammar of the Malay language. The singular and difficult dialects of America* illustrate the most important peculiarities of this entire branch. Notwithstanding the inexhaustible variety of the primitive roots of those languages, in which very frequently no sound of similarity can be heard, even among tribes who dwell in close juxtaposition, all, as far as they have hitherto been examined, appear to follow the same laws of construction, every modification of time or degree being expressed by the addition of words or particles which frequently become incorporated with the primitive word, and yet have in themselves a peculiar signification, which they communicate to the root to which they are annexed. The grammar of the American languages employs the affix, and, like all of that branch, is very rich in pronomal references used as *suffixes*, and in relative verbs and conjugations thence arising. The *Basque* language numbers no less than twenty-one of these pronouns, commonly inserted either before or after the auxiliary verb.† Whether in a language of this kind the particles be generally annexed to the verb, as is the case with the Basque, and with most of the American dialects, or prefixed as in the Coptic, or whether both methods be employed indifferently, as in the Peru-

* I gladly embrace this opportunity of thanking that distinguished author A. von Humboldt, for his kindness in procuring for me various vocabularies and dictionaries, on which the preceding and following observations are founded; besides two tolerably complete vocabularies and grammars of the American dialect, and the *Oquichua* dialect, prevailing in Peru and Quito, he also favoured me with several shorter hand-books of the Othomi, Cora, Huasteca, Mosca, Mixteca, and Totonaca dialects.

† According to Larramendi. We may perhaps anticipate from the elder Von Humboldt, a copious, and more especially, a distinct and intelligent analysis of that remarkable language.

vian, Mexican, and other American languages, is of little material importance; the general principle is the same in all, the grammar of the language being formed, not by inflection, but by the addition of particles. An appearance of inflection is sometimes produced by the incorporation of the annexed particles with the primitive word. In the Arabic language, and those related to it, the first and most important modifications, as, for example, the persons of the verbs, are formed by the introduction of single particles, each bearing its own appropriate signification, and in these the suffix not being easily distinguished from the original root, we may conclude a similar incorporation to have taken place in other instances, although the foreign particles inserted may be no longer traceable. We are at least justified in assigning the language to that peculiar branch, notwithstanding the higher character already apparent in certain isolated points, and deducible either from its own richer and more artistic development, or from an intermixture of foreign dialects.

The gradual progress of languages, in which this grammatical construction is adopted, may probably be traced as follows. In the Chinese, all particles indicating modification of time, person, &c., are monosyllables, perfect in themselves, and independent of the root. The language of this otherwise refined and civilized people stands consequently in the lowest grade; it seems possible that the highly artistic system of writing so early introduced may have contributed to the imperfection of the language, seizing it, as it were, in its infancy, and fixing its characteristics at too early a stage of their development. The grammar of the Basque, Coptic, and many American languages is formed entirely by prefixes, and affixes, which in general are easily distinguished from the root, and have their own independent signification. The particles thus inserted soon began to coalesce with the word itself, as may be particularly seen in the Arabic and the dialects connected with it, which, from the chief features in their grammatical construction, appear to belong to that branch, although many other peculiarities cannot so surely be traced to the same source, and some single points even manifest an affinity with the system of inflection. Some traces of the employment of suffixes may be discovered in the Celtic language, although the modern

system of conjugating by the aid of auxiliary verbs, and declining with prepositions, generally predominates.

There is little beauty in the American dialects, the great number of which has been lamented, as well as the diversity existing between them; the dialects of Brazil and Paraguay differing no less widely than those of Old and New Mexico, and even in the North they are uniform, monotonous, and the similarity of their character clearly indicates a similarity of principle. The source of this singular diversity of dialects may be found even in the principles of their grammatical construction. In the Indian and Greek languages each *root* is actually that which bears the signification, and thus seems like a living and productive germ, every modification of circumstance or degree being produced by internal changes; freer scope is thus given to its development, and its rich productiveness is in truth almost illimitable. Still, all words thus proceeding from the roots bear the stamp of affinity, all being connected in their simultaneous growth and development by community of origin. From this construction a language derives richness and fertility on the one hand, and on the other strength and durability. It may well be said, that highly organised even in its origin, it soon becomes woven into a fine artistic tissue, which may be unravelled even after the lapse of centuries, and afford a clue by which to trace the connexion of languages dependent on it, and although scattered throughout every part of the world, to follow them back to their simple primitive source. Those languages, on the contrary, in which the declensions are formed by supplementary particles, instead of inflections of the root, have no such bond of union: their roots present us with no living productive germ, but seem like an agglomeration of atoms, easily dispersed and scattered by every casual breath. They have no internal connexion beyond the purely mechanical adaptation of particles and affixes. These languages, in their earliest origin, are deficient in that living germ essential to a copious development; their derivations are poor and scanty, and an accumulation of affixes, instead of producing a more highly artistic construction, yields only an unwieldy superabundance of words, inimical to true simple beauty and perspicuity. Its apparent richness is in truth utter poverty, and languages belonging to that branch,

whether rude or carefully constructed, are invariably heavy, perplexed, and often singularly subjective and defective in character.

The study of the American dialects is also of importance, as proving the utter impossibility of deriving every language in its primitive roots and construction from one common stem. We must, however, admit that *every* language formed by inflexion rises from one original source; but the incalculable diversity of languages belonging to the other branch makes it impossible to trace *them* back to any point of union even at their source, as is sufficiently proved by examining many languages of Asia and Europe, not to mention the countless dialects of the American continent. Even the thinly populated Northern Asia contains four quite distinct families of language; the Tartar, Finnish, Mogul, and Mantcheou branch; there are, besides these, many less widely diffused, to which a student of philology would find it difficult to assign any fixed and appropriate place. We must enumerate also the *tangutische*, or Thibet dialect, the Singhalese, Japanese, and what little, after separating its intermixtures of Indian and Arabic, will yet remain of the Malay language peculiar to the dialects of the islands between India and America, and may again be traced back to two fundamentally distinct families of language in Malacca, and the negro-like Papua. Symes enumerates six distinct dialects in the eastern peninsula of India, many of which differ even in the numerals, those important characteristic parts of the language. The Burmese is divided into four dialects, the most important of which is that of Ava; it assimilates with the Chinese in its monosyllabic form. The dialects of Koloun, between Bengal, Aracan, and Burmah, and a few dialects of Pegu, belong to the same stock: the original language of Pegu is, according to Symes, very different, as well as that in the country of Meckley, south of Assam, and that of Assam itself, from which the Singhalese dialect is derived. Notwithstanding these trifling points of affinity, the diversities of dialect are very considerable in proportion to the scanty population. If we consider the large number of completely isolated languages, vestiges of which are to be found in the west of central Asia, the region of the Caucasus; and in Europe, besides the Coptic, the

Basque, and that portion of the Wallachian which is not derived from the Latin and the Arnautic, it will be clearly seen, that any attempt to trace these languages to a common stock must prove futile and untenable. Another grand distinction exists between the two chief branches of language: many among those formed by affixes are completely distinct in themselves; but in those formed by inflection the internal affinity of the roots becomes more striking, the higher we ascend in tracing the history of their formation.

It must not, however, be supposed that I desire to exalt one chief branch of language exclusively, to the neglect or disparagement of the other. The sphere of language is too comprehensive, rich, and grand, and has been too highly developed and investigated for one sweeping decision to accomplish any such object. Who can deny the lofty power and energy of the Arabic and Hebraic languages? They, indeed, stand on the loftiest point of their peculiar branch, in respect of construction and development, although their adherence to it is not so exclusive as to prevent their assimilating in some few instances with the other family. Still the most erudite investigators of language have been of opinion that such points of resemblance may have been arbitrarily grafted on the rude original stem at a subsequent period.

It must undoubtedly be admitted, after adequate investigation and comparison, that languages in which the grammar is one of inflexion are usually preferable, as evincing higher art in their construction; but without adducing similar instances from the Greek and Roman, our own noble language, debased and ruined as it is, affords abundant proof of the degradation in which even the most beautiful language may be involved by the negligence of bad writers and the admission of numerous dialects.

The progress of mere grammatical development in the two chief divisions is entirely reversed. Languages formed by affixes were at their commencement rude and completely unformed, but grew more artistic as the subjoined particles became incorporated by degrees with the primitive words: in those formed by inflexion, on the contrary, the first beauty and symmetry of their construction was gradually defaced by an attempt to simplify and elucidate it, as may

be seen by comparing various dialects of the German, Romantic, and Indian languages, with the original type from which they were framed.

The dialects of America usually belong to an inferior class: this is evident by their deficiency in many indispensable letters, as of B, D, F, G, R, S, J, V, as consonants in the Mexican; B, D, E, F, K, and X, in the Oquichua language. in which the O, also, is scarcely to be found; of F, I, K, L, R, S, in the Othomides; D, F, G, I, L, F, in the Coxa; of B, D, F, R, in the Totonaca; B, P, F, R, in the Mixteca; and of F, R, S, K, in the Huasteca language. A few of the *hard* consonants may, indeed, be supplied by the soft, or there may appear to be a deficiency, as in the Spanish language, when none actually exists; but how can the want of such indispensable consonants as R, L, F, or the entire family, B, P, F, be supplied? We also observe a peculiar preference for certain compound consonants, as TL, in the Mexican. The unwieldly bulk produced by the accumulation of affixes, heaped one after another upon the radical word, rather establishes than controverts my theory; so great a multitude of particles being required, especially in the conjugation of the verbs, to express the changes of person, or to contrast the mere commencement of an action with a permanent habit, occupation, reciprocity, or continued repetition of the same action. How many peculiarities of grammatical construction are common in all the American dialects, notwithstanding the differences of the roots? Many among them have no gender, case, or number, and no infinitive mood; the latter being supplied in Mexican and Peruvian by the future, with the verb "I will;" or, perhaps, the verb "to be" is deficient, or the adjective (as is the case in the Oquichua dialect) is the same as the genitive case; so that *Runap*, from *Runa*, the man, signifies both of the man and manly.

Many of these languages are, notwithstanding, powerful and expressive, and no less artistic and well constructed. This is particularly the case with the Oquichua or Peruvian; probably, as we are informed by old traditions, the Incas were induced, by the peculiar excellence and comprehensiveness of this language, to enforce its general use. In the Peruvian vocabulary, I find occasionally a few Indian roots, as *veypul* [great], in Indian, *vipulo; acini* [to laugh],

Indian, *hosono*, &c.; the most remarkable is *inti* [the sun], in Indian, *indra*. If there be any grounds for the tradition, that the Incas used a peculiar language, spoken and understood by themselves alone, and now entirely lost, these stray roots may have wandered from that language into the popular dialect; as it is clearly proved, by referring to the earliest historical records of China, that the founders of the Peruvian kingdom and language must have migrated from the east of China and the Indian isles.*

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## CHAP. V.— ON THE ORIGIN OF LANGUAGE.

HYPOTHESES concerning the first origin of language would either have been discarded altogether, or have assumed an entirely different form, had they been founded on historical investigation, instead of being wrested into forced compliance with arbitrary theories. It is a most erroneous proposition to assert, that the origin of language and intelligence was everywhere similar. So many varieties, on the contrary, exist in that respect, that it would be easy to cite one language at least in corroboration of almost every theory that has ever been framed. If we take, for example, the vocabulary of the Mantcheou language, we shall be astonished at the completely disproportionate number of onomatopoëtic † or sense-imitative words which it contains, forming by far the greater portion of the language. In fact, had this dialect been more important and universal, we should have been compelled to adopt the opinion that that principle predominated in all languages. This example will also serve to illustrate the form naturally assumed by every language founded on similar principles, and the idea of referring to the same origin languages of an entirely different aspect must be im-

* It is very remarkable that the Peruvian Incas, who boasted of the same descent as the Hindoo Rama, (viz., from Suryá, or the Sun), styled their great festival Ramasitoa; whence we may suppose that South America was peopled by the same race who imported into the farthest parts of Asia the rites and fabulous history of Rama.—*Discourse on the Hindoos*—Sir W. Jones's Works, vol. i. p. 30.

† See note, *ante*, p. 433.

mediately discarded. Let us consider the entire family of each language which now claims our attention. The number of these onomatopoëtic words in the German is very inconsiderable, in comparison with the instance before noticed; still they are very important, and, perhaps, not much less so than in the Persian, which may be defined as an intermixture of the Tartar, Sclavonic, and some other dialects; in the Greek and Latin languages their number is still further diminished, and in the Indian they so completely disappear, that we cannot admit the possibility of community of origin.

Where, then, shall we seek the source of all those allied languages which are formed by inflection? How did the Indian originate? or, since that language, although admitted to be of far higher antiquity than others, is itself but a derived form, how did the common source and origin of that entire family first come into existence? A satisfactory answer may be given to a portion at least of this important question, that the earliest language was not the mere instinctive cry of physical nature, nor was it from an indiscriminate imitation of natural tones, nor from fancy indulging in a sportive experimental combination of sounds that it arose, gradually engrafting on its first rude commencement a more rational expression and reasonable form. The structure of language, on the contrary, is but one proof added in confirmation of so many others, that the primitive condition of mankind was not one of mere animal instinct, which by slow degrees, and with many a weary effort, at length attained some slight glimmering of reason and intelligence; it rather confirms the opposite belief, proving that, if not in every country, at least in that which is now the subject of our investigations, the most profound study and the clearest intelligence were early called into operation; for without much labour and reflection it would have been impossible to frame a language like the Indian, which, even in its simplest form, exemplifies the loftiest ideas of the pure world of thought, and displays the entire ground plan of the consciousness, not in figurative symbols, but in direct and immediate clearness and precision.

By what means the human mind at so early a period attained that wondrous gift of clear intelligence; whether it

was gradually developed or suddenly appeared in all its lofty perfection, or whether it can be accounted for by reference to the natural powers of the human intellect alone, presents a subject for investigation which, as touched upon in the following book, may at least stimulate to further inquiry; since I shall there lay before you the systems of religion and philosophy to which historical investigation assigns the highest antiquity, and examine whether any unequivocal traces of a first and earlier dialect are therein to be recognised. It would, however, be useless to attempt any analysis of the language, except in accordance with its natural principles and progress, as no traces of foreign admixture are to be found in it. It is not by any means my intention to dispute the spontaneous origin of language generally, but merely the theory that *all* were originally similar, and equally rude and irregular in their first construction — an opinion which the facts already cited abundantly disprove.

The manner in which mankind attained such lofty perfection of reason and intelligence is a question of a different kind; but the same spirit, the same deep feeling and intelligence undoubtedly communicated itself to their language, and it would be difficult to find any so skilfully and exquisitely framed as that of which we have been speaking. It combines the clear perception of the natural signification of things, — a delicate discrimination of the original sense and power of all those sounds which may be made the medium of communicating our ideas, — a fine imitative faculty for assorting and combining letters and significant syllables, those mysterious elements of language,—and a power to invent, discover, determine, and, by the use of varied declensions, transform the language into a living organisation, ever advancing, and developing itself by its own internal strength and energy. Such was the origin of language; simply beautiful in form and construction, yet capable of almost unbounded development; the union between the primitive roots, on which it is based, and the grammatical construction are most closely cemented, and both spring from the same original source—a deep feeling, and a clear discriminating intelligence. The oldest system of writing developed itself at the same time, and in the same manner, as the spoken language; not wearing at first the symbolic form, which it sub-

sequently assumed in compliance with the necessities of a less civilised people, but composed of certain signs, which, in accordance with the nature of the simplest elements of language, actually conveyed the sentiments of the race of men then existing.

To attempt to analyse the construction of languages which bear the traces of a rude and scanty original, by separating from them all they owe to foreign idioms, and the adaptation of other and more beautiful systems, would lead me too far from my present subject. Whether placed in a state of happiness and simplicity, endowed with the light of reason and intelligence, and in the fulness of a clear perception, man easily dispensed with a more artistic development of his powers, — or whether in his original condition he was but a few degrees removed from the irrational and brute creation, this at least is certain, that the distinctive character of speech must be greatly dependant on the physical condition of mankind. In many languages, indeed, instead of that highly organised and artistic construction which is produced by significant syllables and prolific roots, we discover merely varied imitations, and almost sportive combinations of sound — the cry, as it were, of instinctive feeling and impulse, to which the exclamatory, the interjectional, and distinctive terminations and additions in time became annexed, and invested by constant use with a certain conventional and arbitrary signification.

All the preceding proofs appear clearly to establish the fact that the Sanscrit or Indian language is of higher antiquity than the Greek or Latin, not to mention the German and Persian. We might, perhaps, decide more satisfactorily in what relation it stands, as the earliest derived language, to the general source; if it were in our power to consult the Veda in its genuine form, together with the vocabularies which were early required on account of the great difference between the language of the Veda and the Sanscrit. The Saga of Ráma, who is described as a conqueror of the wild tribes of the South, might seem to favour the opinion that the Indian language, even at a very early period, suffered considerable foreign intermixture from the various tribes incorporated with the body of the nation. The northern part of the country is peculiarly the seat of the Indian language and philosophy. In Ceylon we still trace the influence

of the foreign tribes of Singhalese, which in former times was probably of more extensive operation. Still the regular, simple structure of the Indian language proves that the influence of foreign intermixture was never so overpowering or heterogeneous as in other languages of the same family.

