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ART. I.—THE PHILOSOPHY OF THE ANCIENT HINDOOS.

MINGLED with the theogonies and myths of the Hindoos are many fragments of a speculative character, which, though not properly amounting to a system, yet manifest an attempt to theorize on the Universe;—to *understand* what is presented in their religious writings under the form of dogmas and tradition.

There seem, at least to us who know the Hindoo literature only at second hand—to be three very distinct epochs in the history of their sacred writings.

The first, the age of the Vedas, (or of certain portions of them,) is that of a simple, original people, of agricultural habits, standing on the first step of civilization. The literature of this period consists of hymns, invocations, and prayers, displaying the first simple relation of the finite mind to the Infinite. There is little trace of reflection, or of intense religious consciousness. The deities which at a later period appear as distinct personalities, are here only personifications of the elements;—Indra is still the firmament; Agni, fire, &c. The prayers are for abundance of cows and of corn, for rain, for protection against enemies and wild beasts. The worshipper calls upon the Deity “from day to day, as a milch-cow to the milker.” God is the friend of the husbandman; “the giver of horses, cows, and corn; lord and keeper of wealth;”—and he is worshipped with libations of milk, butter, and honey. The figures of speech throughout are taken from an agricultural life, particularly the herds-

man's.* Hence, perhaps, by tradition, the subsequent religious importance of the cow.

The second, the age of the Puranas and the Bhagavat Gita, is a meditative, mystical period, during which speculation among the Hindoos reached its highest point.

Then comes the third period, extending to the present time, — the age of commentators, of subtle distinctions, and of polemics; the Indian Scholastic Age.†

Mr. Colebrooke and others who have treated of the Hindoo philosophy, distinguish several systems, with their subdivisions, — finding also parallels between them and the earlier Greek schools. They make us acquainted even with a good deal of controversy on metaphysical points, and sharp polemics, among the adherents of the various opinions. The arguments consist of appeals to the authority of the more ancient writings, together with some rather superficial, though often acute reasoning, and illustration by comparisons with familiar objects. But if we look at the texts themselves which are cited on opposite sides, we find them substantially in harmony with each other, and their apparent opposition only the diversity of various sides of one idea, successively made prominent, according to the habit of the Oriental mind.

This division of systems is evidently the product of later ages. "All the Indian schools," says Creuzer, "acknowledge three ways to knowledge: sensuous perception (Experience); Inference; Revelation (Tradition). . . . But it is agreed by all that true knowledge is not to be obtained through the senses. Nor can discursive thought and inference conduct us to the knowledge of the supreme Deity; — this is only to be obtained by tradition (doctrine) and hearing (of discourses); the teacher imparting to the disciple the true exposition of the sacred writings, handed down by tradition."‡ All this is evidently of later origin. The essence of the Hindoo metaphysics, so far as they are of importance in the

* *Rigveda-Sanhita*: ed. Fr. Rosen. London, (Oriental Trans. Fund.) 1838. 4to. See Hymns 4, 7, 23, et passim. — *Sanhita of the Sama Veda*: Translated by the Rev. J. Stevenson, D. D. London, (Oriental Trans. Fund.) 1842. 8vo.

† The Hindoo chronology remains in utter and probably hopeless confusion. Creuzer places the age of the Puranas 1600 years before the Christian era, (*Symbolik*, i. p. 386.) The Vedas are undoubtedly much older, but the whole reckoning is so often founded on mythical and fantastic data that any precision is at present impossible.

‡ *Symbolik*: ed. 1837, i, p. 528.

history of Philosophy, may be expressed in few words: It is the reduction of all Reality to pure, abstract Thought.

In the following pages we have brought together some extracts from the more important original sources, so far as they are known to us in translations.* As the works from which they are taken are most of them costly, and thus not often met with, we have made these extracts copious, in order to afford our readers the means of forming a general notion of this interesting phase of thought; the more interesting to us, as the Hindoos are intellectually, as well as physically, our antipodes, and their peculiar tone of thought, their *common-sense*, the opposite and complement of our own. Such, however, is the simplicity and abstractness of its principle, on the one hand; and such the profuseness and indistinctness of the forms in which it is presented, on the other, — that a development of the view from a central idea, or even a methodical arrangement of propositions, is scarcely possible. One might almost as well attempt a topographical survey of a wreath of mist. This may excuse the repetition and want of perspective in the following exposition.

The main principle of the Hindoo Idealism — that Reality is equivalent to pure abstract Soul or Thought, unexistent and thus simple and unformed; in a word, pure Negation — is presented especially under the aspect of the unity and identity of all things in the Deity. This is the constant theme of the ancient writings, and in every form of often sublime imagery, fills a great portion of the sacred books. Even in the grammatical forms of speech this idea is not overlooked; the most absolute expression for the Deity (*Brāhm*) being a neuter word: —

Laws of Menu, (Sir William Jones's translation, Calcutta, 1794) ch. 1, § 2. "From THAT WHICH IS, the first cause, not the object of sense, existing, not existing, without beginning or end, was produced the divine male, famed in all worlds under the appellation of Brahmá."

* Others, not cited, are Vans Kennedy's *Researches into Ancient and Hindoo Mythology*, London, 1831, in which, it is said, are many extracts from the Puranas. — Anquetil du Perron: *Upnekhatā*. Strasbourg. 1804. 2 vols. 4to. (Which, however, according to v. Bohlen and others, "is without critical value.") — Windischmann: *Sancara, Sive de theologumenis Vedanticorum*. Bonn. 1833. — Görres: *Mythengeschichte*. — Niklas Müller: *Wissen, Glauben, und Kunst d. alt. Hindus*, — none of which we have been able to consult. See also Ram-mohun Roy: *Translation of several Books, &c., of the Veds*. 2d ed. London. 1832. — P. F. Stuhr: *D. Religions-Systeme d. heidn. Völker d. Orients*.

Bhagavat Gita, p. 103.* “I will now tell thee what is *Gnea*, or the object of wisdom, from understanding which thou wilt enjoy immortality. It is that which hath no beginning, and is supreme, even *Brahm*, who can neither be called *Sat* (ens) nor *Asat* (non ens). It is all hands and feet; it is all faces, heads, and eyes; and, all ear, it sitteth in the midst of the world, possessing the vast whole. Itself exempt from every organ, it is the reflected light of every faculty of the organs. Unattached, it containeth all things; and without quality, it partaketh of every quality.”

Ib. p. 85. Vishnu says, “I am the soul which standeth in the bodies of all beings. I am the beginning, the middle, and the end of all things.”

Ib. p. 70. “I am the creation and the dissolution of the whole universe; . . . and all things hang on me even as precious gems upon a string.”

Vishnu Purana,† p. 94. “All the world is derived from thee. As the wide-spreading Indian fig-tree is compressed in a small seed, so, at the time of dissolution, the whole universe is comprehended in thee as its germ. . . . As the bark and leaves of the Plantain tree are to be seen in its stem, so thou art the stem of the Universe, and all things are visible in thee.”

Ib. p. 215. “He is primary nature; he, in a perceptible form, is the world; and in him all finally melts; through him all things endure. He is the performer of the rites of devotion; he is the rite; he is the fruit it bestows; he is the implements by which it is performed. There is nothing besides the illimitable Hari.”

Bhag. Gita, p. 80. “I am generation and dissolution; the place where all things are repositied, and the inexhaustible seed of all nature. I am sunshine, and I am rain; I now draw in, and now let forth. I am death and immortality; I am entity and non-entity.”

Vedas: (cited in *Comm. to Sāṅkhya Kārikā*,‡ XVII.) “One only soul is distributed in all beings; it is beheld collectively or dispersedly, like the reflection of the moon in still or

* *Bhāgavat-Gēta, or Dialogues of Krēṣhṇa and Arjūn*. In 18 Lectures. With notes. Translated by Charles Wilkins. London. 1785. 4to.

† *The Vishnu Purana*: Translated by H. H. Wilson, F. R. S. (Oriental Trans. Fund.) 1840. 4to.

‡ *Sāṅkhya Kārikā*: Translated by H. T. Colebrooke. Edited by H. H. Wilson. Oxford, (Orient. Trans. Fund.) 1837. 4to.

troubled water. Soul, eternal, omnipresent, undisturbed, pure, one, is multiplied by the power of delusion, not of its own nature."

Laws of Menu, ch. 12, § 124. "It is He, who, pervading all beings in five elemental forms, causes them by the gradations of birth, growth, and dissolution, to revolve in this world like the wheels of a car."

Ib. ch. 1, § 52. "When that power wakes, then has this world its full expansion; but when he slumbers with a tranquil spirit, then the whole system fades away."

Vishnu Pur., p. 132. "This whole world is but a manifestation of Vishnu, who is identical with all things; and it is therefore to be regarded by the wise as not differing from, but as the same with themselves."

The distinctness of things from God being unreal, God, or Reality, is the negation or transience of the Finite: — Time.

Ib. p. 335. "Glory to thee, O lotus-eyed, who art one with Time, the form that devours, without remorse, all created things."

Ib. p. 12. "The two forms which are other than the essence of unmodified Vishnu, are Pradhana (Matter) and Purusha (Spirit); and his other form, by which those two are connected or separated, is called Kāla (Time)."

Ib. p. 519. "At the end of all, the universe disappears in thee; upheld by thee, this earth sustains living and inanimate things: in the character of uncreated time, with its divisions of ages, developed from an instant, thou devourest the world."

Not only all positive qualities, all virtues and powers, but also weakness, imperfection, and foulness are embraced in the One Soul, since otherwise independent Reality must be attributed to them: —

Vishnu Pur., p. 154. "He (Vishnu) is the creator, who creates the world; he, the eternal, preserves it in existence; and he, the destroyer, destroys it; invested severally with the attributes of foulness, goodness, and gloom."

Ib. p. 139. "Thou (Vishnu) art knowledge and ignorance, truth and falsehood, poison and ambrosia."

Ib. p. 335. "Glory to thee, Govinda (Vishnu), who art all demons, whose essence is arrogance and want of discrimination, unchecked by patience or self-control. Glory to thee, who art the Yaksas, whose nature is charmed with sounds, and whose frivolous heart perfect knowledge cannot pervade. Glory to thee who art all fiends, that walk by night, sprung

from the quality of darkness ; fierce, fraudulent, and cruel. . . Glory to thee who art one with the saints, whose perfect nature is ever blessed, and traverses, unobstructed, all permeable elements. Glory to thee who art one with the serpent race, double-tongued, impetuous, cruel, insatiate of enjoyment, and abounding in wealth. Glory to thee who art one with the Rishis, whose nature is free from sin or defect, and is identified with wisdom and tranquillity."

Here, very evidently, a *subsistence* of all things in God is not meant, but merely an absorption of all in him. The power and greatness of God is not shown as embracing and upholding the vast variety of the Universe, but as reducing it to his own undivided essence. God is the whole of Reality, and thus all that is not God is unreal. All distinction, therefore, is unreal. All diversity of things, and all finite existence, is a delusion. The outward world has only the reality conferred on it by human imagination, which in its blindness so conducting itself as if the Outward were real, confers upon it a subjective reality, an existence *for* Man, by making it an object and motive for action.