Changes of manners and habits were more slowly introduced among that Indian race than in other nations of the world; and it seems historicallyprobable that their language also observed a similar tardy progression; it was too intrinsically bound up with their temperament and philosophy to admit of such arbitrary innovations and extensive revolutions as are often allowed through negligence or indifference to creep into other languages. This assertion will be more strongly confirmed by investigating the structure of the language itself. It is true that the Indian is almost entirely a philosophical or rather a religious language, and perhaps none, not even excepting the Greek, is so philosophically clear and sharply defined: it has no variable or arbitrary combination of abstractions, but is formed on a permanent system, in which the deep symbolic signification of words and expressions reciprocally explain, elucidate, and support each other. This lofty spirituality is at the same time extremely simple, not originally conveyed through the medium of representations of merely sensual expressions, but primarily based upon the peculiar and appropriate signification of the fundamental elements as originally established. The distinct genus of many, which, though quite clear in meaning, yet admits only of a purely metaphysical interpretation, allows of our determining the high antiquity either historically from the employment of the terminology, or etymologically from the compounded words. It is a most unfounded idea that in the earliest epoch of each language a bold and irregular fancy alone predominated; it may have been the case with many, but certainly not in all, nor in the Indian especially, in which a profound philosophical signification and perspicuity of expression are even more striking than poetical inspiration or imagery, although it is quite susceptible of the former; and in the figurative and imaginative poem of Calidas the latter property also is most abundantly developed.

Poetry, however, belongs to a later epoch in the formation

of the Indian language, which as we proceed in tracing its source back to the earliest antiquity, becomes even more simple and prosaic, although far from being dry or abstractedly lifeless. Thus Menù's metrical collection of laws*, which bears the stamp of far higher antiquity than the Puranas, is remarkably different in its construction; perhaps scarcely so much as might be imagined from the comparison instituted by Sir William Jones between the style of Cicero, and the fragment of the Twelve Tables. Still, considering the slow progress and trifling nature of the alterations to which the Indian language has been subjected, the distinction is quite sufficient to justify the supposition of at least many intervening centuries.

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## CHAP. VI. — ON THE DIFFERENCE EXISTING BETWEEN THE MOST CLOSELY CONNECTED LANGUAGES, AND ON A FEW REMARKABLE INTERMEDIATE DIALECTS.

IN considering the alterations sustained by the Indian language, and in a still greater measure by those derived from it, another question immediately arises. The affinity of those languages has been too clearly ascertained to admit the supposition of its being merely the result of accident; but it must, on the other hand, be received as a proof that all are derived from the same common source; and the question immediately forces itself upon the mind, — were these languages originally one? To what cause, then, may we attribute the differences existing between them? We must not judge of these varieties from the first impressions communicated by sound or form, but rather by their inner and essential character, which can be appreciated only by researches penetrating far beneath the mere external veil. What remarkable differences the Greek and Latin languages appear to

* The "Body of Law" called Smriti consists of eighteen books, each divided under three general heads,— the duties of religion, the administration of justice, and the punishment or expiation of crimes: they were delivered for the instruction of the human species by Menù and other sacred personages. — *Sir W. Jones's Works*, vol. i. — *Trans.*

present when either is examined for the first time by a student whose attention had till then been confined to one only! He imagines himself to be entering a world in which every thing is new and strange. After a longer acquaintance, however, his opinion becomes considerably modified, and he sees that the general harmony of construction of both languages invests them rather with the character of very remotely connected dialects than of distinct branches.

If the affinity of other languages be estimated in the same ratio, much greater varieties will be found to exist in the various dialects of this family than can be accounted for by their different local features, or attributed to a diversity of impulse in the development of the mind during any certain period of time. Another point must here be brought forward fully sufficient to explain the source of those varieties, and our argument will be supported partly by accurate grammatical analysis, partly by reference to historical records.

Each of these derived languages, as well as the character of the people or tribe, is remarkable from the varied and frequently incongruous intermixture of foreign influences, which necessarily led to a more complete estrangement between the allied language and people themselves. I do not allude merely to such intermixture as that of the Arabic in the Persian, or the French in the English language; the intrusive words in these instances, although completely incorporated into the body of the language, retain sufficient marks of their original form to be immediately recognised as foreign words: these examples strikingly illustrate the fact that every language of grand principles, that is to say, highly organised and skilfully framed, possesses in itself an original element of stability and individuality, which can scarcely be overpowered by the most violent and forcible extraneous intermixture. How completely Teutonic are the characteristics of the English language, and how striking the difference which still subsists in the Persian and Arabian! My observations refer also to such intermixtures as are of still greater antiquity, and thus are more completely blended with the primitive construction of the language, having been introduced at a period when from its greater flexibility, appropriative power, and productiveness, they were more

easily incorporated, and cannot be traced without careful analysis.

Such analogies and intermixtures are often important in reference to history, while that branch of science reciprocally affords a clue by which to trace language to its source. In the Greek, for instance, we find a far greater number of Arabic roots than would at first appear credible; the structure and character of the two languages being so entirely different, that this point of agreement between them is easily overlooked. Yet is it nothing more than the continual intercourse of the Greeks and Phœnicians might justify us in anticipating. An acquaintance with the history of the earliest settlers in Italy leads us to expect in the latter a greater intermixture of Celtic and Cantabrian roots. The close connexion of the German language with the Persian distinctly indicates the point at which that branch separated from their parent stem, and the numerous radical words, common both in the Teutonic and the Turkish languages, may afford indications of the migratory path which the former people pursued, and which is proved by other and historical evidence to have followed the direction of the river Gihon, along the north shore of the Caspian Sea, bearing constantly towards the north west.

Scarcely any language can be named, however remote in situation and character, in which some German roots are not to be found; as *das jahr* [the year], or *jarĕ*, in the Zend and Mantcheou dialects; *legen* [to lie], Span. *poner*, *laygan*, in the Tagala dialect of the Philippine Islands; *rangio* [evil seeking], in the Japanese, *ranzig;* also a few in the Peruvian dialect. This may easily be accounted for from the migrations of the Teutonic race, and their sojourn in the districts of northern and western Asia; a region which has since been the rendezvous of those tribes, and the scene of their most frequent wanderings.

I shall, in this book, confine my investigations to the language, and to whatever may be deduced from that alone, reserving for my third book any historical facts or hypotheses tending to elucidate the wonderful agreement between so many distant languages and people, divided by long tracts of sea and land, or to illustrate the earliest migrations of the human race. Much may, however, be found in the pro-

vince of language alone, contributing either to fill up that wide space or to contract its limits, or perhaps to mark the point of separation and transition. I am not now alluding to the few isolated remains of the German language, which may be found in the Crimea, the Caucasus, and the neighbourhood of the Caspian Sea, nor to the many more insignificant, yet still very remarkable vestiges, of other languages now lost; but to the principal branches of those still existing and flourishing, which, by their mixed construction and the situation of the people among whom they are in use, seem to fill up the space intervening between the Indian and Persian on the one hand, and the German, Latin, and Greek on the other.

The Armenian dialect is, unquestionably, entitled to hold the first rank, on account of the numerous Greek and Latin, Persian and German roots contained in it, which appertain, in fact, to the first and most essential parts of the language: as, for example, the numerals, pronouns, particles, and some of the most important verbs. To mention a few of the most remarkable: *kan*, the Latin conjunction *quam; mi* [one], related to the Greek *mia; hing*, L. *quinque*, [five]; *ciurch*, L. *circa* [around]; *ham*, the Greek *hama*, used as a prefix, in the same manner as Gr. *sum*, and L. *con;* the negative particle *mi*, Greek *mē; an* and *ab* are prefixed in the same sense as Gr. *a*, and *ab*, *a* in the Latin, and *un* in the German; *aminajim*, the Latin *omnis*. Also a few verbs: *lusauorim*, G. *ich leuchte* [I light], L. *luceo; luzzim*, G. *ich löse* [I redeem], Gr. *luō; uranam* [I deny], Gr. *arneomai; zairanam*, G. *ich zürne* [I am angry]; *arnum*, G. *ich nehme* [I take], Gr. *arnumi; tenim* [I sit], Gr. *theinai; adim* [I hate], L. *odium; udim* [I eat], L. *edo; garodim* [I have trouble], L. *careo; lnum* [I fill up], L. *plenus; dam* [I give], L. *do; im*, in English *I am; pirim* [I bear], L. *fero*, and P. *burun; porim* [I dig], G. *bohre; kam*, G. *ich komme* [I come], G. *ich kam;* and many other Persian roots. Their identity is frequently unquestionable, except that the pronunciation is rather harsh, perhaps more so than can be accounted for, as the general peculiarity of all mountain dialects, and rather affording an indication of superior antiquity. Their agreement in structure is even more remarkable; as, for example, *luanam*, L. *lavo; luanas*, L. *lavas;*

*luanan*, L. *lavant;* the future is formed by *ziz*, *szis*, *sze*, the same general sound as in the Indian and Greek. A few participles in *al* agree, on the contrary, with the Sclavonic language, as well as the third person of the singular number, *luanay*, L. *lavat.* The conjugation is generally formed by inflection, and partly also by auxiliary verbs.

The Armenian is unquestionably a remarkable intermediate link, and may afford a clue to many facts in the origin and history of the Asiatic and European languages. I have no means of ascertaining whether the same observation applies to the Georgian language; we are also in want of the most efficient aid for drawing any certain conclusion with regard to the Zend and Pahlavi* dialects, no complete grammar of either having ever been compiled. The declensions in Zend closely resemble the Georgian; the Pahlavi employs the Persian oblique case in *ra*, many Persian terminations of substantives and adjectives in *man*, &c.; the infinitive in *atan* may also be compared with the Persian in *adŭn.* But these few particulars, all that have as yet been discovered, are meagre and unsatisfactory. We find nothing in Arabic, or Hebrew, agreeing with the Indian grammar, except the feminine termination in *a* and *i*, and the Hebrew pronoun [הָהּ] P. *an*, Indian *soh*, Teutonic *sa*, whence comes the German *so.* The common roots of these languages retain many traces illustrating the progress of intermixture between people and language in ancient times. It would be of importance to decide accurately how far the number of roots belonging to the other chief branch in the Hebrew language exceeds those in the Arabic; the affinity was probably even stronger in the Phœnician.

The next place to the Armenian, as possessing a still evident, although almost more remote, affinity, is undoubtedly occupied by the great and widely diffused family of Sclavonian dialects. They agree with the allied languages in many inflections of their grammar, and in a few instances, even in the signs of the cases used in declension, as in the first and second person of the present tense, both in the singular and plural. Insufficient as are the materials collected for this branch of study, I have nevertheless been

* One of the sacred languages of Persia.

enabled to trace a few Indian roots in the Sclavonian language, and such indeed as are not to be found in either of the other allied languages; but without a comparative grammar and vocabulary it is impossible to ascertain the relative proportion of the various Sclavonian dialects, or to decide which of them deserves to be esteemed the oldest and purest, and may with justice be adopted as a sure basis for the investigation of the later dialects. It is impossible to trace the relationship and connexion between any separate branches of language, without first forming a similar systematic arrangement.

I cannot venture to decide whether the Celtic language stands in equally close connexion with the noble original stock as the Sclavonian. The community of certain roots indicates only an intermixture by which this language incorporated with itself other signs and symbols. Nor can the similarity of the numerals be considered decisive; in the Coptic language, Greek and other peculiar numerals, particularly the old Egyptian, are in use. The Bretagne dialect* is declined by prepositions; but the declensions of the pure Erse are very different, being formed, singularly enough, by varying the initial letters of the words, a change which is regulated according to certain particles prefixed, which indicate the inflection of person; for example, *mac* [the son], *wihic* (pronounced *wic*) [of the son], *pen* [the head]; *i ben* [his head], *i phen* [your head], *y 'm mhen* [my head]. A peculiarity somewhat resembling the manner in which the personal particles in the Coptic language become incorporated with the particles prefixed and the word itself; *Pos* [the lord], *paos* [my lord], *pekas* [thy lord], *pefos* [this lord], *pesos* [your lord], *penos* [our lord], *naos* [my

* According to Le Brigant, Pinkerton, Shaw's, Smith's, Vallancey's, and other works, which I have not been able to consult. I am also in want of adequate materials for investigating several other languages; and, besides the chief works already mentioned on the N. Asian languages, I have also been unable to obtain the latest and most complete dissertations on the Coptic and Armenian dialects. I hope, therefore, that the incompleteness of my researches will be treated with indulgence by learned men, as they best know the difficulty of procuring works on these subjects, many good libraries being entirely deficient in that particular province: on the other hand, a few particulars not hitherto known may probably be found even here.

lords], *nekos* [thy lords], &c. In the Bretagne dialect of the Celtic, an auxiliary is employed in conjugation, although in many instances it is completely lost by its blending with the suffixum as *comp* [we go], *ejomp* [we went], *efsomp* [we will go], from *omp* [we]. This analogy leads us to that other chief branch of language to which the Basque belongs, which however has nothing in common with the Celtic beyond what may easily be accounted for by the intermixture of dialects. The mixed character of the Celtic language is proved by the singular circumstance, that the Bretagne dialect employs no less than four distinct words for the pronoun *I: anon*, Coptic *anok; on*, Indian *ohon, in* and *me*. It is hardly necessary to furnish further examples in refutation of the erroneous opinions entertained by those who assert the language and people of the Celts and Germans to be at least closely connected, if not actually one, and cite the traces of intermixture in the Bretagne dialect in confirmation of their theory.

It is easy to discover trifling points of agreement even in such languages as are most widely removed from the Indian, Greek, and German; as, for example, the termination of adjectives in *ezco* in the Basque, which rather resembles the German *isch* and the Greek *ikos*,—but is rarely observable in the Spanish. Emigration, colonisation, war, and commerce so completely amalgamated the old nations of Europe, that traces of marked identity are rarely to be discovered.

To lay before the reader even a summary of every thing that has been collected and prepared in this province would only weary and perplex him. I shall be content if I have proved satisfactorily, in general terms, the fixed principles on which a comparative grammar and genuine historical foundation, — an authentic history, in short, of the origin of language,—instead of the theories hitherto invented, may be constructed. What has here been said will suffice to prove the importance of Indian study, in regard to the language at least: in the following books we shall contemplate it in reference to the history of Oriental genius.

I close with a retrospect of the works of Sir William Jones, who, by establishing the affinity between the Indian language and the Latin, Greek, German and Persian, first threw a light on this obscure study, and consequently on the earliest

popular history, which before his time was every where dark and confused. Yet he has extended the affinity to some other instances infinitely less important, tracing back the exhaustless abundance of language to three chief families — the Indian, Arabic, and Tartar; and, finally, after having himself so finely exhibited the total difference of the Arabic and Indian languages, seeking, from a love of unity, to derive all from one common source: I have, therefore, been unable to adhere closely in every particular to this excellent and learned man, since his arguments, being directed to support an opposite theory, would unquestionably militate against my own opinions.

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## BOOK II.

### CHAP. I. — ON THE INDIAN PHILOSOPHY.

IT is an opinion very generally entertained, that the original condition of man was one of almost unreasoning stupidity, from which, impelled by necessity or other external incitements, he gradually attained, by successive efforts, to certain degrees of intelligence. Independently of the consideration that this idea is completely at variance with all known systems of philosophy, it must be acknowledged, that so far from being supported by the testimony of ancient historical records, it is, on the contrary, contradicted, and proved to have been adopted on arbitrary and insufficient grounds. Without mentioning the Mosaic records, which I shall reserve for examination in the third book of this treatise, the numerous ancient monuments existing in Asia, and the general progress of events, afford sufficient and incontrovertible evidence that, in the earliest steps of his mortal career, man was not left without God in the world. In India especially, many surprising discoveries have been made, which remarkably illustrate the progress of human intelligence in those ancient times; and the little we already know of Oriental literature has elucidated so many difficult points, that we may confidently anticipate that still more satisfactory results will attend the further prosecution of our researches.

Having in the first book considered the Indian language in the relation it bears to the most important languages of Asia and Europe, Indian Mythology, the parent of so many other systems, appears to offer an appropriate subject for consideration in the second. We must, however, be on our guard against an error, into which the British Society in Calcutta has too often been betrayed, and not lay too much stress upon isolated and often deceptive appearance, while attempting to prove that an internal uniformity of structure exists both in the language and mythology, and that the similarity of the ground tissue in each, notwithstanding slight subordinate alterations, sufficiently indicates congeniality of origin. It is true that there is no dearth of such surprising coincidences as cannot be merely casual; but, before being received as such, they require to be more strictly investigated than even the language, the peculiarities of mythology being more variable and uncertain, and their delicate and evanescent spirit more difficult to seize and retain. Mythology presents the most complicated structure ever devised by human intellect; inexhaustibly rich, but at the same time most variable in its signification; and that being a point of the highest moment, requires to be scrupulously examined; the slightest variation of meaning is of importance, and should be considered in its simple individuality, apart from any consideration of time or place. Greek and Roman mythology, for instance, we are accustomed to treat as one and the same, unless forbidden by distinct historical records; and yet, any one whose researches have been carried back to the earliest origin of those people, will be sufficiently alive to the difference existing between them to feel that Venus and Aphrodite, Mars (Mavors) and Ares, &c. cannot justly be regarded as one and the same divinity. How widely do the Hellenic cities differ among themselves! how great is the difference between Corinth and Athens, or between Doriern in Sparta and Sicily; the symbolic representation of certain peculiar features in the history, and even the name of the divinity, may be common to many distant nations, and long preserved among them; but it is the signification, the idea conveyed by these symbols, which is the really essential point, and this everywhere assumes a different aspect. A great number of facts must be adduced, and many different sources

explored. before it will be possible to adopt, with any degree of success, the only method which can in this instance be available; that is, to enter into a full analysis of the system, displaying all its peculiar features in their just proportions, whether of internal development or external admixture, noticing even each trace of gradual change or variation: the scarcity of our materials makes it impossible at present to accomplish this in the Indian Philosophy.