Vishnu Pur., p. 242. "How can reality be predicated of that which is subject to change, and reassumes no more its original character? Earth is fabricated into a jar; the jar is divided into two halves; the halves are broken to pieces; the pieces become dust; the dust becomes atoms. Say, is this reality? though it be so understood by man, whose self-knowledge is impeded by his own acts. Hence, Brahman, except discriminative knowledge, there is nothing anywhere, or at any time, that is real."

Ib. p. 258. "Even as the same sky is apparently diversified as white or blue, so Soul, which is in truth but one, appears to erroneous vision distinct in different persons."

Ib. p. 251. "As one diffusive air, passing through the perforations of a flute, is distinguished as the notes of the scale, so the nature of the great spirit is single, though its forms be manifold, arising from the consequences of acts. When the difference of the investing form, as that of good, or the rest, is destroyed, then there is no distinction."

Moral distinctions also, as appertaining to individuality, and thus to bodily existence, belong merely to the sphere of Nature, which it is the aim of the wise man to transcend. His aim, therefore, is not action, whether virtuous or otherwise, but liberation from existence, since as long as he exists, as

long as he is under the dominion of Nature, he is necessarily impure: —

Vishnu Pur., p. 335. “As long as man lives he is immersed in manifold afflictions, like the seed of the cotton amidst its down.”

Sāṅkh. Kār., XX. “By reason of union with it (soul,) insensible body seems sensible; and though the qualities be active, the stranger (soul) appears as the agent.”

Ib. XLII. “For the sake of soul’s wish, that subtile person exhibits (before it), like a dramatic actor, through relation of means and consequences, with the aid of nature’s influence.”

Ib. LIV. et seq. “Above there is prevalence of goodness; below, the creation is full of darkness; in the midst is the predominance of foulness, from BRAHMA to a stock. There does sentient soul experience pain, arising from decay and death, until it be released from its person; wherefore pain is of the essence (of bodily existence).”

Bhag. Gīta, p. 59. “The Almighty createth neither the powers nor the deeds of mankind, nor the application of the fruits of action: nature prevaleth. The Almighty receiveth neither the vices nor the virtues of any one.”

Ib. p. 105. “He who beholdeth the Supreme Being alike in all things, whilst corrupting, itself uncorrupting; and conceiving that God in all things is the same, doth not of himself injure his own soul, goeth the journey of immortality. He who beholdeth all his actions performed by *Prakṛiti* (nature), at the same time perceiveth that the *Atma* or soul is inactive in them.”

Vishnu Pur., p. 649. “The ill-judging embodied being, bewildered by the darkness of fascination, situated in a body composed of the five elements, loudly asserts, ‘This is I:’ but who would ascribe spiritual individuality to a body in which soul is distinct from the ether, air, fire, water, and earth? What man of understanding assigns to disembodied spirit corporeal fruition, or lands, houses, and the like, that it should say, ‘These are mine?’ Man performs all acts for the purpose of bodily fruition, and the consequence of such acts is another body; so that their result is nothing but confinement to bodily existence. In the same manner as a mansion of clay is plastered with clay and water, so the body, which is of earth, is perpetuated by earth and water. The

body, consisting of the five elements, is nourished by substances equally composed of those elements ; but since this is the case, what is there in this life that man should be proud of ? Travelling the path of the world for many thousands of births, man attains only the weariness of bewilderment, and is smothered by the dust of imagination. When that dust is washed away by the bland water of real knowledge, then the weariness of bewilderment sustained by the wayfarer through many births is removed. When that weariness is relieved, the internal man is at peace, and he obtains that supreme felicity which is unequalled and undisturbed. This soul is pure, and composed of happiness and wisdom. The properties of pain, ignorance, and impurity, are those of nature, not of soul. There is no affinity between fire and water, but when the latter is placed over the former in a cauldron, it bubbles and boils, and exhibits the properties of fire. In like manner, when soul is associated with nature it is vitiated by Egotism and the rest, and assumes the qualities of grosser nature, although essentially distinct from them, and incorruptible."

Ib. p. 137. "He who inflicts pain upon others, in act, thought, or speech, sows the seed of future birth, and the fruit that awaits him after birth is pain."

Ib. p. 139. "Let him who covets the goods of fortune be assiduous in the practice of virtue ;—let him who hopes for final liberation learn to look upon all things as equal and the same."

Bhag. Gita, p. 47. "The man whose mind is led astray by the pride of self-sufficiency, thinketh that he himself is the executor of all those actions which are performed by the principles of his constitution. But the man who is acquainted with the nature of the two distinctions of cause and effect, having considered that principles will act according to their natures, giveth himself no trouble."

Ib. p. 48, et seq. "But the wise man also seeketh for that which is homogeneous to his own nature. All things act according to their natures, what then will restraint effect ? In every purpose of the senses are fixed affection and dislike. A wise man should not put himself in their power, for both of them are his opponents. A man's own religion, though contrary to, is better than the faith of another, let it be ever so well followed. It is good to die in one's own faith, for another's faith beareth fear. . . . *Arjōon* : 'By what, O

Krēshnā, is man propelled to commit offences? He seems as if, contrary to his wishes, he was impelled by some secret force.' *Krēshnā*: 'Know that it is the enemy lust, or passion, offspring of the carnal principle, insatiable and full of sin, by which this world is covered as the flame by the smoke, as the mirror by rust, or as the foetus by its membrane. The understanding of the wise man is obscured by this inveterate foe in the shape of desire, who rageth like fire, and is hard to be appeased.'