I must henceforth abandon the system pursued in my first book, and instead of a comparative analysis of the mythology, which it is as yet too early to attempt, fix a few certain principles, which may serve as a groundwork for future researches; a brief inquiry, in short, into the character of Oriental genius, its distinctive peculiarities, and the most important stages of its progress. Much information in regard to details is still required; but we already possess enough to gain a tolerably just idea of its general structure: the mind should, however, if possible, be transported into the sphere of antiquity, and primitive ideas, and the facts themselves, simply stated, will soon lead to perfect clearness and precision.

The separate portions of this description must not be regarded as a system of philosophy, but rather as illustrating distinct epochs of the Oriental mind; for these several theories are not all precisely similar, and many were systematically developed at a much later period than others, and their origin is to be sought in a principle that lies deeper than mere philosophy. I have treated these new systems or modes of thought separately, because all are actually distinct, divided both by their characteristic features, and by historical evidences. We shall remark in each separate division the gradual transition from one to another, or the particular points in which the later appear to grow out of earlier theories, or are most strikingly contrasted with them. I shall, in each epoch, confine my attention to such peculiar points of Indian mythology or philosophy as belong to it, merely alluding to that of other Asiatic nations, when by so doing the whole can be rendered more perfect and intelligible.

## Chap. II. — On the Doctrines of the Metempsychosis, and on Emanation.

Among all the numerous systems of philosophy which recognise Asia as their parent-land, none are so positively of Indian origin as the doctrines of the Metempsychosis and of Emanation; nor can any, with the exception of the Mosaic dispensation, lay claim to such great antiquity. The most essential doctrines of these systems are contained in the first book of the laws of Menù, which no critic of sound judgment will assert to be of slight antiquity: they are, at the least, more ancient than any existing records of European literature. The laws of Menù have been, for thousands of years, the basis and groundwork of the Indian constitution and legislature (of Indian *life*, in fact), and their influence is no less sensibly exerted in regard to philosophy and learning, in which they are clearly seen to be the ruling spirit. Information even more precise than that afforded by the laws of Menù may be drawn from the first part of the Vedas, containing that system of philosophy termed the Mimansà, which was founded by Jaimini, the author of the Sámaveda, and is, perhaps, the earliest Indian system now in existence.

It will be easily seen that the doctrine of Emanation, taken in its earliest original meaning, is closely and immediately connected with that of Transmigration; but the inquirer must first dismiss from his mind every idea of emanation borrowed from the Indian, and afterwards promulgated by Chaldee and Greek philosophers, who, instead of propounding any system of original purity and simplicity, rather amalgamated into one body all the various innovations and admixtures which had either sprung from or been engrafted upon the original doctrine, and applied to the whole the indefinite title of Oriental philosophy. We must be especially on our guard also against the too frequent error of confounding the doctrine of Emanation with Pantheism. The bold and fanciful character of that Oriental system is easily mistaken for a pantheistic tendency by those who are familiar only with the dialectic structure of modern European philosophy; and, viewed in that light, it of course appears connected in many points with later times. Still there is so

much actually at variance between them, that it would be impossible to deny or cancel the individuality of the ancient Indian doctrine. The re-incorporation of individuals into the unity of the Godhead is only possible, not of absolute necessity, and those who are incorrigibly evil will continue separate and divided throughout eternity; or, if we may employ a theological mode of expression, which, although apparently modern, completely embodies the ancient idea, "the eternal strife of hell" is by no means irreconcileable with the doctrine of Emanation, but, on the contrary, forms an essential element of that system. The difference between Emanation and Pantheism, in regard to the powers of good and evil, is very marked and important. Pantheism teaches that every thing is intrinsically good and pure; all originally *one* with divinity, and that every appearance of wrong or guilt exists but in idea, or depends on the conventional idea entertained of it. Hence its dangerous influence on the moral life and character; for by whatever subtlety of language the meaning may be disguised, and however men may cling to a belief in the all-regulating power of conscience, yet, if this destructive principle be admitted as a ruling fact, the conduct of individuals will be considered as of slight importance, and the eternal distinction between right and wrong, good and evil, set aside, and finally rejected. Far different, however, is the doctrine of Emanation: in that system the condition of all created existences is rather counted unhappy, and the world itself ruined and guilty in its very essence; all is in a state of mournful degradation, sinking deeper and deeper into the abyss which divides it from the perfect bliss and purity of its divine Creator.

It would be useless to enter into a dialectic argument concerning the philosophical incorrectness of this system, for it rests not on any logical basis; nor can it be supported by demonstration, but, like other merely poetical systems of cosmogony, rather wears the character of an arbitrary invention. Still a systematic connexion may be traced throughout, and to that it is probably indebted for its stability during so many thousand years, but still more to primæval tradition and the divine origin ascribed to it. The labour of investigating and comprehending this doctrine will indeed be amply repaid, even if we regard it merely as the earliest

authentic monument of the human intellect, and reflect on the inconceivable influence it exercised on its subsequent history and development. Still, before we can understand the superstructure, we must gain some insight into the feeling on which that system of philosophy is based. When Menù had sung of the creation of all natural elements, of all creatures endowed with life, animals, herbs, and plants, all of which were imagined to be the abode of various imprisoned souls, he concluded with this general reflection —

" By many-formed darkness encircled, the reward of their deeds,
" All are at length endowed with conscious existence, with susceptibility of joy and pain."

Thus in bondage and darkness, yet fraught with feeling, conscious of their own guilt, and the doom awaiting them, they wander on in the path which their Creator has appointed them from the beginning, still drawing nearer and nearer to their inevitable goal: —

" Towards this goal they now wander, proceeding from God, descending low to the plants,
" In this fearful world of existence, which sinks ever deeper in ruin and destruction."

In these words the predominant feeling, the ruling spirit of the entire system, is revealed. If all that has been sung by poets of antiquity concerning the misery of created existence be assembled into one image and under one comprehensive form; if we collect each melancholy gleam and fearful conception of the world around, which, born of that gloomy idea of irrevocable destiny, pervades the poetical legends and histories of their gods, and breaks forth in deep-souled tragedies, changing the play of poetical imagery and diction into an enduring and eternal sadness, we shall gain the most perfect conception of the peculiar characteristics of this ancient Indian doctrine.

We trace to the same source the doctrine of the four epochs, which represents each successive division of time as more wretched and degraded than the former, till the fourth and now existing period of utter ruin and misery arrives. The progress of decline in the four conditions of mankind is in the same manner illustrative of this constant degradation, ever sinking deeper and deeper into the abyss of earthly im-

perfection. Hence also arises the doctrine of the three worlds, *troilokyon;* of the three primary powers, *troigunyon;* of which the first is actually brilliant, *sotwo;* the second deceptively bright, *rojo;* and the third and last utterly dark and obscure, *tomo.* This theory of constant degradation, both in spiritual and physical perfection, pervades the entire system of Emanation.

Menù supposes the divine spirit to be an immediate emanation of the self-existent (*selbst*), eternal divinity; from the spirit proceeds the consciousness; thus the spirit is the secondary creative power (*the agent in creation*); and Menù (almost the same with Monoh) created all individual beings, after Brahmá himself had produced the general primary powers of nature and spirit. In the succeeding explanation Bhrigú * supposes the elements to spring originally from the divine essence, and also successively from each other, according to the different ideas entertained of their respective delicacy and perfection. A belief in the law of constant ruin and deterioration, and an eternal sorrow, occasioned by the consciousness of guilt and death, constitute the vital elements of this doctrine. The degrees or primary powers of emanation are different in different representations, the imagination of the poet not being always arbitrarily confined within these narrow limits.

It is Brahmá, who among the divinities of Indian mythology belongs especially to this system and sphere of ideas. He is described in Menù's book of laws as the Eternal Spirit, the Supreme *One,* the Sovereign and Lord of Creation: he is the eternal and incomprehensible, the self-existing God, *the peculiar* HE, or God himself. In later works the same appellations are given to Siva and Vishnu by the particular adherents of those divinities. In Menù's book Brahmá holds the first rank; the narrower acceptation, in which this divinity is held, merely as the element of the earth, is of later date.

Notwithstanding the rude errors and arbitrary fictions with which this philosophy is everywhere overlaid, a fearful and horrible superstition having crept into the entire system, profaning and polluting every thing it touched, still it cannot be denied that the early Indians possessed a knowledge of

* Promulgator of the first code of sacred ordinances.

the true God: all their writings are replete with sentiments and expressions, noble, clear, and severely grand, as deeply conceived and reverentially expressed as in any human language in which men have spoken of their God. Yet it may well be asked, how is it possible to account for the existence of such lofty wisdom in combination with errors so great and numerous?

Our astonishment is, perhaps, still more excited, by discovering that a belief in the immortality of the soul is bound up with the idea of divinity in this most ancient system of superstition, than at the noble purity and simplicity of their conception of God. Immortality was not with them a mere probability, deduced gradually, the result of long study and reflection; not some vague imagining of an undefined and shadowy world, but a conviction so certain and decided, that the idea of a future life became the ruling motive and impulse of all actions in this; the grand aim and object of all laws and arrangements, carried out even in the most trifling details.

It would be utterly impossible to explain this fact, I will not say satisfactorily, but even in an intelligible manner, by any theory professing to trace the gradual development of the human intellect from a state of irrational stupidity, little superior to that of the brute creation, up to the highest development of soul and intelligence. This is not the place in which to lay bare the operation of those deeply hidden causes, by which a belief in the immortality of the soul is inseparably linked with the knowledge of the true God. I merely suggest the question, whether it can be correct to seek our proofs of the existence of a God in the usual manner, by syllogisms, probabilities based upon natural appearances, or the evidence of internal necessity; for the footsteps of the Deity cannot be recognised in external nature, or the inner consciousness, unless He be already known and acknowledged; and this consideration, by destroying the simplicity of the original idea, deprives it of all value. I do not here allude to those who assert that the idea of divinity is capable of being deduced from consciousness or internal evidence and the laws of reason; for another power should be evoked in their place, the very idea of which has long been lost. In a word, the Indian doctrine of Emanation, if treated as the offspring of natural reason, is totally inexpli-

cable; but, considered as a perverted conception of revealed truth, becomes at once intelligible. We have, then, ample reason to conclude, from historical evidence alone, as well as upon far higher grounds, that the same glorious Being by whom man was so majestically formed and highly gifted, vouchsafed to the newly created one glance into the mysterious depth of his own existence; thus for ever raising him above the bondage of his mortal condition, placing him in communion with the invisible world, and enriching him with the lofty, yet dangerous boon — the faculty of eternal happiness or misery.

We cannot suppose that original revelation to have been communicated by the immediate teaching of the Father, in symbolic and expressive language, although even that idea were far from utterly empty and futile; still it was probably rather an impulse of the inner feeling; and where the living principle of truth exists, appropriate words and symbols immediately suggest themselves, and these will be full and expressive in proportion to the grandeur of the feeling which inspires them. But again: how could truths so divinely imparted become involved in the mists of error? I would explain it in this manner. Man, if without the gifts of revelation, would occupy a place with other animals in the general plan of creation; perhaps holding the first and highest rank, perhaps, on the contrary, the most intrinsically wild and savage of them all. Without the free operation and comprehension of divine truth, he would soon become debased into a merely blind and senseless instrument. This primitive error, which sprang from an abuse of the divine gifts, and an eclipsing and misinterpretation of holy wisdom, is clearly to be traced in all the Indian records; and in proportion as our knowledge of this, the most highly cultivated nation of antiquity, becomes more perfect and complete, the influence of error and distorted views will be more clearly and palpably evident. The Indian mythology and philosophy is the first system which was substituted for the pure light of truth: notwithstanding some lingering traces of a holier origin, wild inventions and savage errors everywhere predominate, and an impression of anguish and sorrow, naturally resulting from the first rejection of, and estrangement from, revealed truth.

It will readily be acknowledged that the unfathomable

abyss which was supposed to intervene between the idea of infinite perfection in the creative essence and the visible imperfection of the world around, could hardly be more easily and naturally filled up than by the doctrine of Emanation: it is, indeed, not merely the root and basis of all primitive superstition, but an ever-welling spring of poetry and imagination. According to that doctrine, every thing is an emanation of divinity, each distinct existence being, as it were, but a more obscure and limited reflection of the supreme head; consequently the world, thus inspired and vivified, becomes an assemblage of Divine Beings, or Gods,—Hylozoismus, not merely Polytheism, but, if one may so speak "all-götterie,"—an universality of Gods or Pantheism, for the Indian divinities are indeed of countless numbers. Every mythology rising from the same fertile source is remarkable from the richness of its original inventions, and is thus sufficiently distinguished from all less perfect systems, or, to speak more properly, from those which lie yet more widely distant from the stream of old legendary tradition. Still no mythological system has as yet been discovered which can be entirely separated from all dependence on nobler ideas, and more cultivated nations; on those, in short, whose creations were drawn more immediately from the true and living spring of poetry and fancy. Even the Greek philosophy, different as it is in genius and character, partakes, in common with the Indian, of this overflowing abundance of indwelling living treasures.

It seems scarcely necessary to observe that the deification of great and holy men is by no means irreconcileable with the opinion that all were but various emanations from the same primal source; on the contrary, it rather harmonises with that doctrine; since the greater the affinity between the divided being and its pure and glorious original, the more appropriately will it claim a greater measure of reverence and regard.

The ten holy Avatars*, who hold so conspicuous a place in Indian philosophy, are numbered among the followers, or rather successors, of Brahmá, the seven great Rĭshis, priests

* Avatars or incarnations of the Deity. These ten avatarâs are by some arranged according to the thousands of divine years in each of the four ages, or in an arithmetical proportion from four to one; Buddha was the latest incarnation. — *Sir W. Jones's Works*, vol. i. — *Trans.*

and sages of a primitive world, Casyapá, and all the races descending through him from Diti and Aditi*, night and day, down to the two families of the children of the sun and of the offspring of the moon.

We are here discussing merely the possibility that the Indian Avatars were simply deified men, without wishing to dispute the opinion previously expressed of their symbolic signification. The testimony of history often coincides with the idea of emanation, and the genealogy of avatars and heroes with the cosmogony of nature. The seven Menùs, for example, represent many periods of infinite duration, subordinate world-creators and world-disposers; the periods marked by the development and apparition of the highest avatars. But should we, therefore, deny every historical inference that may be drawn from that saga?

To pursue this investigation further at the present moment would lead us too much into details, and it may, perhaps, at some future day, be more amply illustrated by far richer sources that may then be opened to us. The present disquisition on the most important epoch of Oriental genius must be restricted to the principal features of Indian mythology, the intention of which is so clearly and prominently marked that, even with the little information we yet possess, it is impossible to mistake its intrinsic signification.

The doctrine of Emanation is seen in the most beautiful and favourable light when considered as a system of reunion with the divine essence. The divine origin of man is continually inculcated to stimulate his efforts to return, to animate him in the struggle, and incite him to consider a reunion and re-incorporation with divinity as the one primary object of every action and exertion. To this we may attribute the holy tendency of so many Indian laws, customs, and manners, and the severe and serious simplicity of their entire life. Still the spirit of those institutions may have early vanished, leaving only dead forms and penitential exercises too quickly assailed and undermined by the growth of error and superstition.

From these ideas of various kinds of living and conscious beings, concealed under such a vast diversity of forms, and of their perpetual approach towards or departure from the common source, arose the belief in the Metempsychosis or

* Casyapá, the ancient god of the heavens, with Aditi his consort.

transmigration of souls. With the same principle was closely connected the doctrine of a former life, or the pre-existence of the soul, and ideas or lofty thoughts and dim remembrances of an earlier period, illumined by the immediate aspect of divinity, and which were ever kindled and reawakened in the soul by the presence of the beautiful.* Calidásá, in the "Sacontala" (a national drama), frequently alludes to this doctrine as to one generally known and admitted. The Metempsychosis, wherever it is not viewed in a merely physical light, but as closely connected with a belief in the moral ruin and abasement of all created beings, is unquestionably of Indian origin, springing from the belief in emanation, and inculcating the necessity of repentance and purification as the terms of reunion with the Supreme Being. Thus the doctrine of the Metempsychosis, with all its Oriental accompaniments embodied in the teaching of Pythagoras, proves his philosophy to have been no Hellenistic invention, although it was soon developed and adorned with all the riches of Hellenistic genius and ingenuity. We must, then, also be prepared completely to reject the oldest and proportionately best accounts of the Pythagorean philosophy.

The same doctrine was common among the Celtic Druids, though by what channel it was conveyed thither is less certainly known: it is probable that the Etruscans and other people of Italy had adopted it before the time of Pythagoras, and we find very ancient traces of its existence even in the extreme north of Europe. If borrowed by Pythagoras from any distant country, he may well have derived it either from Egypt or Western Asia. The Egyptian treatment of the dead body, which they strove to eternise as much as possible, proves the marked difference existing in their ideas of immortality, although the general features and construction of the Egyptian mythology and religion assimilate closely to the Indian. Osiris, a suffering and dying god, the leading idea of Egyptian mythology, is best explained by a reference to the Indian belief in the misery of the natural world, and the deep degradation in which its original light and purity had become involved.

* "Dreams of a former, happier day,
When heaven was still the spirit's home,
And her wings had not yet fallen away!"
MOORE'S *Epicurean. Trans.*

## CHAP. III. — ON ASTROLOGY, AND THE WILD WORSHIP OF NATURE.

THE pure morality inculcated by the doctrine of Emanation, its positive richness and abundant development of animal life, give it the superiority over Pantheism, properly so called. which, from its irregular abstract and false conceptions of the infinite God, has long since been consigned to neglect and oblivion: still even emanation in its purest form cannot be wholly freed from the imputation of fatalism. The belief in predestination has already been noticed. It is most intelligibly indicated in the cosmogony of Menù, in a quotation which we extract from the tenth volume (the second of the poetry). The doctrine of the constant alternation of repose and activity, sleep and waking, of the Supreme Being, belongs to the same volume: —

"As he had created all things, which beyond the power of imagination to conceive, constantly developed themselves,
He sank back again into himself, time with time now alternating:
While God is waking, the world rises into motion and activity,
But if with calm mind he sleeps, then all decays and perishes."

He then describes more fully the manner in which all the earthly being is interwoven with the primitive power and energy: —

"As long as he sweetly sleeps, so of all his life he loses the strength."

And further:

"Thus alternating waking and sleep, every thing which moves or is at rest
He brings forth constantly into life, or exterminates it, himself unchangeable."

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"Numerous world-developments there are, creation, and extermination;
Sportively he produces either, the highest Creator for ever and ever."

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The idea of the absence of any specific design in the creation of the world, and of a merely capricious activity on the part of the Creator, is intimately connected with that of a ceaseless alternation and revolution. In later systems this

becomes a continual contraction and expansion of the ruling principle of strength, the pulsation of the soul of the world.

Fatalism unfolded among the ancients into a highly artistic and comprehensive system. Astrology too, with all its accompaniments of prediction, auguries, lucky and unlucky days, forms a most remarkable feature of ancient mythology, and even exerts an incalculable influence on modern times. The star-worship of the Egyptians, with which was combined an apparently rude adoration of nature, arose not so much from a wondering poetical veneration for the beautiful, but rather from the influence of astrology and divination. There exist in the human heart and brain so many impulses and principles likely to lead from the veneration of the divinity into a worship of rude natural strength, — the adoration of the Creator so easily sinks and degenerates into that of the thing created, that it would be superfluous to insist further on a point so well known and universally acknowledged; let it then suffice to observe, that in ancient Asia also, not mere indications, but absolute proofs, are everywhere to be found of a completely material train of thought. This materialism might, in contradistinction to that prevailing in Europe, be called the Oriental; and it is certainly, as far as it has hitherto been investigated, of a peculiar and very original character. In tracing the historical gradations and progress of Oriental philosophy, this doctrine appears immediately to succeed those of Emanation, Return, and Metempsychosis. The astrological belief might, perhaps, supply a clue for tracing the progress of degeneracy from the religious idea once entertained to one so entirely material; but this is not necessary; for in the cosmogony of Menù, the most ancient work yet known on Indian philosophy, many indications of materialism are to be found. The symbol of the world-egg * indeed, which is known also among the Egyptians, may be considered as a mere image of childlike antiquity; but the Matra, the seed particle of the world, must have had some reference to philosophy, whether the idea of separate atoms existed at this period also as well as subsequently; whether

* Brahmá is said to have been born in a golden egg, blazing like a thousand suns: after dwelling there for ages, meditating on himself, he divided the egg into two equal parts, and formed heaven and earth.— *Trans.*

those Greek philosophers were in the right who maintained that the atomic system was of Oriental origin, cannot be decided until we have a more perfect acquaintance with the sects of Paschandisten, Shoktisten, and the Atheistic systems, as Charval, &c., the principles of which may at least be clearly gathered from the refutations of their opponents, although their own writings are now almost entirely lost. The little we know of the philosophy of the Phœnicians is involved in too much uncertainty to afford any grounds for a decisive conclusion; the probability is, that its doctrines were solely and entirely of this kind.

The wild adoration of mere physical strength holds a far too important place in the various different elements out of which the religion of the Hindoos gradually developed itself. It is presented under two characters; sometimes as an inexhaustible creative power, and sometimes as an all-annihilating principle of destruction, and is thus embodied in the worship of Siva*, and of the terrific Durga.† Images of death and pleasure, intermingling in horrible combination Bacchantic licentiousness and bloody human sacrifices. The idea of eternity, interwoven with the general plan of this philosophy, and ever pointing backwards to a holier origin, invested the nature-worship and materialism of the Orientals with a peculiarly fearful character, far different from the mere sensuality which reigned in the religion of many wild and uncivilised nations; for the most frightful errors are too frequently produced by the perversion and demoralisation of the loftiest and noblest principles.

The worship of nature has extended so widely that our observations must be confined to a few of its most important peculiarities. All those gods whose wrath could be appeased, or their favour propitiated by human sacrifices, betray their affinity with the Indian Siva and Kali. To this class belong also the Baal and Moloch of the Syrians and Phœnicians: few people have ever been so completely under the dominion of materialism and the wild worship of nature as the Phœnicians. The Gallic Esus, too, was of the same family: in his worship the Gauls poured forth such streams

* Siva, Seeva; the same with Brahmá.

† Durga, the wife of Brahmá; the same with Seraswatti.

of blood as were unparalleled in ancient times, and of which the modern era affords no example, except in the idol worship of the Mexicans. The adoration of the Lingam, and the all-creating Yoni, holds a more important place in the star and animal worship of the ancient Egyptians than is generally supposed. The use of the Phallus in festivals and symbols is said by Herodotus to have been borrowed from the Egyptians. The emblematic monuments erected by the victorious Sesostris, at every stage of his progress, may be far more naturally explained as general symbols of this superstition than according to the moral signification assigned them by Herodotus, who considers them to have typified the masculine courage or womanly cowardice of the conquered nations. The Phœnician Astarte, the Phrygian Cybele, the Ephesian Artemisia, and even the German Hertha, perhaps differ only in unessential points from the Indian Bhavani.* The fundamental idea of all-creating infinite physical vigour is evidently the characteristic of each divinity. The worship of the goddess Mylitta, called by the Armenians Anaitis, and by the ancient Arabs Alilath, appears to have been most predominant in Babylon, and the states dependent on the Babylonian empire. It is not improbable that the term Yavanern is employed in old Indian MSS. to designate all those western nations who adhered to that worship, indicating not any distinct race or people, but a religious sect. Certainly the Yavanern mentioned in Menù's Book of Laws, with the Pahlavi, and other uncivilised races of the warrior stem, could not have been the Greeks who accompanied Alexander, because they are afterwards comprehended under the general denomination of people of the West.

A similar veneration of the physical strength and vigour of nature, although more refined and softened among the polished Greeks and Romans, and not carried out in so full and connected a form, was nevertheless the vital spirit of classic mythology, as must be acknowledged by all whose researches have not been purely antiquarian. A severe sense of propriety checked and restrained among the Romans the licentiousness of this wild nature-worship; either because with them the idea still retained more of its original purity and excellence, or from the influence exercised by the ad-

* Bhavani or Parvati, the wife of Siva.

mirable legislators of their earlier times. The structure of the Greek mythology, however, probably on account of the greater versatility and lightness of their character, was loose and free; and the ancient superstitions were lost ere long, or wrapt in a glowing veil of mythological fictions; while many separate ideas and doctrines were probably borrowed from a far better and purer system, of which we shall subsequently have occasion to speak.

Oriental Materialism possesses, in common with the doctrine of Emanation, an inexhaustible fund of fancy and imagination; nay, the wild enthusiasm, which there replaces the earlier impression of weariness and pain, is the one remarkable source of every gigantic invention in history or mythology. Even the deification of heroes was founded on the principle of nature-worship; the creative or destructive power of nature being so peculiarly evidenced in warriors and heroes, that they readily become personifications of those attributes. The six-armed war-god Carticeyà or Scondoh, is represented in Indian fable as the son and constant attendant of Siva. Perhaps not heroes only, but even great inventors and discoverers, were also deified. The human intellect must have been flattered in no slight degree by the first steps towards unveiling the mysteries of nature, since those early discoveries appear marvellous even to the calm investigator of history. With the worship of the stars and other works of creation which formed the theme of these discoveries, it seemed natural to combine the adoration of that wisdom and science which had led to the discoveries; this will account for the widely diffused idea of Hermes or Thauts, and possibly of the earliest Indian Buddha also. Ganeschah*, another inventive god, was the constant companion of Siva. I must remark, in conclusion, that the great antiquity of this portion of Indian philosophy and tradition, is incontestably proved by the monuments existing at Ellora, and in the island of Elephanta; the symbolism of the Indians, Egyptians, and even of the Greeks, can have arisen only from that source. Human sacrifices are commanded in the Veda to be offered to the goddess Kali; but before positively asserting this, it would perhaps be desirable to consult the text, with the assistance of a mature

* Ganesa, son of Siva, god of wisdom.

critical work, by which the antiquity of the whole might be satisfactorily proved, and later additions distinguished and separated from the original work.

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## Chap. IV. — The Doctrine of the Two Principles.

The subject we are now approaching is one of the most beautiful in the whole sphere of ancient Heathenism — the worship of light, and the sun. The doctrine of Dualism, the Oriental philosophy of two contending principles, and the eternal strife between good and evil, are all members or adjuncts of this religion. Wherever any traces of it are recognised, it appears to have maintained a vigorous contest against the material disposition of mind already noticed, even as though it were a reappearance of that divine light of truth, which was too early lost and forgotten. The spirit of this philosophy is completely ideal: it is true that the idea of self-acting *oneness* (ichheit) is common to all Indian systems; and the derivation of all light and vigour from the spiritual essence of the *one* Supreme Being is found to be of more universal acceptation the higher we advance in tracing the history of Oriental philosophy: in this sense, therefore, the epithet Ideal may justly be applied to almost every Eastern system. The peculiar affinity of Oriental and European Idealism consists principally in the opinion that activity, life, and freedom can alone be recognised as actually effective in their operation; dead repose and motionless inactivity being condemned as utterly void and ineffective. It is true that great philosophical difficulties may be raised against this system, considered as such; if, for example, the principle of evil be described, as in eternal opposition to all holiness and virtue, we must recognise the existence of a separate power, distinct from, if not co-equal with, the Supreme Divinity, and consequently maintaining the position he occupies in the world by his own independent strength, and thus destroying all idea of unity. But if, as is usually the case, it be asserted that the opposing principle is finally overpowered and subdued, Ahriman being transformed, and once more united

with and reconciled to Ormuz, the principle of disunion is virtually abandoned; everything melts pantheistically into one single essence, and the eternal distinction between good and evil is completely set aside. Yet, notwithstanding these defects, the intellectual religion of the Persians deserves to rank next to the Christian faith and doctrine, as propounded in the Old Testament and developed and completed in the New: its severe truth and high moral tendency give it a decided superiority to all other Oriental systems.

The distinction between good and evil must unavoidably be neutralised by the doctrines of Pantheism. However it may seek in words to refute that imputation, a belief in emanation crushes all freedom of mind and spirit, by the infinite weight of conscious guilt, and the conviction that all created beings have been wretched from their eternal origin, down to the present time. The doctrine of the Two Principles, and of the strife between good and evil, forms a medium between those two extremes, and is in itself a mighty impulse, prompting to a similar struggle, an unquenchable source of pure morality and virtue. Whatever may have been the hidden origin of this doctrine and these systems, they must, undoubtedly, be referred to a period of very remote antiquity; for Zerdusht merely reproduced the doctrines, and can scarcely, indeed, have been the first even to revive them; their origin must unquestionably claim our veneration, even if it be not esteemed divine, for the free life of pure moral strength cannot be embodied in theory, unless it be first in active operation. This doctrine is, indeed, no subtle speculation of inventive fancy; and the strife between the principles of good and evil will be an empty and unmeaning phrase to all except those who, animated by a pure enthusiasm for virtue and holiness, have striven, with the whole energy and power of their nature, against the prevailing power and encroachments of the spirit of evil. Although from the simplicity of its structure and component parts, this philosophy may be reduced to a system, it does indeed deserve a far loftier name, — it is life and action. Whoever, by his own free operation, has gained a consciousness of his moral existence, may thence be enabled to comprehend the life of nature.

This religion does not make the wild vigour or destruc-

tive power of nature the objects of its adoration; not enjoyment nor death, but the purest and most beneficent elements, fire and light, therefore life, and indwelling spirit generally. The seven Amshaspands or genii of the elements, and primary powers of existence, stand, like so many kings of nature, around the throne of their sovereign ruler. Heaven is thronged by the sacred Feruers, the divine prototypes and ideas of all created things. Mythras, the star of day, and friend of man, stands as the mediator between him and the divinity; all bloody sacrifices are abolished, and the sacred union and enjoyment of the pure Hom and Miezd, consecrated by the priest at the altar, signifies an internal communion with God, through the noblest strength and luxuriant produce of his blooming productions.

The adoration of the elements, however, is not the only characteristic feature of this religion; heroes and warriors, also, became objects of worship; yet they were no longer adored merely as destroyers and conquerors, nor reverenced on account of their physical strength and vigour, but as heavenly conquerors of the giants, triumphant over the powers of darkness and the spirits of hell. The combat between Iran and Turan is but an earthly counterpart of the eternal struggle between the powers of good and evil, perpetually carried on in heaven. Feridun and Rustan, whose names have been so often celebrated in heroic song, subdue and fetter the savage strength of Zohak and Afrasiab; but Dschemschid appears, resplendent above them all, the ideal of a perfect king, shining forth in the gloom of an obscure antiquity. A realm of perfect happiness, where light at length reigns triumphant in joy and blessedness, becomes a necessary appendage of this system of philosophy, no less than the perfection of the original condition of the world, when Meshia and Meshianes wandered in the garden of innocence: a condition which the religion of Zerdusht seeks only to restore.

All the loveliest fables of Indian mythology owe their birth to this philosophy. We may trace back to this source the all-preserving, beneficent, and sagacious Vishnoo, with his followers and attendants. His feminine image and consort has, however, no resemblance to the wild spouse of Siva, the fearful Kali. She is the lily of heaven (Pedmah), the

blessed and ever blessing goddess Lacshmi, or Sri, the lovely daughter of the benignant sea-god Varuna. Cama, the god of love, is always found near to her, and the sun-god Indrá, the friend of man, surrounded by all blessed and beneficent spirits, genii, and celestial nymphs. Vishnoo frequently appeared upon earth, under the various forms of a king, a sage, a wonder-working warrior and hero, but always with the intention of checking the progress of crime, exterminating giants and unfriendly powers, and animating all good genii to support and protect their leader, the high-souled Indrá.

This noble idea has been greatly defaced by arbitrary fables and inventions; feigning that God, like another Proteus, assumed not only the human form, and appeared in the character of a philosopher or hero, but also took that of a turtle, a boar, a man-lion, and a fish. Still, the mere conception of so grand an idea as the incarnation of a God, is an abiding proof of the profound reflective character of the Indian mind, and of the high degree of intelligence with which that people was endowed. The same pure and beautiful idea of affording salvation to the pure in heart, and annihilating all evil and destructive powers, may be seen under every variety of form. We occasionally find in other systems of mythology, if based on high moral principles, such descriptions of heroes as almost answer to our ideas of god-like virtue; heroes, who, obedient to sublime laws, and in the performance of glorious duties, laboured only to subvert the wicked, and raise and protect the good. But in no Hercules or hero of the poet's song is the idea of deified humanity so vividly embodied as in that of the Indian Ramá, the generous conqueror, whose voluntary exile and loneliness, and sometimes fortunate, sometimes unhappy affection for Sita, has been so sweetly and deliciously sung.

This doctrine mounts to a still higher grade of perfection, if we consider the lofty morality in life and doctrine of the Indian hermits and munis, particularly as they are described in the Puranas. The austere self-denial of those old penitents and rishis, who by voluntary and self-inflicted torture thought to extort as it were a higher degree of virtue, happiness, and supernatural power, are thrown rather into the background, and we are struck occasionally by the sweetest

resignation and trust in God, a sentiment fraught with humility and pure heavenly love.

The worship of Vishnoo holds so important a place in the philosophy of the Vedas, that it becomes a question of surpassing interest, whether the doctrines and opinions there promulgated concerning him are precisely the same as those contained in the Puranas. This certainly is not the case in the book of Menù, but the question need not now be debated, as we already possess sufficient data to enable us to arrange in their proper order the various stages and strata of its general progress and development, but without attempting to determine the exact chronology of each, or to form them into a regular history.

This system is not purely poetical, although many and indeed the most beautiful among the Persian and Indian fables were founded on the doctrine of the two principles and the worship of the free spirit of nature. The full meaning and intention of many fictions of the Greek and Latin mythology also, as well as the Northern, is first seen when they are considered as forming part of that cycle of ideas. Still, notwithstanding their inherent poetic spirit, they will generally be found susceptible of a philosophical construction and interpretation. Even in the symbolism of the Persians we discover a certain regular proportion in the symbolic figures, a form symmetrically constructed, and the first germ of which is in Dualism, in the antagonism or alternate manifestation of the primary powers. It seems highly probable that a philosophical system of similar intent and spirit was also common among the Indians. Whether the principles of Dualism were contained in the Nyayà philosophy*, next to the Mimansà the oldest now extant, or whether the two systems of Madhwo and Ramanujo, into which the adherents of Vishnoo divided themselves, and which are noticed and contrasted in the writings of the

* The word Nyayà in the MS. copy of the *Amaracosha*, is explained by *certamen*, combat, unless the name of that philosophy should be differently derived through *niyole*, he ordains (*constituit*), whence *niti*, the doctrine of morality. According to the first explanation, Nyayà may also be supposed to mean dialectic; but our ideas of Indian philosophy are as yet so undecided, that Nyayà is sometimes explained as referring to a branch of philosophic logic, and at others as a decided system, and belonging to a distinct sect.