Soul being the only reality, material existence is possible only so far as it is established by the soul. Thus the body is a product of the action of the soul. But as the finite soul is again unreal, its action is not properly its own, but God's; being conformed by him to the disposition manifested by the individual in his imaginary action:—

Brahme-Sūtra. (Colebrooke's *Miscellaneous Essays*,* I., 354.) "Blind in the darkness of ignorance, the soul is guided in its actions and fruition, in its attainment of knowledge, and consequent liberation and bliss, by the supreme ruler of the Universe, who causes it to act conformably with its previous resolves; The supreme soul makes the individuals act relatively to their virtuous or vicious propensities, as the same fertilizing rain-cloud causes various seeds to sprout multifariously, producing diversity of plants according to their kind."

The cares and interests of the world are therefore ridiculous to one who has attained true wisdom:—

Vishnu Pur., p. 487. "How great is the folly of princes, who are endowed with the faculty of reason, to cherish the confidence of ambition, when they themselves are but foam upon the wave. Before they have subdued themselves, they seek to reduce their ministers, their servants, their subjects, under their authority: they then endeavour to overcome their foes. 'Thus,' say they, 'will we conquer the ocean-encircled earth;' and intent upon their project, behold not death, which is not far off. But what mighty matter is the subjugation of the sea-girt earth to one who can subdue himself. Emancipation from existence is the fruit of self-control. It is through infatuation that kings desire to possess me (the earth), whom their predecessors have been forced to leave, whom their fa-

* *Miscellaneous Essays*. By H. T. Colebrooke. 2 vols. London. 1837.

thers have not retained. . . . The valiant Prithu traversed the universe, everywhere triumphant over his foes ; yet he was blown away, like the light down of the Simal tree, before the blast of Time. . . . Aware of this truth, a wise man will never be influenced by the principle of individual appropriation ; and regarding them as only transient and temporal possessions, he will not consider children and posterity, lands and property, or whatever else is personal, to be his own."

Bhag. Gita, p. 35. "The wise neither grieve for the dead nor for the living. I myself never *was not*, nor thou, nor all the princes of the earth ; nor shall we ever cease to *be*. As the soul in this mortal frame findeth infancy, youth, and old age ; so, in some future frame, will it find the like. One who is confirmed in this belief, is not disturbed by any thing that may come to pass. The sensibility of the faculties giveth heat and cold, pleasure and pain ; which come and go, and are transient and inconstant. Bear them with patience, O son of Bhārāt ; for the wise man, whom these disturb not, and to whom pain and pleasure are the same, is formed for immortality. A thing imaginary hath no existence, while that which is true is a stranger to nonentity. By those who look into the principles of things, the design of each is seen. Learn that he by whom all things were formed is incorruptible, and that no one is able to effect the destruction of this thing which is inexhaustible. . . . The man who believeth that it is the soul which killeth, and he who thinketh that the soul may be destroyed, are both alike deceived ; for it neither killeth, nor is it killed. It is not a thing of which a man may say, it hath been, it is about to be, or is to be hereafter ; for it is a thing without birth ; it is ancient, constant, and eternal, and is not to be destroyed in this its mortal frame. . . . As a man throweth away old garments, and putteth on new, even so the soul, having quitted its old mortal frame, entereth into others which are new. . . . But whether thou believest it of eternal birth and duration, or that it dieth with the body, still thou hast no cause to lament. Death is certain to all things which are subject to birth, and regeneration to all things which are mortal ; wherefore it doth not behove thee to grieve about that which is inevitable. The former state of beings is unknown ; the middle state is evident, and their future state is not to be discovered. Why, then, shouldst thou trouble thyself about such things as these ? Some regard

the soul as a wonder, whilst some speak, and others hear of it with astonishment ; but no one knoweth it, although he may have heard it described."

Ib. p. 41. "The wisdom of that man is established, who in all things is without affection ; and, having received good or evil, neither rejoiceth at the one, nor is cast down by the other. His wisdom is confirmed, when, like the tortoise, he can draw in all his members, and restrain them from their wonted purposes. The hungry man loseth every other object but the gratification of his appetite, and when he is become acquainted with the Supreme, he loseth even that."

Ib. p. 46. "But the man who may be self-delighted and self-satisfied, and who may be happy in his own soul, hath no occasion. He hath no interest either in that which is done, or that which is not done ; and there is not, in all things which may have been created, any object on which he may place dependence. Wherefore, perform thou that which thou hast to do, at all times, unmindful of the event ; for the man who doeth that which he hath to do, without affection, obtaineth the Supreme."

Ib. p. 60. "The enjoyments which proceed from the feelings are as the wombs of future pain."

Ib. p. 99. "He my servant is dear unto me, who is free from enmity, the friend of all nature, merciful, exempt from pride and selfishness, the same in pain and pleasure, patient of wrongs, contented, constantly devout, of subdued passions and firm resolves, and whose mind and understanding are fixed on me alone. He also is my beloved of whom mankind are not afraid, and who of mankind is not afraid ; and who is free from the influence of joy, impatience, and the dread of harm. He my servant is dear unto me who is unexpected, just and pure, impartial, free from distraction of mind, and who hath forsaken every enterprise. He also is worthy of my love, who neither rejoiceth nor findeth fault, who neither lamenteth nor coveteth, and, being my servant, hath forsaken both good and evil fortune. He also is my beloved servant, who is the same in friendship and in hatred, in honor and in dishonor, in cold and in heat, in pain and in pleasure ; who is unsolicitous about the event of things ; to whom praise and blame are as one ; who is of little speech, and pleased with whatever cometh to pass ; who owneth no particular home, and who is of steady mind."