Vedas, arose from the same source, may be seen by future researches, which may also decide the question as to whether Zerdusht adopted Indian doctrines exclusively, or the reverse. Since so much unquestionably proceeded from India, may not a little at least have flowed back thither? It should be constantly remembered that this is by no means impossible, and we ought therefore to be on our guard against mistaking circumstances, which are merely of frequent occurrence, for an universal law to the neglect of individual dissimilarities.

Some foreign admixtures may be discovered in almost every branch of Indian writings, but the Puranas are unquestionably the first in which the religion and fictions of Vishnoo predominate, partly, indeed, in the same philosophical sense which they bear in later systems. We also meet in the Puranas with personages and histories borrowed from the Holy Scriptures; not merely those which, like the history of Noah, were familiar to all nations and people, but others also which appear peculiar to the sacred writings; the history of Job, for example: still we must not too hastily conclude that they were borrowed immediately from the records of the Old Testament by Indian poets and sages, for it is probable that the Hebrews and Persians, and again the Persians and Indians, may have had more ideas in common than is usually supposed.

Although the system we have been describing appears in a most favourable light, in comparison with other ancient superstitions, still even here, as in every case in which the high manifestation of divine light was not preserved in unsullied purity in the soul, errors and superstitions early became annexed to the truth, and the false bias given in those ancient times was followed up with so much eagerness and unanimity, that the most beautiful and sublime ideas often gave rise to customs and ceremonies which cannot be contemplated without abhorrence. A feeling of the ineffable beauty, purity, and holiness of the primal elements, though in itself both poetically beautiful and at the same time a profound and unquestionable truth, gave birth to an anxious and fearful horror of polluting and corrupting that sacred spring of life, the etherial essence of nature, by contact with human corpses. To inter a dead body in the earth,

or even to consume it in the still holier element of fire, was therefore condemned by the Persian religion as almost the greatest crime of which any human being could be guilty, and hence arose the fearful practice, common among the ancient Magi, of giving the bodies of their dead to be torn to pieces by wild beasts; a custom which is still in force in Thibet, notwithstanding the change of religion: it has even extended into the northern corner of Asia, as far as Kamschatka, in the same manner in which customs and ceremonies often subsist, even when the government or legislation under which they were first appointed is no longer in being. This belief, however, is not generally insisted upon as a philosophical principle, or at least not as a severe and exclusive system; and it is therefore probable that many old astrological errors and superstitions may similarly have crept into the pure worship of nature and the elements, or may soon have found a path of return thither.

That divine light of which the present treatise more peculiarly treats, was constantly described as a principle and essence of gradual development; the morning dawn heralding a better time, but preceded by a far different period of darkness and obscurity: we are thus led back to the material idea of original gloom and chaos, and of Night, the mother of all created things.

I recall these facts merely in refutation of the belief that a mythology which, like the Greek, sprang from Chaos, or Night, as the mother of all things, must consequently be pure materialism, and be incompatible with the clear and glowing ideas which distinguished the Oriental systems, and whose influence is so widely different throughout the realms of fancy and imagination.

Yet the religion of light, originally so pure and beautiful, has been much corrupted in other respects. This system of philosophy has had more influence than any other, except the astrological superstition, on the establishment and formation of secret societies and mysteries. A loftier degree of illumination ought indeed to bring with it an increase of humility and love; but the slightest estrangement from the pure source of truth, even in the most highly gifted, leads to pride rather than to more gentle and gracious sentiments; and those who believed themselves endowed with

clearer revelations of hidden wisdom, separating in disdainful and mysterious selfishness from their fellow-men, presumed in their seclusion to assume the place of that Providence which governs all, considering other men but as blind tools for the working out of their peculiar aim and object, and holding themselves justified in thus employing them.

This was probably the case in the earliest antiquity, as well as in our own time, and perhaps far more frequently than is usually imagined.

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## Chap. V. — Pantheism.

Among the various Oriental systems of philosophy, which, on account of their great historic weight and widely extended influence, claim our consideration, one only, Pantheism, now remains to be noticed. The spirit of this system may be recognised in the religion of the Buddhists, which at the commencement of the Christian era, 1000 years after its first origin, was common to the natives of Thibet, China, Ceylon, and the whole eastern peninsula of India, besides the people of Tartary and the North. The doctrine of the nothingness of all matter, to which the belief in its unity or oneness so naturally leads, has at least been attributed to Fo, the Chinese philosopher, as his peculiar, most essential, and esoteric doctrine, founded on the clearest and most distinct science; but a doctrine which supposes every object in creation to be thus nullified and absorbed into an abstract and negative conception of the Eternal, is too thoroughly visionary and untenable to subsist for more than a very brief period.

It must not be forgotten that the Pantheistic philosophy is considered the latest of the Oriental systems; the historical evidence on which this is asserted will be cited below; and I shall merely remark in this place, that the profound and vital idea originally entertained of the Eternal and his almighty power, must have been greatly vitiated and enfeebled before it could descend to lose itself in the false and visionary notion of the oneness or unity of all things, so distant too

from the doctrine of their nullity. All other Oriental doctrines, however disguised by error and fiction, are founded in, and dependent on, divine and marvellous revelations; but Pantheism is the offspring of unassisted reason, and therefore marks the transition from the Oriental to the European philosophy. It is no less flattering to the self-conceit of man than to his indolence. When once men have arrived at the conclusion that all is unity, an opinion at once so comprehensive and all-annihilating, further research or investigation is deemed superfluous; every thing that is divine, drawn from other sources, or believed in by other men, appears, to their superficial reasoning, to be merely the delusive folly of superstition, and even life itself, with its mutations, is, in their eyes, but a fallacious and unsubstantial semblance of reality.

If any energy of mind or depth of feeling still survive, and the doctrine he carried out in its fullest scope and intensity, it certainly assumes a very different, and at the same time a most fearful, character. In India more especially, it has frequently prompted a system of voluntary and self-inflicted torture, which to the calm contemplator seems almost incredible: like the spirit-crushing martyrdom of the Yogis and Sonnyasis, who aimed at a total annihilation of self as the highest perfection. In colder and feebler natures, however, the doctrine of Pantheism engendered a belief that guilt itself was but an empty delusion, and the conviction that all, being one, must be equally perfect, brought with it a false and glittering semblance of internal peace.

In China, however, where Pantheism prevailed long before the time when the religion of Buddha was introduced, this latter may perhaps have borrowed a little from the former. In other countries, generally, Buddhism assumes a very mingled form, and we find in it many doctrines drawn from the worship of Siva especially. In Tartar Buddhism we discover a more than usually hideous and distorted image of the fearful and destructive power of divinity. Turner found in Thibet festivals of Kalí, the restoration of Carticeya and Ganesa, and the entire suite of Siva.

The Chinese Number-philosophy, as set forth in the old Y-king*, the Book of Unity, comprises another and very

* I-king, sometimes called the Book of Changes.

pure system of Pantheism. This is one of the most remarkable records existing of Oriental philosophy. Although Fo-hi, who is named as its author, is a merely fictitious character, still the circumstance that the true meaning of the work had long been a subject of dispute even in the time of Kon-fu-tse* (in the year 550 B.C.), who was the last of its classical expounders, proves it at once to have been of great antiquity. It is not written in the ordinary character, but in peculiarly simple forms and symbols, and is therefore the less likely to have been changed or falsified. The great Supreme Being, of whom this hieroglyphic book treats, is also called Tao, or divine reason, through which all things are created; or Tai-ki, the great supreme point, through whom all things are produced, and in whom all distinction and separation terminates.† This great one is divided into two primary equations, or beings of contrasting powers and attributes, from whose various connexions and combinations every thing comes into existence according to a certain fixed mechanism and blind necessity, the laws of which are imposed by Tao. The Yn and Yang—the perfect, masculine and active; and the imperfect, feminine and passive; are symbolised, the first by entire and unbroken, the second by a broken line; these again produce four other combinations, signs, or symbols, as they are called; the greater and lesser Yang, and the greater and lesser Yn, respectively expressed by two broken or unbroken lines placed parallel, and the two lesser by a broken line placed above or below the unbroken. The eight koua, or symbols, in the threefold combination of the Yang and Yn, are the eight elemcntary powers.‡ Moral ideas might once have been conveyed by the six-fold combination and reduplication of

* Confucius.

† The great first principle has engendered or produced two equations and differences, or primary rules of existence, but these two primary rules or oppositions, namely, Yn and Yang, or repose and motion,—the affirmative and negative, as we might otherwise call them,—have produced four signs or symbols, and these four symbols have produced the eight koua, or further combinations. See *Philosophy of History*, p. 130.

‡ 1. Kien, or ether. 2. Kni, or pure water. 3. Li, or pure fire. 4. Tchin, or thunder. 5. Tiun, the wind. 6. Kan, common water. 7. Keu, a mountain, and 8. Kuen, the earth.—*Schlegel's Philosophy of History*, p. 131.

that triple form. But all are soon lost in a mere play of numbers, — or, to speak philosophically, all that apparent individuality is merely a difference in degree and combination. In the Number-philosophy of Kon-fu-tse, the five, as the perfect middle number, ranks highest, and not the four or the six, as in other systems of Number-philosophy; and the five first even numbers, up to ten, belong, according to him, to the heavenly, the five uneven, on the contrary, to the earthly powers.

If Pantheism is not a mere theory and sentiment, as would appear from the description of the Indian Yogis and Sonnyasis, contained in the Bhagavatgita, but is considered in the light of a scientific system, it will prove to be nothing more than a combination-play of the positive and negative, framed according to the mere mechanism of reason, which is far better expressed by a number-symbolism of the kind above described, than it could be in words. Finding a place as it does in the earliest form of Pantheism, it appears probable that it originated in the later alterations and debasement of Dualism. When the doctrine of the Two Principles ceased to be a religious belief, and was degraded into a merely philosophical system, the idea of the two primal powers being united and absorbed into one higher being could hardly fail to be admitted.

The original signification of the Yang is, according to De Guignes, *light* and movement; of the Yn, *darkness* and repose. Many Chinese doctrines and traditions, before the time of Kon-fu-tse, bear an undeniable resemblance to the Persian ideas, similar to that which we have already noticed between the Chinese and Scriptural records. Those countries had, indeed, more intercourse than would appear at the first glance. The principal seat of the old religion of China was in the north-west province of Shen-see, and the Persian faith ruled in Bactria. The philosopher Laokiun had journeyed far into the west.

Is it not possible, then, that a similar connexion may have subsisted between the Indian Sanchyà, or Number-philosophy of Kopilo, and the Chinese? The philosophy of Fo did, undoubtedly, at a later period, travel from India into China, and may not the same have happened with other systems? In the commentary on Menù's book of laws,

Mahat and Avyakto, the mighty, the incomprehensible and indivisible, are cited as the two principles of the philosophy of Kopilo. But perhaps this apparent Dualism had a similar meaning in the Y-king. The Bhagavatgita removes every doubt as to the Pantheistic tendency of the Sanchyà philosophy, and we must therefore conclude that the author either completely misunderstood it, or violently wrested the meaning to support his own system. In the Bhagavatgita, and all other works ascribed to Vyasa, we remark the prevalence of the Vedantà philosophy, of which he was the founder, and this system is consequently better known to us than any other Indian theory.

It is clearly seen, even from the translation, to be pure Pantheism; and the philosophical precision of the original record would probably make some passages even more forcible. Certainly, however, it was, as its name, Vedanta, indicates, merely a remodelling of that ancient Indian system hallowed by the tradition of the Vedas.

The ancient Saga, as well as the ancient construction, are preserved throughout; but, wherever it is possible, the new meaning is interpolated, and all referred to that one great supreme being — the highest Brahmà; also Ghuinyon, the object of knowledge, is here expressively defined as the medium between being and not being, — Sot and Osot (chap. 13.). Yet there are numerous passages directed against the Veda itself; and the unqualified praise bestowed upon the Sanchyia philosophy, in preference to every other, seems to indicate an actual agreement with that system.

It has, nevertheless, been maintained by some few writers, that these three systems are three branches of philosophy, the Sanchyà being physics, the Mimansà ethics, and the Nyayà dialectics; while others, on the contrary, consider them to be so many systems of philosophy; among which, the Nyayà would deserve peculiar attention, as one of the most ancient, and, with the exception of the Mimansà, the only one mentioned in the book of Menù, and numbered with it among the Upangas.* The moral spirit of the Mimansà, and the speculative creativeness of the Sanchyà, agree with the rank which we have assigned them in our

* There are four Upangas, called Puraná, Vyáya, Mimansà, and Dhermasástra. — *Sir Wm. Jones.*

systematic arrangement of Indian philosophy. A further acquaintance with Indian works may render a more distinct division possible; it is enough for the present that Menù's book of laws enables us to judge with tolerable accuracy of those very ancient Indian doctrines, which form the basis of their legislature, — the essential characteristics of the Vedantà philosophy (which, as the latest, closes the entire series of Indian literature,) are plainly set forth in the Bhagavat-gita.

Indian literature may, for the greater facility of investigation, be provisionally divided into four epochs. The first will comprise the Vedas, and other writings closely connected with them, as Menù's book of laws: the Vedas, though perhaps corrupted by single interpolations, cannot have been entirely remodelled; and the fact that, in so short a space of time, vocabularies were already required for the correct understanding of the text, argues much in favour of its genuineness. The intention ascribed to the Rigvéda and Yajurvéda, compiled in prose, was different, being that of a magical and liturgical cosmogony; while the Sámavéd, in verse, is moral, but probably with many mythical and historical circumstances interwoven, as is the case with the Manovondhormoshastron.

Another grand epoch is formed by the works ascribed to Vyasá, the eighteen Puranas, the Mahábhárata, and the Vedantá philosophy. Although the books attributed to him are so numerous that they cannot possibly have been the production of one single individual, still it is probable that a similarity of doctrine and opinion prevails in all, with but little dissimilarity in the general style, from which, however, that of Menù's Book of Laws differs in a remarkable degree.

As the Vedas appear to give the earliest intelligible indications of the gradual and mysterious operation of a false tendency, the writings which intervene between it and the Puranas will probably prove equally instructive and important. Nearly all the philosophical writings of earlier date than the Vedanta may be classed with them, some being simply in accordance with it, as the Sanchyá, and others again disputing and opposing the doctrines inculcated in it; besides these, the Rámáyana, and probably also many other poems, which are afterwards more fully worked up in the

Puranas. The great antiquity of the Mahabharatá and Rámáyana, in the internal structure at least, if not in outward form, is incontestably proved by the monuments existing at Ellora and elsewhere.

This, then, I should term the second epoch. The Puranas and other works of Vyasá form the third; finally the fourth and latest epoch is formed by Calidás and other poets, who clothed the old sagas and legends which till then had been considered the exclusive property of the priesthood, in more popular forms as dramas or poems, and thus fitted them for universal admiration and appreciation.

But the most important periods of Indian, and indeed of Oriental philosophy and religion generally, are the following: first, the diffusion of the pure doctrine of Emanation, which at length degenerated into astrological superstition and fanatic materialism; and the doctrine of the Two Principles, which subsequently was transformed from Dualism into Pantheism.

Oriental philosophy and its influence on the human mind has never been more deeply debased than in its alliance with Pantheism, which is as destructive to morality as even Materialism, while its influence on fancy and imagination is equally fatal. It is quite probable that in India, where, notwithstanding a great apparent uniformity, there existed such a diversity of intellectual and spiritual development, many single instances of ordinary scepticism or even of an empiric tendency may be found. But whether these indications were ever developed into a regular system, or arranged in a more scientific form, has not yet been decided.

I have merely attempted at present to direct your attention to the most important of these systems — those which form epochs and illustrate the general progress of Oriental literature and philosophy. I have intentionally omitted many which might nevertheless have illustrated the contrast and affinity between the different systems, the gradual transition from one to another, or the entire development and formation of each separate scheme and its different modifications, as the great diversity of these contemplations would probably have interfered too much with our consideration of the peculiar theme of this treatise.

BOOK III.

# HISTORICAL IDEAS.

## CHAP. I. — ON THE ORIGIN OF POETRY.

THE ancient forms of speech, which I have attempted in the first book to trace from the root to their loftiest and widest ramifications, constitute a record, far more valuable and instructive than all those monuments of stone, the half ruined, giant grandeur of which, at Persepolis, Ellora, or in Egyptian Thebes, are still contemplated, after the lapse of ages, with wonder and reverence. The question of religion, however, — the one idea ever predominant in all ages of the world, — cannot with any propriety be omitted in the history of mankind, either of ancient or modern times. I have therefore laid before you in the preceding book an analysis of the successive development of the Oriental mind, in its four most remarkable systems, or rather according to the four most important periods of Oriental genius. The present book will be devoted to the consideration of certain historical results, which appear to be the natural consequence of the immutable principles of faith already noticed; and which, though merely hinted at, at present, may at a future period be enlarged upon in some more elaborate work on the History of Antiquity.

Instead of bewildering myself and my readers with isolated comparisons between the Indian and different other systems of mythology, I shall rather attempt to give a general outline of the earliest Oriental modes of thought, according to the evidence supplied by authentic records. The darkness and confusion of that period can only be satisfactorily elucidated by a thoroughly comprehensive review of the entire scheme of mythology; and such a review, if properly combined at the same time with an inquiry into the historical genealogy of the language, will

afford a clue to assist our progress through that ancient labyrinth, and to point out to us the way of return to holiness and light. The inexhaustible and peculiar development remarkable in these ancient systems must also be passed over; but although it is quite impossible to trace back to any one definite source the entire abundance of imitative fancy displayed in them, it cannot be denied that many general resemblances exist even in the most varied and discursive systems, and nothing in all that arbitrary play of poetic diction is completely without intention; much will be found which leads back to one and the same general signification, not only in what is usually termed allegoric, but still more in the spirit, the tenor, and the general impulse manifest throughout the whole series. The one general idea which lies at the root of every system of polytheism will partially explain the origin of mythology, or at least indicate the point from whence it first arose, and the manner in which in its further development it followed the progress of the human mind.