Brahme-Sûtra. (Colebrooke's *Misc. Essays*, I., 354.) "As

the carpenter having his tools in hand, toils and suffers, and laying them aside, rests and is easy, so the soul in conjunction with its instruments is active, and quitting them reposes."

Bhag. Gita, p. 111. "The incorruptible being is likened unto the tree *Aswāthā*, (the Banyan,) whose root is above and whose branches are below, and whose leaves are the *Vēds*. He who knoweth that, is acquainted with the *Vēds*. Its branches growing from the three qualities, whose lesser shoots are the objects of the organs of sense, spread forth some high and some low. The roots which are spread abroad below, in the regions of mankind, are restrained by action. Its form is not to be found here, neither its beginning, nor its end, nor its likeness. When a man hath cut down this *Aswāthā*, whose root is so firmly fixed, with the strong axe of disinterest, from that time that place is to be sought from whence there is no return for those who find it."

Vishnu Pur., p. 130. "The simpleton, in his inexperience, fancies that the alleviation of hunger, thirst, cold, and the like, is pleasure; but of a truth it is pain; for suffering is pleasure to those whose eyes are darkened by ignorance; whose limbs, exceedingly benumbed, desire pleasure by exercise. . . . The agreeableness of fire is caused by cold; of water, by thirst; of food, by hunger; by other circumstances their contraries are equally agreeable."

Ib. p. 132. "Let us therefore lay aside the angry passions of our race, and so strive that we obtain that perfect, pure, and eternal happiness, which shall be beyond the power of the elements or their duties, . . . which shall be uninterrupted by men or beasts, or by the infirmities of human nature; by bodily sickness and disease, or hatred, envy, malice, passion, or desire; which nothing shall molest, and which every one who fixes his whole heart on Kesāva shall enjoy. Verily I say unto you, that you shall have no satisfaction in various revolutions through this treacherous world, but that you will obtain placidity for ever by propitiating Vishnu, whose adoration is perfect calm."

Ib. p. 210. "Heaven is that which delights the mind; hell is that which gives it pain: hence vice is called hell, virtue is called heaven. The self-same thing is applicable to the production of pleasure or pain, of malice or of anger. Whence then can it be considered as essentially the same with either? That which at one time is a source of enjoyment, becomes at another the cause of suffering: and the same thing may at

different seasons excite wrath or conciliate favor. It follows, then, that nothing is in itself either pleasurable or painful; and pleasure and pain, and the like, are merely definitions of mind."

Ib. p. 568. "O Lord, I have been whirled round in the circle of worldly existence for ever, and have suffered the three classes of affliction, and there is no rest whatever. I have mistaken pains for pleasures, like sultry vapors for a pool of water: and their enjoyment has yielded me nothing but sorrow. The earth, dominions, forces, treasures, friends, children, wife, dependants, all the objects of sense, have I possessed, imagining them to be sources of happiness; but I found that in their changeable nature, O Lord, they were nothing but vexation. . . . Where, then, is everlasting repose? Who without adoring thee, who art the origin of all worlds, shall attain, O supreme deity, that rest which endures for ever? . . . Addicted to sensual objects, through thy delusions I revolve in the whirlpool of selfishness and pride: and hence I come to thee, as my final refuge, . . . desiring the fulness of felicity, emancipation from all existence."

Action is not to be avoided, since this also would be to make a motive, and thus a reality, of the Outward. We are not to seek favorable circumstances even for study or devotion, but to hold ourselves passive, whether our position determine us to act, or not: —

Bhag. Gita, p. 57. "Both the desertion and the practice of works are equally the means of extreme happiness; but of the two the practice of works is to be distinguished above the desertion."

Ib. p. 40. "Let the motive be in the deed, and not in the event. Be not one whose motive for action is the hope of reward. Let not thy life be spent in inaction. Depend upon application, perform thy duty, abandon all thought of the consequence, and make the event equal, whether it terminate in good or evil."

Ib. p. 181. "The duties of a man's own particular calling, although not free from faults, are far preferable to the duty of another, let it be ever so well pursued. A man by following the duties which are appointed by his birth, doeth no wrong. A man's own calling, with all its faults, ought not to be forsaken. Every undertaking is involved in its faults, as the fire in its smoke."

Ib. p. 44. "The man enjoyeth not freedom from action,

from the non-commencement of that which he hath to do ; nor doth he obtain happiness from a total inactivity. No one ever resteth a moment inactive. Every man is involuntarily urged to act by those principles which are inherent in his nature. The man who restraineth his active faculties, and sitteth down with his mind attentive to the objects of his senses, is called one of an estrayed soul, and the practiser of deceit. So the man is praised, who, having subdued all his passions, performeth with his active faculties all the functions of life, unconcerned about the event. Perform the settled functions ; action is preferable to inaction. The journey of thy mortal frame may not succeed from inaction. This busy world is engaged from other motives than the worship of the Deity. Abandon then, O son of *Kōōntēē*, all selfish motives, and perform thy duty for him alone."

Ib. p. 58. "The man who, performing the duties of life, and quitting all interest in them, placeth them upon *Brāhm*, the Supreme, is not tainted by sin ; but remaineth like the leaf of the lotus unaffected by the waters. Practical men, who perform the offices of life but with their bodies, their minds, their understandings, and their senses, and forsake the consequence for the purification of their souls ; and although employed, forsake the fruit of action, obtain infinite happiness : whilst the man who is unemployed, being attached to the fruit by the agent desire, is in the bonds of confinement. The man who hath his passions in subjection, and with his mind forsaketh all works, his soul sitteth at rest in the nine-gated city of its abode, neither acting nor causing to act."

Ib. p. 110. "He, O son of *Pāndōō*, who despiseth not the light of wisdom, the attention to worldly things, and the distraction of thought, when they come upon him, nor longeth for them when they disappear, . . . such a one hath surmounted the influences of the qualities."

Ib. p. 53. "Wise men call him a *Pāndēēt*, whose every undertaking is free from the idea of desire, and whose actions are consumed by the fire of wisdom. He abandoneth the desire of a reward of his actions ; he is always contented and independent ; and although he may be engaged in a work, he, as it were, doeth nothing. He is unsolicitous, of a subdued mind and spirit, and exempt from every perception ; and, as he doeth only the offices of the body, he committeth no offence. He is pleased with whatever he may by chance obtain ; he hath gotten the better of duplicity, and he is free from envy.

He is the same in prosperity and adversity ; and although he acteth, he is not confined in the action. The work of him who hath lost all anxiety for the event, who is freed from the bonds of action, and standeth with his mind subdued by spiritual wisdom, and who performeth it for the sake of worship, cometh altogether unto nothing."

Ib. p. 116. [The evil and foolish] "trust to their carnal appetites, which are hard to be satisfied ; are hypocrites, and overwhelmed with madness and intoxication. Because of their folly they adopt false doctrines, and continue to live the life of impurity. They abide by their inconceivable opinions, even unto the day of confusion, and determine within their own minds that the gratification of the sensual appetites is the supreme good. Fast-bound by the hundred cords of hope, and placing all their trust in lust and anger, they seek by injustice the accumulation of wealth, for the gratification of their inordinate desires. 'This, to-day, hath been acquired by me. I shall obtain this object of my heart. This wealth I have, and this shall I have also. This foe have I already slain, and others will I forthwith vanquish. I am *Eśwār*, and I enjoy ; I am consummate, I am powerful, and I am happy ; I am rich, and I am endued with precedence amongst men ; and where is there another like unto me ? I will make presents at the feasts and be merry.' In this manner do those ignorant men talk, whose minds are thus gone astray. Confounded with various thoughts and designs, they are entangled in the net of folly ; and being firmly attached to the gratification of their lusts, they sink at length into the hell of impurity."

Bodily existence and individuality being unreal, the individual is in reality a part of the Infinite : there is no qualitative distinction : —

Brahme-Sūtra. (Colebrooke's *Essays*, I., 354.) "The soul is a portion of the supreme ruler, as a spark is of fire. The relation is not as that of master and servant, ruler and ruled, but as that of whole and part. . . . He does not, however, partake of the pain and suffering of which the individual soul is conscious, through sympathy, during its association with body ; so solar or lunar light appears as that which it illumines, though distinct therefrom. As the sun's image reflected in water is tremulous, quaking with the undulations of the pool, without, however, affecting other watery images, nor the solar orb itself ; so the sufferings of one individual affect not another, nor the supreme ruler."

In truth, however, there is no real distinctness, even quantitative. The individual, then, is God:—

Vishnu Pur., p. 258. “Do thou, O king, who knowest what duty is, regarding equally friend and foe, consider yourself as one with all that exists in the world. . . . That One, which here is all things, is Achyuta (Vishnu); than whom there is none other. He is I: he is thou: he is all: this universe is his form. Abandon the error of distinction.”

Ib. p. 255. “Man (the soul of man) goeth everywhere, and penetrates everywhere, like the ether; and is it rational to inquire where it is? or whence or whither thou goest? I am neither going nor coming; nor is my dwelling in any one place; nor art thou, thou; nor are others, others; nor am I, I.”

Ib. p. 247. “The pure, imperishable soul, tranquil, void of qualities, preëminent over nature, is one, without increase or diminution, in all bodies.”

Ib. p. 139. “Gods, men, animals, birds, reptiles, all are but forms of one eternal Vishnu, existing as it were detached from himself. . . . It were idle to talk of friend or foe in Govinda (Vishnu), who is the supreme soul, lord of the world, consisting of the world, and who is identical with all beings. The divine Vishnu is in thee, father, in me, and in all everywhere else; hence how can I speak of friend or foe, as distinct from myself? . . . By him who knows this, all the existing world, fixed or movable, is to be regarded as identical with himself, as proceeding alike from Vishnu, assuming a universal form. When this is known, the glorious god of all, who is without beginning or end, is pleased; and when he is pleased, there is an end of affliction.”

Ib. p. 251, et seq. “The great end of all is Soul: One, pervading, uniform, perfect, preëminent over nature, exempt from birth, growth and decay, omnipresent, undecaying, made up of true knowledge, independent, and unconnected with unrealities, with name, species, and the rest, in time present, past, or to come. The knowledge that this spirit, which is essentially one, is in one’s own and in all other bodies, is the great end, or true wisdom, of one who knows the unity and the true principles of things.”

By study and devotion the wise man may arrive at the truth of this identity with God, and then, all the reason of his finiteness being removed, he becomes in truth God.