The first germ of polytheism is contained in the doctrine of Emanation,—that is to say, of the eternal and progressive development of the Divinity, and of universal spiritual animation. The belief in astrology, and the sensual adoration of nature, called forth the abounding riches of ancient mythological fables, which were subsequently softened, beautified, and enriched by the doctrine of the two principles — the religion of light, and the pious and divinely inspired hero-worship; but as soon as pantheistic ideas were introduced, at whatever period that may have been, mythology, ere long, became regarded merely in the light of allegory, or as an esoteric veil of poetic fancy and diction. The Greek mythology is perhaps the richest in symmetrical development, but the Indian is far more comprehensive in its mystical ideality; which, indeed, appears to have been transfused from thence into every other system. It would be difficult to point out any idea or doctrine, common in either of the different intellectual systems, which was not also known among the Indians; nor any fable holding a distinguished place in merely poetical mythologies, the counterpart of which does not exist also in the Indian.

In the preceding book we have shown the rank which

ought to be assigned in the series to Egyptian and Syriac mythology; European traditions, and the poems of the Celtic, Roman, Greek, German, and Sclavonian mythologies may be viewed in the same light, and though still involved in considerable obscurity, their genius and general progress will thus be rendered intelligible. We have arranged the different systems of the above-named mythologies in such order as will correspond with the regular succession of the different doctrines introduced. As most decided traces of the ancient system of metempsychosis are found in the Celtic religion, we might expect that the Latin mythology would contain more vestiges of it than that of the Greeks. Dualism, or the strife between the two principles of good and evil, was a predominant feature in Sclavonian mythology*; that doctrine, together with the worship of the elements, which we have been accustomed to combine with the former, was not unknown in Germany. The Greek appears to stand in the exact medium between both. It is less confined to any strict philosophical intention than any other, and is, on the contrary, more entirely poetical.

An unexpected light is thrown by the Indian system upon the source and peculiar character of Greek poetry. It has,

* The Sclavonians of the Baltic acknowledged two principles, one of good, the other of evil; they called the former Biel Bog (Bog in Sclavonian signifies God) or the White God, from whom all that was good proceeded; and the second Cherni Bog, or Black God, who was the cause of all evil; this latter was represented in the form of a lion. The most celebrated idol, whose temple was at Arcina, was Sviatovid, that is "holy sight:" he had two chests and four heads. There were other divinities, such as Potenut, with four faces (probably the god of seasons, from the word *pora*, season,) and a fifth face on his breast; Porevit, with five hands; Bughevit, supposed god of war, with seven faces, seven swords at his side, and an eighth in his hand, &c. The Sclavonian deities usually have more than one head; many have in some part of their body a human face, signifying the good principle, or a lion's head, denoting the evil principle. Many have also the figure of a beetle on them, which might denote an Egyptian origin.

The Eastern Sclavonians worshipped Perun, or the god of thunder; Volos, the god of the flocks; Koleda, the god of festivals; Kupala, the god of the fruits of the earth. Dittman, a German writer, pretends that the Pagan Sclavonians did not believe in the immortality of the soul; but that statement is sufficiently refuted by several customs and ceremonies which they observed for the repose of the dead.— *Extracted from the Penny Cyclopædia.*

indeed, a two-fold origin; the one is natural, that feeling which, alike in uncultivated or highly civilised nations, has every where breathed itself forth in song; the other, the mystical element of ancient poetry, which cannot be so simply explained: we may not say of this last-mentioned as of that which is the natural offspring of feeling, that it exists every where, the growth of a spontaneous impulse, common in the new world as well as in the old; it is a poetry, the spring of which lies deeply interwoven with the ancient tissue of fancy and religion.

The copiousness of the earliest poetry, and its wild and gigantic creations, arose from a superstitious worship of the divinely productive power in nature, and the idea of infinity attached to it; and when the beautiful light of a softer, holier inspiration beamed upon those rude fables, their very wildness gave them the stamp of poetry and imagination. This is precisely the character of Greek poetry, and of that especially in which, as is most generally the case, the richness and vigour of ancient superstitions are still in vital operation, and the belief in the gods has not yet evaporated into the mere imagery of poetic diction.

Let us not, like ordinary letter-learned critics, study the form alone without the spirit, but rather contemplate the inner life of that mythology, and we shall find that all their poems are of one description, mythic or heroic. If we reject all immaterial differences of outward form, we shall see that in Homer as well as in Æschylus, in Pindar as in Sophocles, the blending of that originally wild and gigantic power with softer and sweeter impulses, gives a peculiar fascination to their writings; though all may vary much in proportion to their different degree of deviation from, or approximation to, the primary idea, or in individual traits of loveliness or harshness.

This, and this alone, is true poetry; all to which that name has been given in later times, when art had annexed so much to the original germ, becomes so only when it breathes a kindred spirit with those old heathen fictions, or because it springs from them. If it were not too bold to hazard a conjecture from the few fragments now in our possession, I should imagine that Indian poetry, in this its peculiar essence, was not so very different to the ancient

Greek, except that the former, if I may so speak, is designed on far grander proportions, the original ground work of the fables being generally more strange and wild, but softened down in later times into a spiritual loveliness, which is in form even more morally and intellectually beautiful than the grace of Pindar and Sophocles.

The first source and origin of the imitative arts also, among the Indians, Egyptians, and ancient Greeks, is identical in character with that of their heroic poetry. The same combination of gigantic boldness and softness, which constitutes the very essence of classic poetry, gave its peculiar expression to the plastic beauty of Grecian art; at least, as long as the minds of their sculptors were still imbued with their first lofty impulses, before old traditions became extinct, and the genius of the art was entirely lost.

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## Chap. II. — Of the earliest Emigration of Nations.

Poetry was intrinsically bound up with the religion of antiquity, and so completely *one* with it, that many ideas which, at the first glance, appear to us strange and inexplicable, arose naturally from the manner of thought then prevailing, and undoubtedly exerted a potent influence on the earliest adventures and migrations of nations or tribes; although, as has frequently been the case in later periods, the force of necessity, and the allurement of interest, stimulated and co-operated with those ideas.

Wherever fields and towns, the primitive arts of war and peace had been called into existence, trade and commerce began to flourish in equal proportion with building and agriculture; and the same influences which in modern history appear to reign supreme, were not without some weight, even in the first ages of antiquity. Before, however, we enter into an inquiry concerning the influence exercised by religion on the establishment of the first Indian colonies, it will be necessary to make a few preliminary observations on the proper light in which to contemplate these earliest emigrations, and their general origin and variety.

If the entire diversity of these people and nations is to be made the theme of our investigation, it will be expedient first to set aside the arbitrary supposition of their common origin, and of their separation having been occasioned by subsequent causes; and to divide the various races of people according to their greater or less antiquity, even as the skilled geologist, attentively observing the position of the various strata of the earth, in mountains or on the level surface of the plain, calculates the period of formation of each. Here also language presents the first characteristic to be observed; but it should be studied rather in its intellectual structure than from the roots merely, which may be called the natural parts, and in which the points of resemblance usually discovered are frequently over-strained and far-fetched. The point next in importance to that of language, is the use of metals, as well copper and iron in war or agriculture, as the employment of gold and silver for arbitrary, universal signs of the outward value of things; to these points may be added the domestication of useful animals, and especially of those which are indispensable in the two arts before mentioned. Still the fact, that none of the beasts of burden which had so long been generally in use throughout the old world were known in America at its first discovery, cannot be taken as a decisive proof that the American race is totally distinct from the Asiatic; the numerous American dialects and their general dissimilarity, and the many singular customs which are nevertheless common to all those tribes, together with their universal ignorance of the use of metals, might lead to the same conclusion. Nevertheless the eastern islands, which are clearly proved, by speech and other indications, to be of Asiatic descent, are equally destitute of the larger animals; and as the strangers who founded the kingdoms of Peru and Mexico, and who came originally from Asia or Europe, (as is historically proved by Chinese records, and partly by the authentic sagas of the Mexicans,) either did not bring those animals with them, or knew not how to preserve them when brought, we may reasonably conclude the same to have occurred with the primitive settlers in America. In eastern Asia, much may be found that coincides generally with America. The extensive employment of metals and beasts of burden in the

interior of Africa, is far from sufficient to prove that those nations are of Asiatic origin; no evidence exists in corroboration of this opinion, and there is no ground for disputing the numerous facts which militate against its adoption.

The physical varieties remarked in different races of mankind are not, as far as has hitherto been ascertained, of material importance. The greatest and most remarkable discrepancy is apparent in the natives of America, who, towards the south of that country, have so much of the negro character; but in the north, the white skin and other peculiarities of Europeans, as well as the inhabitants of the west part of central Asia, partake, in the same degree as those people, of the characteristics of the Asiatics. This would also presuppose a greater physical flexibility and suppleness in the Asiatic race, tending perhaps no less to the deterioration than to the ennobling of the original stock, since the language, historical records, and many other circumstances, sufficiently prove the Asiatic descent of the white European family, as well as of the black inhabitants of southern India and the Indian Islands.

Thus the distribution of races of men, like the internal formation of mountains to the geologist, supplies a portion of our lost historical records, laying before us, as it were, a ground-plan of history, which affords in some parts the most irresistible and conclusive proofs, and in others, is as equally unintelligible; for although it may assist us in tracing the general connexion, it cannot undertake to embrace the whole exuberance of individual detail.

Another point, no less important to the historical investigator, is the intermixture of people which so frequently took place in the Persian empire, especially along the Gihon and Euphrates, towards the Caucasus and Asia Minor, and in the central western division of that anciently inhabited portion of the globe. If to set these facts distinctly before the reader lay within the sphere of our present inquiry, I should now endeavour to illustrate the manner in which a new people may be formed through the effects of continual migration alone; that is to say, in what way sudden changes of climate and of the ordinary habits of life would naturally lead to a great revolution in language and manners, so that a very trifling intermixture with branches of another

stock would suffice to produce an entirely new nation, stamped with a complete individuality of character; which, when the moment of separation and fermentation had subsided, would afterwards continue unaltered through thousands of succeeding years. It might then be possible to decide with what degree of justice central Asia has been usually represented in history as the general parent, the inexhaustible spring of all people thence emigrating; and how far, and in what measure, it is actually clear that the twofold stream of emigration, the course of which was more usually and naturally directed towards the north-west, in this instance led from the east and south together; and how this district, in which the intermixture of nations was most various and fruitful, became actually, from the earliest antiquity, the scene of their origin and development.

While the emigration of nations is regarded merely as an advancing impulse, which may be accounted for by physical causes alone, it will be impossible to gain any clear ideas of ancient history: we should, at the same time, consider the manner in which a greater branch is sometimes seen to divide itself into several lesser parts, while those again are continually separated and subdivided into greater individual varieties; or, on the other hand, the constant intermixture whence, in process of time, an entirely new race may probably arise, different and strikingly degenerate in language and character. Clear views and opinions, deduced from a thorough investigation of facts, can alone throw light upon the chaos of facts and traditions, and well or ill grounded theories, which form what is usually termed ancient history.

We must not expect to recognise in antiquity the counterpart of every nation now existing in Asia, and still less should we think to find in our modern geographical works traces of all which have existed in early times. Many nations which arose in the manner above described were in the same manner swallowed up and completely overwhelmed by others; even as in the Basque language and in that of the Arnauts* and Wallachians, we still discover faint and

* Arnauts, the name given to the inhabitants of Albania. The Albanians rank, under the name of Arnauts, among the flower of the Ottoman

feeble tokens of a nation preceding them, and probably greater and more extensive than theirs. Many other people, probably of even later origin, became amalgamated with each other, at a comparatively recent period.

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## CHAP. III. — ON INDIAN COLONISATION AND LEGISLATURE.

THIS question has been hitherto left undisturbed, and I merely allude to it, as it appears indispensable to the connexion of the subject, and belongs properly to the third and present part of our inquiry. I must particularly call attention to the connexion that existed between the oldest and most civilised nations of antiquity, a theme well deserving the patient study of every investigator of ancient history. Religion and mythology are most significant features in this connexion, which may also be further evidenced by language and architecture: the latter, as it is seen in the old Egyptian, Persian, and Indian monuments, presents some very general features, and bears corroborative testimony to the unity of all Asiatic inventions. This latter point it is the peculiar aim of history either to confirm or disprove. If the uncivilised countries of America and Southern Africa had remained in their original necessitous and barbarous condition, without receiving any new impulse

army. The Illyrians were probably the original stock from which the Albanians sprung, but this hypothesis cannot receive confirmation from comparing it with the old Illyrian tongue, because we know nothing about the latter; still the Albanian language, whatever may be its basis, has received accessions from the Greeks, Romans, Goths, Sclavonians, Franks, and Italians: some writers have supposed them to be descendants of the Albani of Asia, and who may, it is conjectured, have retired before the advance of the Sclavonian nations, that for some time followed the track marked out by the Huns when they broke into Europe. Mr. Hobhouse, who adopts the above hypothesis, supposes the basis of their language to be the Sclavonian. Ponqueville asserts the existence of a belief among the Albanians themselves, that they are descended from the French (? Franks); and Miletius, a geographer of the last century, says they are descended from Celts, who crossed over from Iapygia, now the Terra di Otranto, in the kingdom of Naples. — *Extracted from article Albania, in Penny Cyclopædia.*

from Europe or Asia, implanting in them the germs of higher intellectual activity, cultivation and movements, scarcely any history could have existed of those countries.

If we attribute the earliest emigration of the Asiatic people to some impulse higher than the mere spur of necessity; if the unity and similarity of a deeply studied legislation and system of thought be discovered among them, we ought also to remember the gigantic grandeur and durability of Egyptian and Indian architecture in contradistinction to the fragile littleness of modern buildings. This consideration will enable us, by analogy, the better to grasp the idea (which to modern habits of thought certainly appear singularly vast) that all these famous nations sprang from one stock, and that their colonies were all one people either directly or indirectly of Indian origin. The colonies planted by Greece and Rome appear to be of but little importance compared with the ancient grandeur of those migrations, and yet what important revolutions were effected even by those trifling changes!

It is true that the connexion between them is not always immediately perceived. Through how many now forgotten intermediate gradations must the doctrine of the Metempsychosis have passed in its course from India to the Druids of ancient Gaul! In Peru, too, we find an ancient kingdom, in which the adoration of the Sun-god is established, and a royal branch of the children of the Sun, with many other vestiges of Oriental ideas*; and were it not for the information afforded us by Chinese historical records, we might build conjecture upon conjecture as to the manner in which these peculiar doctrines became prevalent in a country so remote.

The mighty population of the nations thence derived, the Teutons and Persians more especially, might give birth to some difficulties. The number of the Sclavonian people taken collectively (according to geographical statements, which indeed generally have other points in view than the distinction of races), and including all those dispersed throughout Turkey and Germany, amounts to at least 50,000,000. The Teutonic race may also be computed at about 40,000,000, without reckoning those inhabitants of England, not speak-

* See note *ante*, p. 337.

ing the Celtic, and the English in North America. It seems, therefore, unnecessary to add, that in this as in many other instances authentically recorded in history, the preponderating mass of a great wandering horde entirely overwhelmed the original stock, and that, besides the gradual increase of population which may have been promoted by the dispersion and extension of the people, many lesser families or tribes were, in their very commencement, incorporated with the ruling power.

Let us consider only the progress of the Latin tongue, which was at first confined to the centre of Italy, the north being inhabited by Celts, and the south by Greeks. How wonderfully has it extended from that little spot of ground through the whole universe! still reigning, by its daughters, the Romance languages, in almost every portion of the world. Italian is the commercial language of the East, and Portuguese of the coasts of India and Africa; Spanish is spoken by the greater part of the New World, and to these we might add the social influence of the French language, and the constant adoption of the dead Latin tongue in learning, science, and, in many countries, even in conversation and religious worship,—just as the Sanscrit, or at least certain forms of that dialect, are used in the liturgy of Siam and Thibet, not to mention the numerous Latin roots existing in the English, German, and Wallachian languages. The influence and language of a people not originally numerous have been thus widely extended in the space of two thousand years, although the population of their peculiar dominions, even when the empire was most extensive, can rarely have exceeded that of India alone. It must not be forgotten that India has always been one of the most populous countries in the world, and is so even at present, notwithstanding the numerous destructive revolutions of the last century and the prevalence of universal misery and oppression. How natural, then, is the inference that the overflowing population may have rendered emigration a measure of absolute necessity at the period of its ancient prosperity?

The influence of the Arabians, extended more widely and far more rapidly than even that of the Romans, their language having been diffused by conquests, trade, and colonisation through the greatest part of Asia, and even into the

interior of Africa: it has extended also to the Indian isles adjoining, and our historical records are insufficient to explain in what manner Arabian influence can have reached such distant localities. Although the Indians were not universal conquerors, still is it not possible that some similar influence existed even among them in much earlier times? We have undoubtedly sufficient reason to entertain the supposition, and could easily show, in general terms at least, how it may originally have occurred.

We have already, in the first book, pointed out a few single languages and people which stand in trifling though direct affinity with the parent-land, like intermediate links connecting the widely estranged ramification of the Romans, Greeks, and numerous Teutonic tribes. The western peninsula of India, lying on the borders of Persia and Turkind, has, from the earliest period, been the seat of the highest Indian civilisation, and also its most potent dynasty.