Ib. p. 139, et seq. [A young man, son of the king of the Daityas, a race of Titans continually at war with the gods,

became devoted to the worship of Vishnu. His father, after trying various expedients to detach him from the hostile faith, at last becoming excessively enraged, commanded them to bind him with strong bands and cast him into the ocean. This being done,] “as he floated on the waters, the ocean was convulsed throughout its whole extent, and rose in mighty undulations, threatening to submerge the earth.” [Then the king ordered them to pile rocks upon him. Accordingly they hurled upon him] “ponderous rocks, and piled them over him for many thousand miles; but he still, with mind undisturbed, thus offered daily praise to Vishnu. . . . ‘Glory to that Vishnu from whom this world is not distinct. May he, ever to be meditated upon as the beginning of the Universe, have compassion upon me; may he, the supporter of all, in whom every thing is warped and woven, have compassion on me; . . . glory to him who is all; to him whom I also am; for he is everywhere, and through whom all things are from me. I am all things; all things are in me, who am everlasting. I am undecaying, ever enduring, the receptacle of the spirit of the supreme. Brahma is my name; the supreme soul, that is before all things, that is after the end of all.’ — Thus meditating upon Vishnu, Prahláda became as one with him, . . . he forgot entirely his own individuality, and was conscious of nothing else than his being the inexhaustible, eternal, supreme soul. . . . As soon as, through the force of his contemplation, Prahláda had become one with Vishnu, the bonds with which he was bound burst instantly asunder; the ocean was violently uplifted; the monsters of the deep were alarmed; earth with all her forests and mountains trembled; and the prince, putting aside the rocks which the demons had piled upon him, came forth out of the main.”

Thus the whole duty of man, all philosophy, both practical and theoretical, is embraced in the single requirement of absolute Skepticism; a skepticism which does not doubt, but is absolutely certain of the unreality of all things; which recognizes only pure negation, and seeks only liberation from existence:—

Vishnu Pur., p. 658. “Liberation, which is the object to be effected, being accomplished, discriminative knowledge ceases. When endowed with the apprehension of the nature of the object of inquiry, then there is no difference between it and supreme spirit; difference is the consequence of the absence of true knowledge. When that ignorance which is the

cause of the difference between individual and universal spirit is destroyed, finally and for ever, who shall ever make that distinction between them which does not exist?"

Vishnu Pur., p. 654. "Until all acts which are the causes of notions of individuality, are discontinued, spirit is one thing, and the universe is another, to those who contemplate objects as distinct and various; but that is called true knowledge, or knowledge of Brahma, which recognizes no distinctions, which contemplates only simple existence, which is undefinable by words, and is to be discovered solely in one's own spirit."

Bhag. Gita, p. 55 et seq. "In wisdom is to be found every work without exception. Seek then this wisdom, * * * which having learnt, thou shalt not again, O son of *Pāndōō*, fall into folly; by which thou shalt behold all nature in the spirit; that is, in me. Although thou wert the greatest of all offenders, thou shalt be able to cross the gulf of sin with the bark of wisdom. As the natural fire, O *Arjōōn*, reduceth the wood to ashes, so may the fire of wisdom reduce all moral actions to ashes. . . . Children only, and not the learned, speak of the speculative and the practical doctrines as two. They are but one, for both obtain the self-same end. . . . That man seeth, who seeth that the speculative doctrines and the practical are but one. . . . Mankind are led astray by their reasons being obscured by ignorance; but when that ignorance of their souls is destroyed by the force of reason, their wisdom shineth forth again with the glory of the sun, and causeth the Deity to appear."

Vishnu Pur., p. 251. "Best of all is the identification of soul with the supreme spirit. . . . The knowledge that this spirit, which is essentially one, is in one's own and in all other bodies, is the great end, or true wisdom, of one who knows the unity and the true principles of things."

Ib. p. 139. "That is active duty, which is not for our bondage; that is knowledge, which is for our liberation: all other duty is good only unto weariness: all other knowledge is only the cleverness of an artist."

The object of creation, and the end of existence, is the exclusion and negation of the Outward. By relinquishing and casting off his false being, Man attains again his true state.

Ib. p. 649. "The mind of man is the cause both of his bondage and his liberation: its addiction to the objects of sense is the means of his bondage; its separation from the objects of sense is the means of his freedom."

Vedas : (cited in Colebrooke's *Essays*, I., 287.) "Soul is to be known, it is to be discriminated from nature: thus it does not come again, it does not come again."

Sāṅkh. Kār., LVI. et seq. "This evolution of nature, from intellect to the special elements, is performed for the deliverance of each soul respectively; done for another's sake as for self. As a dancer, having exhibited herself to the spectator, desists from the dance, so does nature desist, having manifested herself to soul. Generous Nature, endued with qualities, does by manifold means accomplish, without benefit (to herself) the wish of ungrateful soul, devoid as he is of qualities. Nothing, in my opinion, is more gentle than Nature; once aware of having been seen, she does not again expose herself to the gaze of soul. Verily not any soul is bound, nor is released, nor migrates; but Nature alone, in relation to various beings, is bound, is released, and migrates. By seven modes Nature binds herself by herself; by one, she releases (herself) for the soul's wish. So, through study of principles, the conclusive, incontrovertible, one only knowledge is attained, that neither I AM, nor is aught mine, nor do I exist. Possessed of this (self-knowledge), soul contemplates at leisure and at ease Nature, (thereby) debarred from prolific change, and consequently precluded from those seven forms. He desists, because he has seen her; she does so because she has been seen. In this (mere) union there is no motive for creation. By attainment of perfect knowledge, virtue and the rest become causeless; yet soul remains awhile invested with body, as the potter's wheel continues whirling from the effects of the impulse previously given to it. When separation of the informed soul from its corporeal frame at length takes place, and nature in respect of it ceases, then is absolute and final deliverance accomplished."

Commentary to Sāṅkh. Kār., LVI. "Nature is like a utensil; having fulfilled soul's object it ceases."

Bhag. Gīta, p. 106. "They who, with the eye of wisdom, perceive the body and the spirit to be thus distinct, and that there is a final release from the animal nature, go to the Supreme."

In this all-absorbing nihilism we have the first attempt at speculation. It cannot be called the earliest philosophical system, for it does not get as far as a system; but it is the earliest distinct endeavour to grasp the idea of the Universe.

The antithesis of Thought and Being, of the Mind and Nature, about which all philosophy turns, first presents itself in a one-sided form, one or the other factor being neglected. If we consider Being alone, or principally, then Reality is to us contained in the Outward; and as we do not see its true relation to Thought, it is an uncomprehended *something*, the highest attribute of which is Being; a pure abstraction of the Outward, and thus altogether unideal, rude, — Matter. This is the natural position of the Occidental mind.

The Orientals, on the other hand, are prone to consider Reality as pure Thought. The highest Reality to them is Mind, from which all trace of the Material is removed, — abstract Soul. The most important theological dogma to us is that God exists. But to the Hindoos the highest description of God is as the One Soul which does not admit of incarnation, and to whom Existence is the illusive show with which He disports himself. The Deity is here pure introversion; mere homogeneousness and equality with himself, that is, pure, abstract Thought. This is the earliest and the simplest conceivable form of speculation, and it must be acknowledged that these writings display an earnestness and intensity of abstraction that would seem to indicate a great depth of philosophical genius.

There is something irresistibly commanding in the terrible simplicity of this Idealism; partially typified, also, in the colossal sculptures of Ellora and Elephanta. But like its opposite, Materialism, it rests on an extreme abstraction, and is thus altogether one-sided and incomplete; and although as speculation it stands higher than Materialism, since it demands a comprehension of the relation of Nature to the mind, — yet, on the other hand, it cuts off the solution of the problem, by a mere negation, which does not dispose of Nature, but merely forbids any further consideration of it.

The Hindoo Idealism might seem at first sight the most thoroughgoing possible; — yet such is not the case. The *reality* of the Outward, of Nature, is denied, yet it remains, as an *existing unreality*. It is actual existence, only not the existence of God. But, then, whence does it derive its power to exist? The answer is, from God, who created and sustains it as an unreality, an illusion. Then Soul, the One Principle, which is Reality, does not embrace the whole Universe, — but there is, moreover, something unreal and material, which is yet existent, and created by God — who, how-

ever, is identical with the One Soul, and thus pure Reality. Evidently, therefore, a qualification of the principle is necessary. Soul is no longer pure soul, but also material: Reality not purely real, but also, in some relations, unreal; namely, *as to Man*. So also the Material is no longer pure negation, but qualified. It is nothing as to God, but something as to Man. Nor is this to be avoided by saying that Man is an unreality, and his supposed knowledge, the relation of Nature to his mind, mere deception. For the illusion by which he is deceived must be real, else it is no *illusion*, and then our knowledge is real. In other words, the relation between the mind and Nature being established by God, must be a reality, and thus our perception a reality also,—whether we perceive correctly or not; a subjective reality, at least, though, perhaps, not objective.

In spite of all, then, Nature remains *something*, which, according to the principle, it should not. It is something unspiritual, and, though created by God, foreign to him, existing properly only in the minds of created beings, not in his own. This is Evil, Impurity, that which ought not to be, but is.

It is interesting to observe in passing, the resemblance of this view to Fichte's, in whose system also Nature is merely the Unspiritual and Evil. In the Hindoo view, as in his, moreover, Nature, though mere negation, is yet necessary, as the *pièce de résistance*, by the negation of which its opposite is affirmed.

Skepticism, then, is here possible only as to the reality of *things in themselves*, out of our perception of them—(Kant's and Fichte's *Dinge an sich*); whether, apart from the phenomenal and perceptible world there be a super-phenomenal reality in nature, *distinct from God*. This skepticism, therefore, does not apply to all belief in existence—to Nature as presented to the senses—but only to a dogmatic conception of Nature as an independent supersensuous reality. Matter is an independent reality to the senses, because the senses partake of its nature, and thus do not transcend it. Sensuous perception is a relation established by God, and thus that which is perceived is independent of the finite mind. To God, however, or the mind unencumbered by personality, Matter is only this relation, and in itself, apart from this relation, it is nothing. An illusion is the substitution of an idea, formed in one's mind, for an outward reality. Creation, therefore, may be called a Divine illusion, since in it what was contained in

the mind of the Creator becomes an outward reality for the creature. The expression, however, is an improper one, since the word *illusion* implies deceit, and such indeed is its general acceptation in the Hindoo writings. Here the same erroneous notion shows itself, which we saw in the ethical view of the Outward as Evil and Impurity. Both postulate that Matter is in itself a reality independent of Mind; that Nature is independent of God. For illusion is such only by contrast with Reality and real knowledge. If the illusiveness of the phenomenal world, therefore, be held to consist in its transience, Reality must be a permanence of the phenomenal, as something separate from Spirit, from the Creator. In that case Creation would be the substitution of a shadowy and transient existence for a solid reality; and would thus be a deception;—and Nature would be an eternal undivine existence, and (being independent of the Creator) an eternal negation of God, or eternal Evil.

The main peculiarities of the Hindoo view, therefore, do not come from its Idealism, but from its Materialism. It is an essentially incomplete Idealism, because it does not dispose of Matter by reducing it to an idea, but only ignores it;—hence a reaction, and a passage to its opposite, Materialism, was unavoidable. Nature not being shown to be included in Spirit, but merely excluded by it, remained as its opposite, mere negation; and Spirit also was thus degraded into the mere opposite of Nature, — mere immateriality, or unembodied soul. Skepticism was the necessary result.

It would be interesting, did our limits allow, to show the development of this principle in the institutions and character of the Hindoos. It would also be of the highest interest to contrast with it (and thereby illustrate the same great truth,) its opposite, Materialism, and show how it in turn, by the same necessity of symmetry, passes into Idealism, and at last to the common meeting-point of Skepticism;—how from Locke to Berkeley and Hume there is a progress not at all accidental, but necessary, and involved in the very principles started with.