The colonies were not always founded by emigration: a very trifling number of people sufficed to form a colony, not perhaps consisting merely of conquerors and warriors, but comprising the most intelligent men of their time, priests or philosophers: the former would always find an inducement to quit their native country and settle among wilder tribes, in the hope of civilising and converting them. The zeal for proselytism is often as strong in the disciples of error as of truth, and in the former, indeed, it may more easily be combined with selfish ambition and worldly views. Priestly and religious colonies such as I am now describing are known to have been common among the Egyptians, while in Persian emigration, on the contrary, warriors and nobles generally took the lead. The partially Indian character of the Coptic languages tends to confirm this supposition: whether it be asserted that the priestly founders of those colonies settled there immediately on quitting their native country, which is by no means improbable, or that a more ancient and civilised Ethiopia lay to the south of Egypt, from whence Egyptian civilisation was first drawn.

It has been already shown that other motives and causes, besides the mere impulse of an overflowing population, may have contributed to produce emigration. One only need here be noticed. How inconceivable must have been the

ruin and desolation produced in the human conscience by its first decided departure from God, by the guilt of the first crime, the commencement of strife and murder! Terror and confusion were the immediate results, and the still calm of feeling, of soothing reflection and intimate communion with Divinity, gave place to wild and shuddering imaginations, falsehood, horror, and restless despair. How much of all this must have been endured ere the divinely favoured being could resolve to seek a nourishment full of horror from the lifeless body of a slaughtered animal! The abomination in which animal nourishment is held by the Brahmins bears the stamp of such high antiquity, that it seems almost like the only remaining heritage of our earliest condition. Was it not the same inward antipathy which prompted man's fallen race to seek in the entrails of their bleeding sacrificial victims dark tokens of coming danger and distress, and to draw from the depths of the earth those metals in which (almost at the very same period when he first saw and conceived in the natural elements an immediate emanation from the Deity), he quickly recognised the stars and arbiters of his earthly destiny, making them the means of procuring a peaceful subsistence, and at the same time instruments of new crimes, wars, and destruction. May not the unrest of the flying murderer, the first bloodstained criminal, have been communicated even to the farthest extremity of the earth? Still I will not attempt to make these facts the groundwork of my argument, since our belief in them, though equally sure, rests not on the actual basis of history, which is, indeed, of far less ancient date. History could not be written until that awe-struck horror of imagination which has left traces of its influence in all the oldest monuments of the human mind had become soothed and softened down into calm reflection, remembrance, and regret.

We possess one monument of the earliest Indian history, older and more authentic than any set forth in words or recorded in written characters—the Indian mode of government. No legislation so severe in all its enactments, in regard to the lower orders, could have been framed, except in a period of strife and dissension, when the numberless sources of tumult and division to which changes and fluctuations had given birth, required to be crushed and subdued

by the strong hand of legislative power and authority. The intermingling of tribes who, in fleeing from their mother-land, became blended with the wilder races of mankind, may account for the affinity between the Sclavonian dialect and some of the nobler forms of speech. Still those who fled may not necessarily have been the guilty or oppressed alone; many others, doubtless, who had continued separate and unpolluted amidst the ruin and destruction which must have preceded such a system of legislature, fled to distant climes, where they might rear their unpolluted dwelling, and live and die in the exercise of their pure faith and religion.

But it is not the first origin of Indian legislature alone that is so clearly impressed with tokens of war and tumult; it bore even within itself germs of ceaseless dissension and internal warfare. The history of India since the time of Alexander the Great certainly presents little more than a series of foreign conquests and internal revolutions, which however would seem rather to intimate a constant interchange of rulers and dynasties than any actual alteration in the laws and constitution. Buddhism alone forms an exception, which indeed was pursued and overwhelmed, less on account of its doctrines than of its legislation, which broke the unity of the state, and strove to remove its hereditary distinctions; and yet the doctrines of Buddha were promulgated in the great countries adjacent in one single mission rather than by any regular course of emigration. In earlier times, before the constitution was firmly established and had become almost a part of Indian life and nature, this new doctrine must have occasioned great changes and confusion; but when once the indomitable power of the hereditary priesthood was fixed on a sure basis, greater scope was left for feuds and dissensions among the warriors over whom the legislature exerted but little influence. Indeed, one of the oldest Indian poems in the Mahabharatá relates chiefly to the great civil wars between two kindred heroes, ancestors of the godlike race of kings and warriors; but before the Cshatriyas, who were originally of the same family, were severed from the hereditary priesthood, and the rank of each caste became so decidedly marked as it has ever since remained, many severe struggles and convulsions must have taken place. It was not without reason that

Pocosrama was declared to have exterminated wicked kings, chastised their savage nobles, and restrained the power of all within narrower limits.

It is not unfrequently observed, among other characteristics of Indian tribes, that some one race occasionally degenerated into barbarism, — became Mlecchas, as they were termed, — or appear to have gone over and united themselves with some other people generally held to be barbarous and uncivilised. In Menù's book of Laws*, a whole series of degenerate and uncivilised families of the Cshatriya race are enumerated, among which we recognise the names of many famous nations: the Sakas, the Chinas, and the Pahlavas, the latter probably the ancient Pahlvani or Medes, and the Pahlavi may be a debased remnant of their language. The Paphlagonians appear, from their name, to have belonged to the same race. Besides these, we have the Yavanern; unless, as has been asserted†, they are only one of the sects mentioned in the Puranas as practising a sensual idolatry of nature, and propagating their faith by wars and conquests. This supposition is by no means disproved by the circumstance of their being enumerated among the degenerate Cshatriyas, as both are perfectibly compatible.

We have not sufficient data to enable us to decide clearly what portion of the religious wars of the Indians should be assigned to the primitive period of their history. It is not improbable, however, that, as was the case in regard to the doctrine of Buddhism, introduced at a later epoch, even the earliest attempts at innovation may have been too intimately connected with the legislature and constitution to be defeated without a war. The great diversity of sects and systems formerly prevailing in India must have afforded abundant ground for dissension and disunion; the system at present existing, which seems to have aimed only at bringing them into an endurable union, retains traces of them all. The reciprocal religious hatred of the Persians and Egyptians will alone suffice to disprove the often-repeated

* x. 43—45.

† According to extracts quoted by Wilford, who in his own theories and conjectures is often very feeble, but when he merely quotes or translates, overpowering in strength from his great knowledge of the language.

assertion, that the polytheism of antiquity was tolerant in its nature. The low estimation in which polytheistic superstition was held by the professors of a more intellectual religion like the Persian, often led to an attempt at proselytism by violence, as was the case with Cambyses; and in the same manner the believers in popular mythology often indulged in the most bitter, persecuting hatred of all who believed themselves more highly enlightened, as with the Syrian Greeks and the Jews. Both these contending elements existed in India; the struggle between them has given birth to many great religious wars, from that period down to the present time: although they now coexist in comparative harmony, many points which were entirely incompatible having been worn down or enfeebled, while others have been excluded.

If it be admitted that, by the Yavanern of the Indian writings, many nations of the West, devoted to the sensual idolatry of nature are to be understood, we shall find that the course by which the Asiatic race, carrying with them Oriental ideas and customs, extended into Greece and central and southern Italy, lay along the Euphrates and Tigris, through Phœnicia and Asia Minor. Supposing also, what has never been clearly proved, that Babylon and the surrounding countries were, in the earliest times, possessed by a people speaking the Syrian language, it is nevertheless certain that as soon as any great kingdom was founded, an influx of various nations took place, precisely as has been seen to happen in later times. Phrygia, a tributary state dependent on Babylon, presents another intermediate link; for certainly no historian of the present day will agree with the ancients (who referred all races of disputed or doubtful origin to the autochthones*), when they trace the numerous Hellenists of Asia Minor to an European origin. In after-times many unquestionably returned by that route into India, and so probably in grand emigrations of armies, single heroes, or peaceful settlers, numbers retraced the same familiar path by which they had first quitted their native land. Besides, as these great emigrations were almost always gradual in their progress, some intercourse and acquaintance with those they

* Autochthones, peculiar races of men, supposed to have been formed from the slime of the earth.

had left was constantly kept up, till the remoteness of their settlements, and still more the lapse of time, gradually estranged and at length entirely divided them; so that, on afterwards meeting, both were frequently astonished at the undeniable evidence existing of their common descent.

How many royal and heroic races in Hellas and Italy proceeded first from Asia Minor! The Babylonian empire, if that name be assigned to the grand, old kingdom which, extending along the Euphrates and Tigris long before the time of the Persians carried its dominion into the very heart of Asia Minor, naturally became, from its situation, a maritime power*, and even the Hellenists were, from the earliest period, a naval people. The position of the different people in Italy proves that the Italian race of the interior, who were of the same descent, arrived there first by sea; for if they had taken their route across the Alps in Carniola through Venice, some signs of their progress would certainly be yet remaining in the northern part of Italy. Closer investigation may perhaps reveal more traces of the old Indian constitution in the legislature of the Romans, than would at first be thought possible. The patricians, on whom the duties of augurs exclusively devolved, were originally nothing more than a line of hereditary priests, and as they alone made war, and exercised other rights of the warrior race, they formed also the only real nobility (the equites); at length, however, the sole government of this absolute warlike sacerdotal aristocracy excited the animosity of the people, and a struggle began of which the ancient history of that nation gives so animated an account. The singular republic which Alexander of Macedon imagined himself to have discovered in the Indies must be understood in a very different sense from the Hellenic, Phœnician or Italian free states. The Greeks had no idea of a permanent system of legislation such as had been established among the Indians from the most remote antiquity; nor could they imagine a free and legislative monarchy: they probably mistook the incorporated but self-existent members of the great legislative body for separate republics. Notwithstanding the

* In Heeren's "Ideen über den Handel der alten Welt," &c., all that is known of the ship-building of the Babylonians and other ancient people will be found.

obscurity and confusion of the earliest Indian histories, it is clear that even then some great monarchies existed which, although permanent, were extremely limited by the hereditary rights asserted by the nobility and priesthood. In small nations and colonies of Indian descent the republican constitution appeared at a subsequent period; but the monarchical form was that first adopted, particularly in countries where, as in Persia, the warriors and nobles had the chief share in the disposition and arrangement of affairs. It is worthy of remark that both the historical records of Asia and the poetical legends of the south-east of Europe, bordering upon Asia, commence with descriptions of a royal city of inconceivable magnificence, which being subsequently ruined through the effects of arrogance and luxury, became the primary cause of the dispersion of mankind, and gave rise to numerous migrations and the establishment of many lesser states. If the legend of the Trojan war have an historical meaning, as from the stamp of antiquity impressed upon it we are led to believe, we shall certainly be justified in removing it from the narrow sphere of Hellenic tradition, and carrying it back to the grand circle of Asiatic legendary history. Names of places, towns, or mountains holding a conspicuous place in tradition have so frequently been changed in the course of time, and moved more towards the West, with the nearer advance of the legend and the people themselves, that it cannot now be necessary to cite any peculiar example in proof of it.

It should be remembered that these remarks tend no further than to exhibit incidentally the great promise afforded by Indian study, in clearing up historical questions of doubtful import. Many separate details in the earliest history of the people of Asia will, when more abundant materials have been discovered, be distinctly traced in perfect outline, and the general tenour of the whole be clearly comprehended. We require, especially, a critical work drawn from the peculiar Indian records yet existing of the primitive history of the world, which will probably be found to contain much valuable information on other points also, and a correct translation of the Scandapurana, which, as an historical record, should be held in higher estimation than any other book of the Puranas. The little we already have will in the

mean time suffice to explain many difficult points, and very frequently just those which appear most intricate and puzzling. Though, for example, many doubts cannot now be entertained as to whether any race of men ever quitted the fertile and luxuriant regions of Asia to migrate into the extremest Scandinavian North: the theory of their having been driven onwards by succeeding hordes can hardly be adopted by any historian, particularly when the numerous population of the Teutonic race is considered. The traditions of Indian mythology, however, throw a light upon the northern impulse. One of those legends describes the wonderful mountain of Meru* (or the North Pole), in which Kuvera, the god of wealth, is enthroned. Whether this idea may have arisen from a false traditionary interpretation, or dark views and superstitious ideas of natural truth, a high veneration for the North certainly prevailed in that country, not as a secondary circumstance in the Indian system, but a favourite idea constantly recurring, and indelibly impressed upon its poetical creations. Nor would this be the first or only instance in which poetical legends and old songs, intertwined with the doctrines of superstition and religious observances, have had more influence on the character and enterprises of heroes than those who study history in its political aspect alone could easily believe.

Admitting, then, that these tribes were driven northwards, not from the mere impulse of necessity, but by an almost supernatural idea of the majesty and glory of those regions, and everywhere diffused throughout the Indian sagas, the path of the Teutonic race may clearly be traced from Turkind along the Gihon to the north shore of the Caspian Sea and the Caucasus; but it is doubtful whether they afterwards directed their route towards the mountains, and there settled, or followed the course of the mighty streams, like those ancient Asiatic nations, who everywhere sought to make settlements on the banks of majestic rivers; as, for example, on the Ganges, the Nile, and the Euphrates. This, however, is not the place in which to discuss the question, although it is one of high importance in reference to the history of our own native land.

* For a gorgeous description of this mountain see Southey's *Kehama*. — *Trans.*

## CHAP. IV. — ON THE GENERAL IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY OF THE ORIENTAL AND INDIAN LITERATURE, AND ITS TRUE AIM AND OBJECT.

THE copious richness of Indian literature, and the great and valuable assistance that may be afforded by Eastern study in philosophy, ancient history, and philology having been now fully proved, nothing remains except to determine the relative value of Oriental literature generally, as contrasted with European, and to mark the influence which the former has already had, or may hereafter exert, upon the latter. It has, indeed, been the chief object of the present treatise to display the advantages of Oriental study in this respect particularly.

The Holy Scriptures present the only bond remaining by which European habits and thoughts are linked with those of the East; and, consequently, the present occasion appears most appropriate for examining into the connexion between Indian antiquity and the Mosaic records and revelation generally,— a subject which I intentionally avoided in my examination of the historical evidence, fearing to plunge the reader into an ocean of disputed interpretations and unfounded hypotheses. Theories concerning the race of the Noachidæ, and the true situation of Paradise, do indeed revolve in rapid succession and countless numbers, and to sift so many varied opinions would demand a critical and circumstantial inquiry, which I willingly leave to be prosecuted by others.

One fact, however, the most important, if not the only one absolutely essential as a point of religious belief, is recorded in the Mosaic history with so much distinctness that even subsequent interpretations have failed in obscuring it: it tells us that man was created in the image of God, but that by his own sin he voluntarily debased that divine image, and fell from the pure light of happiness in which he had at first rejoiced. The Mosaic history does not give an ample and detailed account of every event afterwards occurring; for it must be remembered that it was not intended for the gratification of curiosity alone, nor as a source of historical information, but rather for a beacon light to indicate the path from which mankind had wandered, and while the night of

sin and superstition wrapt the world around, to guide the chosen few into the divinely appointed way of light and salvation. Thus the Indian records reveal the first growth of error and superstition, which, when the simplicity of divine faith and knowledge had once been abandoned, became continually more false and exaggerated, yet ever retained, even in its darkest gloom, some feeble gleams of celestial and glorious light.

The contrast of truth with error ever places the former in a more majestic and transcendent light, and the history of ancient philosophy, that is, of the Oriental system in general, will therefore furnish a most instructive comment on the Holy Scriptures. It does not appear surprising, to any one who is conversant with the religion of the earliest Asiatic nations, that the doctrines of the Trinity and the immortality of the soul should have been but slightly touched upon in the Old Testament, instead of being distinctly explained, or insisted upon, as forming the groundwork of the teaching of Moses. It can hardly, indeed, be considered probable that Moses, who had been instructed in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, could have been ignorant of a doctrine so commonly received among all the civilised nations of Asia; but we see that, as with the Indians, so in many other nations, the grossest errors and superstitions had become almost inseparably annexed to the lofty truth of the immortality of the soul; and thus the conduct of the Divine Lawgiver of the Hebrew people appears neither unaccountable nor difficult to be explained.

The divinely appointed prophet of the Hebrews has frequently been reproached with intolerance in so severely rejecting other families or people, and keeping the Hebrew nation and doctrines so completely separate from every other nation in the world. But the injustice of such unworthy reproaches would long since have been seen, had it been possible for men of the present day to realise in idea the condition of the East at that period. Let them remember, that although the wisest and most civilised nations of antiquity inherited some few lingering gleams of sacred light, yet all were distorted and confused, and frequently, among both Persians and Indians, the noblest and purest truths had become polluted springs of fatal error and grovelling super-

stition. The necessity of a severe uncompromising isolation of the Hebrews is therefore seen at a glance; and how entirely must the zeal of that man, rejecting all minor considerations, have been absorbed in the sole object of so guarding the costly jewel of divine truth committed to his trust, as not only to save it from destruction, but to keep it ever pure and unpolluted. It may be true that Jehovah was considered by many individual Israelites only in the light of a national God; but we nowhere discover any indications of his having been thus esteemed by the prophets or other inspired teachers. The doctrine of the close and special union with God, into which men are permitted by faith to enter, and into which they are actually received in the Christian church, — the grand doctrine of Christianity, — will be strangely misunderstood, if confounded with those errors on which the reproach of intolerance, alleged against the Jews of the Old Testament, has been founded.

Many passages in the philosophy, and, indeed, of the religious observances of Fo, bear a striking but false affinity with Christianity; single doctrines also are often wonderfully in accordance, but defaced and distorted; every thing is out of proportion, and made to bear a different signification; the resemblance, in fact, that apes bear to men. The affinity of the Oriental system (as has been shown by the review of that philosophy given in the second book of this treatise) is far more true and lofty, particularly in the Persian religion, in which the adoration of light, and the doctrine of the contending principles of good and evil, have a remarkable affinity with the teaching of the Old, as well as of the New Covenant. The too exclusive adoption of these vestiges of higher truths, taking their resemblance, whether spurious or genuine, for perfect similarity, gave rise to various errors in the early Christian church, as, for example, to the heresy of Manes and others. None of the erroneous principles of the Persian mythology are found in the Holy Scriptures; what they teach is not based on a philosophical system, but on Holy Revelation, and when seized and comprehended by the light of inward illumination, will lead to the knowledge of pure and eternal truth.

Still the comparison between these systems, whether the apparent connexion between them be real or imaginary, may afford historical and external evidence that one idea go-

verns and pervades the Old Testament as well as the New, differing only in this, that in one it is merely indicated or prefigured, in the other it shines forth in full lustre: the Christian interpretation of the Old Testament must consequently be the true one; and a more perfect knowledge of the history of Oriental genius will give it fuller confirmation, even from extraneous circumstances. This is important, considered merely in a critical point of view, and would be so, even supposing the Scriptures to be of no higher authority than any other system of Oriental formation, though even in that case, they must be regarded as the most profound and severely grand of all. How, indeed, can any work be understood or explained, except by reference to the system on which it is based? And where can that system be best grappled with, except where it is most clearly developed and vividly expressed? This must be allowed to be the case with the New Testament, and will be admitted by every unprejudiced critic, who compares it with the incomplete signification of the Old Testament, or the partly erroneous system of Persian belief. The sense of the Old Testament can never be unfolded by merely exigetical criticism, even though superior in learning and erudition to all those doctors of the Talmud *, on whom the light of the Gospel, brightening and dispersing the heavy darkness, had not yet dawned. The vestiges of divine truth are every where discovered, in the most ancient Oriental systems in particular, though, perhaps, but in isolated fragments; but the just connexion of the whole, freed from intermingling errors and superstitions, can only be traced by the aid of Christianity, which affords a clue to all such principles of truth and wisdom, as are too lofty in their truth to have been elicited by the efforts of the reason or the imagination.

I proceed to notice, in a few words, the general influence of Oriental philosophy (an important, and certainly by no means the most inferior branch of which is of Indian origin,) on the European mind. Great as that influence has been, it

* An excellent example of this ancient style of exposition, is given in the History of the Religion of Jesus, by Count Stolberg, — a work distinguished by that calm energy, unvarying earnestness, and beautiful clearness, which is seen only when lofty science and knowledge are made the ruling spring and principle of life.

is doubtful whether any simple Oriental system ever reached Europe in a pure, unmixed form: whatever was borrowed from thence, either by the Greeks or more modern nations, appears to have spontaneously incorporated itself with the existing doctrines, and thus to have become in various ways changed and altered.

Before attempting to show the influence exerted by Oriental ideas on European philosophy, we must attempt to give an introductory sketch of its progress and peculiar character. European philosophy, at its first upsoaring in all the as yet unenfeebled vigour of the human mind, was purely ideal. I do not understand by this expression merely the doctrine of the unity of all created existences, nor the nothingness of external appearances; but that philosophy which originates in the idea of self-operating strength and vital activity, — the philosophy of the stoics of Aristotle, and of many ancient Greeks. If, though the knowledge of Revelation had been too early lost, the idea of infinity still existed, what could be more natural than that men should be disposed to refer everything to their own strength and wisdom? All those lofty ideas, engendered by a spiritual religion, and which had from infancy been familiar to their minds, they held to be of their own creation, and peculiarly their own property; for few and feeble were the traces of divinity therein recognised, and their connexion was too easily overlooked and lost. It is true that no system of philosophy ever framed by any people was actually self-created, or existed completely distinct from the fountains and streams of universal tradition. Had human wisdom, indeed, been endowed with such wonderful unassisted power, it would have been more successful in avoiding the numerous and unspeakable errors which attended its development in every period, from that time down to the present. But, on the contrary, errors accumulated so rapidly, that philosophy soon degenerated into mere scepticism, and the vigour of the human understanding, becoming at length enfeebled by continued doubt and unbelief, philosophy next declined into an empiric theory; the idea of a Supreme Divinity, if admitted in words, was denied in principle, till it became almost annihilated; and man, under the specious plea of confining himself within the sphere of utility and

and rationalism, cast aside, as an erring and romantic impulse, that lofty spirit, intellect and sentiment, which alone distinguished him from the brute creation. Some few reflecting minds were occasionally roused by the misery of this lost condition of the soul; and finding it impossible to persevere therein, sought a path of return to the older and better philosophy; and according to the earnestness of their search, were they sure of corresponding success.

Such has been the simple progress of European philosophy from the earliest Greek sages up to the present time.

This revolution of a philosophy which certainly had not lost the idea of infinity and self-creative power, to scepticism and finally to empiricism, has been more than once repeated, and each recurrence differed from the preceding, inasmuch as men were acquainted with and employed it, to link the new in some measure with the old, either by contrast or remodelling.

The continual adoption of various portions of Oriental philosophy, as a foreign and stimulating material, has produced even more irregularity and vacillation in the progress of the European mind in modern times. Without the constant recurrence of this animating principle, European genius would never have soared so high, nor would its decline have been so sudden. Even the loftiest philosophy of the Europeans, the idealism of reason, as it is set forth by Greek philosophers, appears, in comparison with the abundant light and vigour of Oriental idealism, like a feeble Promethean spark in the full flood and heavenly glory of the noon-day sun, faltering and feeble, and ever ready to be extinguished: still the more trifling the dimensions, the greater was the artistic skill employed in pourtraying its form and arrangement.

It is true, indeed, that Oriental wisdom among the Greeks, as well as the moderns, frequently flowed from a turbid spring. How greatly, even in the time of the modern Platonists and Gnostics, the whole circle of European knowledge had already arrived at the lowest state of degeneracy and mingling of systems, is too well known to require further elucidation. In what is usually termed Oriental philosophy, the old system of emanation is always more or less mixed up with Dualism and Pantheism, the ancient philosophy of

numbers, and the doctrine of the two principles already mentioned.

This has not happened in later times only, it was probably the case in the era of Pythagoras, if we may rely on what are usually considered the most ancient and authentic records of his philosophy. It is difficult to decide whether the Number philosophy of Pythagoras was of his own invention, or of Eastern origin; but certainly neither that doctrine nor the opposition of the twofold primary powers and existences belong to the system whence he drew the doctrine of the Metempsychosis. Still we have seen that in Asia, even at an earlier period, the more recent doctrines annexed themselves to the old, either by transformation or intermixture; but if each separate system could be distinctly arranged in its proper order, the task of analysing and tracing out their various compound forms and modifications would be comparatively easy.

A general knowledge of philosophy is indispensable for the investigation of Oriental literature, and particularly for the Indian branch of it. This general knowledge must be understood to mean something more than a merely dialectic skill, enabling us to construct, according to an almost fixed and precise revolving system, whatever appears new to us, and to which ancient philosophers were strangers; but rather an intimate acquaintance with the spirit of those grand old systems which had such mighty influence on the outward destiny of mankind. It is certain, however, that no one will be able to seize this spirit who has not fathomed the depths of those speculative ideas by his own personal investigation.

The important place occupied by philosophy in Indian literature will be clearly understood if we recall to mind the general review of the system, and the four most important epochs, given in the second book. In the first epoch, that of the Vedas and all the ancient works which are most closely connected with them; and in the third epoch, that of the Puranas and the Vyasá; philosophy is so inseparably interwoven with each that it were vain to attempt to comprehend them without her aid. Poetry, in the second period, the medium point, as it were, between both, may appear to have a more distinct existence, separate from philosophy, but still far

less so than has always been the case among the Greeks and other Europeans; while in the fourth epoch, in the time of Câlidâs, and the other poets under Vikramaditya, when Indian poetry bloomed in still more decided independence, it was based upon certain ancient philosophical ideas, from which it cannot with any propriety be divided.

Indian study and research in general should be pursued with the grander views and opinions of those able men of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, who first revived the study of Greek and Eastern literature; for it must not be imagined that a bare knowledge of the language is sufficient to entitle its possessor to the reputation of a learned man; and, indeed, there were few among the classical scholars of that period who did not unite with their knowledge of language an earnest study of philosophy, and the whole abundance of historical science.

Every distinct branch of science being thus united into one indivisible body, would operate with so much greater energy, and the majesty of antiquity, thus seized and embodied, might, even in our time, become a fertile source of new productions. In fact, nothing that exists can actually be called *new;* all must be kindled and inspired by ancient memories, instructed by departed genius, and formed and developed by antique power and energy. While, on the other hand, all those subtle reasoners, who live only in the present, and own no influence save that of the spirit of the day, have almost, without exception, embraced the ruinous and destructive opinion that all should be created anew, and produced, as it were, from nothing. All knowledge of ancient philosophy is, therefore, fallen into contempt, and the taste for it almost annihilated; philology is degraded into an empty fruitless study of letters and words, and, notwithstanding some slight progress in particular points, is, on the whole, completely impaired, and has no vital strength or spirit remaining in it.

Great injury has been done to this science by the prevailing prejudice, which keeps the study of Indian mythology entirely distinct from the Greek; the idea of such a separation being expedient, is an arbitrary assumption, without any foundation in truth. The dwellers in Asia and the people of Europe ought to be treated in popular works as members of one vast family, and their history will never be separated

by any student, anxious fully to comprehend the bearing of the whole; but the idea of Oriental genius and literature generally entertained in the present day is founded on that of a few Asiatic writers only, the Persians and Arabians in particular, and a few books of the Old Testament, in as far as we may be permitted to view the latter as poetry; but there are many other Asiatic nations to whom this ordinary opinion is by no means applicable. The chief peculiarities of Oriental literature are supposed to consist in a bold and lavish pomp of imagery, and in the tendency to allegory usually combined with those qualities. The influence of a southern climate may be a co-operating cause, but it certainly is not the chief source of that richness of fancy, since in many other nations, equally poetical in their character, and lying in the same latitude, it is far less predominant than in the Indian. Their highly intellectual religion should rather be cited as the operating cause. Wherever such a religion prevails — whether it be profoundly philosophical, an immediate emanation from the divine spirit of love, or rude and wild, like the haughty enthusiam kindled by the doctrines of Mahomet, — everywhere, while poetry and the poetical temperament exists, fancy, debarred from the wide field of mythology, will find scope for its richness and luxuriance in bold poetical imagery. For this reason the so-called Oriental character is as strikingly seen in many poets of the Middle Ages, not in Spain alone, but in Italy and Germany, as in the Romantic poems of the Persians and Arabians. We need not attribute this singular circumstance to the influence of the Crusades, as the same result would naturally follow from the same causes in Europe as in Asia. But how does this pomp of colouring and imagery harmonise with the dry prosaic style of the Chinese, or the beautiful simplicity of Indian writings? It is true that there is no lack of flowery imagery and ornament in the Socuntalâ of Câlidâs*, yet it is free from any tinge of exaggeration. The more ancient

* Calidâsâ was one of the most admired of Indian poets. A tradition, very generally believed in India, makes him one of the nine gems or distinguished poets who lived at the court of king Vicramâditya. If by this name the same sovereign is to be understood from whose reign (B. C. 56) the years of the Samvat æra are counted, Calidâsâ must have flourished about the middle of the century preceding the commencement of our æra. Another king of the name Vicramâditya, ascended the

Indian poems are even less imaginative than the most simple and severe of the Greek writings; the soul-felt intensity of emotion, vivifying and inspiring all;—the bright clearness and decision of the conception, has no affinity with the wild-fire, the restless gleaming of a glowing and capricious fancy. Another feature, which has been declared to be characteristic of Oriental writings, is traced chiefly in the progress of the ideas, in the arrangement and construction of the theme, which, from its greater obscurity, often differs widely from that of the Greeks. This, however, can hardly be considered applicable to Indian works, but rather to those of the other nations already named. It coincides in some measure indeed, with their descriptive luxuriance of fancy, and their

throne A. D. 191, and a third in A. D. 441; and several considerations, especially the highly polished style in which the works attributed to Calidâsâ are written, favour the assumption that the poet lived under Vicramâditya II. At all events, this author must be distinguished from a poet of the same name, who lived in the twelfth century at the court of Râja Bhôja, the sovereign of Dhârâ. However imperfect our information about Calidâsâ may be, we possess in his works abundant evidence of the power of his genius. We do not hesitate to pronounce him the most universal, the least constrained by national peculiarities, not merely of all Indian, but of all Asiatic poets with whose works we are acquainted, and to this elevated tone of mind, which, while seeming to breathe the purely human air of Greece, yet retains all the quickness and glow of feeling, all the vividness and description of imagery of the Hindoos, must, in our opinion, be mainly attributed the undivided admiration with which the translation of his drama, Sacontalâ, by Sir William Jones, (the first work that made known the name of Calidâsâ to Europeans) has been every where received. This translation appeared for the first time at Calcutta in 1789, but was soon reprinted in England, and was from the English, at an early period, re-translated into several other languages of Europe. We may particularly notice the German translation by George Foster, who appended to it a glossary explanatory of the allusions to Indian mythology, natural history, &c. The popularity which the play has acquired on the Continent, is attested by the fact that several attempts have been made to adapt it to the stage. In 1830, the Sanscrit text of Sacontalâ was published at Paris, from a manuscript belonging to the Bibliothèque du Roi, with an original French translation by the late professor A. Chéry. The Mêgha Dûta, or "Cloud-messenger," a lyrical poem of only 116 stanzas, by the same poet, contains the complaints of a demi-god banished to earth, who entreats a passing cloud to convey an affectionate message to his wife. It was edited, with a translation into English verse, with notes by H. H. Wilson, Calcutta, 1813, 4to. There are four other poems by Calidâsâ extant, one of which is unfinished.—*Extracted and abridged from Knight's Penny Cyclopædia.*

inclination to allegory: when these tendencies predominate in details, the same daring symbolism frequently pervades the entire composition, giving to the arrangement a certain degree of obscurity. This want of clearness may also be in part attributed to the fundamental differences in grammar, noticed in the first book. It is my opinion, therefore, that all works on philosophy (unless some higher influence order it otherwise) should trace the language from its first natural origin down to the point at which it first became enfeebled, and thence sunk deeper and deeper in the abyss of degradation. The construction of languages, which form their grammar by suffixa and affixa, is so different in details, that the chain of thought easily becomes perplexed and difficult to follow. Those which, instead of being declined by inflections of the primitive root, preserve their original form, and supply the place of those annexed syllables by the use of distinct auxiliary verbs and prepositions, are more convenient for general use, and easy and perspicuous in composition; but too soon become negligent and formless. Such languages as the Greek and Indian, on the contrary, in which every modification of the original meaning is produced by inflection of the roots, are naturally simple and beautiful, both in minor grammatical details and in the general composition and arrangements.

In this latter particular the term Oriental, in the sense which it is usually supposed to convey, will be found applicable to very few nations. The exceptions are, indeed, sufficiently numerous. Thus the obscurity of Æschylus, especially in the Choruses, appears highly Oriental, although clothed in an Hellenic form; but that obscurity springs rather from an impassioned tumultuous excitement, and the hurrying events of the tragedy, than from a general actual want of capacity for clearness in isolated features. To the lyric boldness of the similes and allusions of Pindar, the incoherence of his transitions gives his poetry a tinge of Orientalism; and the heroic grandeur of the conception, the mingling wildness and tenderness of the theme, assimilate greatly to all that we have yet seen of Indian poetry. The deep-thinking philosophers of Europe have almost always shown a decided preference for ancient Oriental literature. Many great poets among the Greeks are distinguished by the same peculiar feeling; and Dante,

among the moderns, approximates, though in a manner less universally recognised, to Oriental grandeur of style and diction.

As in popular history, the Europeans and Asiatics form only one great family, and Asia and Europe one indivisible body, we ought to contemplate the literature of all civilised people as the progressive development of one entire system, or as a single perfect structure. All prejudiced and narrow ideas will thus unconsciously disappear, many points will first become intelligible in their general connexion, and every feature thus viewed will appear in a new light.

It is most natural that the deep-souled genius of the Middle Ages, the influence of which still pervades both our legislature and daily life, and which in history, poetry, and general habits, stands most closely connected with our own, should claim from us peculiar regard and investigation: and the study of the classics forms not only the best groundwork, but is, indeed, an almost necessary school and preparation for all other learning. The science of criticism has never been so completely and perfectly developed in any other literature; and, in short, Grecian art, philosophy, and poetry, if not regarded merely in their outward form, as better learned critics, connoisseurs, and æsthetic philosophers are too prone to consider them, are not only of high intrinsic value, but form an indispensable connecting link between European imagination and Oriental tradition, even as the literature of the Romans marks the transition from the Greek to that of the Middle Ages. The hitherto unknown themes of early antiquity can be disclosed to us only by exploring the rich mine of Indian literature, and laying bare its treasures of poetical beauty and philosophical research.

The too partial, almost wilful devotion to classical learning, which prevailed during the last century, drew men's minds too widely astray—too far from the sole source of lofty truth; but the study of Oriental literature, to us so completely novel in structure and ideas, will, as we penetrate more deeply into it, bring back a new idea of the Divinity, and restore that vigour to the intellect, that truth and intensity of feeling to the soul, which invests all art, science, and literature with new and glorious life.