

Heavens. The modern god is represented as undergoing, for the benefit of mankind, a number of *avatāras* or incarnations, ten of which are especially dwelt upon by the fervid imagination of his followers. The exact time at which these several episodes were incorporated into the cult of Vishnu cannot at present be ascertained. As they are for the most part conceived in a decidedly Brāhmanical spirit,—the special object for which Vishnu assumes a human form being generally to deliver the people from the oppression of some wicked tyrannous prince,—it is probable that they were mostly introduced at a time when there was still some danger of the Kshatriyas defying the Brāhmanical rule. Of somewhat different origin were, perhaps, two of Vishnu's most popular and important incarnations, viz., those in which he manifests himself in the persons of *Krishna* and *Rāma*, two heroes whose exploits are celebrated in the *Mahābhārata* and *Rāmāyana*. It is possible that these warriors and their legendary achievements had been favourite subjects of heroic poetry for some time previous to the overthrow of the Kshatriyas, and that, being already regarded by the latter as representatives of Vishnu, they were afterwards recognized as such by the Brāhmins, and thus gave rise to the system of *Avatāras*.

The male nature of the triad was supposed to require to be supplemented by each of the three gods being associated with a female energy (*Śakti*). Thus *Vāch* or *Sarasvatī*, the goddess of speech and learning, came to be regarded as the *śakti*, or consort of *Brahmā*; *Śrī* or *Lakshmi*, "beauty, fortune," as that of Vishnu; and *Umā* or *Pārvatī*, the daughter of *Himavat*, the god of the *Himālaya* mountain, as that of *Śiva*. On the other hand, it is not improbable that *Pārvatī*,—who has a variety of other names, such as *Kālī* ("the black one"), *Durgā* ("the inaccessible, terrible one"), *Mahā-devī* ("the great goddess"),—enjoyed already a somewhat extensive worship of her own, and that there may thus have been good reason for assigning to her a prominent place in the Brāhmanical system. In later times a special sect, that of the *Śāktas*, or followers of any one of the *śaktis*, was principally devoted to her service; and up to our own days an almost national festival, the *Durgāpūjā* or *Dasarā*, accompanied by sanguinary sacrifices, is annually, in September or October, celebrated in her honour in Northern and Western India.

A compromise was thus effected between the esoteric doctrine of the metaphysician and some of the most prevalent forms of popular worship, resulting in what was henceforth to constitute the orthodox system of belief of the Brāhmanical community. Yet the Vedic pantheon could not be altogether discarded, forming part and parcel, as it did, of that sacred revelation (*śruti*), which it had been taught was the divine source of all religious and social law (*smṛiti*, "tradition"), and being, moreover, the foundation of the sacrificial ceremonial on which the priestly authority so largely depended. The existence of the old gods is therefore likewise recognized, but recognized in a very different way from that of the triple divinity. For while the triad represents the immediate manifestation of the eternal, infinite soul—while it constitutes, in fact, the *Brahma* itself in its active relation to mundane and seemingly material occurrences, the gods are of this world, are individual spirits or portions of the *Brahma* like men and other creatures, only higher in degree. To them an intermediate sphere, the heaven of *Indra* (the *svarloka* or *svarga*), is assigned to which man may raise himself by fulfilling the holy ordinances; but they are subject to the same laws of being; they, like men, are liable to be born again in some lower state, and therefore, like them, yearn for emancipation from the necessity of future individual existence. It is a sacred duty of man to worship these superior beings by

invocations and sacrificial observances, as it is to honour the *pitris*, the spirits of the departed ancestors. The dead, on being judged by *Yama*, the Pluto of Hindū mythology, are supposed to be either passing through a term of enjoyment in a region midway between the earth and the heaven of the gods, or undergoing their measure of punishment in the nether world, situated somewhere in the southern region, before they return to the earth to animate new bodies. In Vedic mythology *Yama* was considered to have been the first mortal who died, and "espied the way to" the celestial abodes, and in virtue of precedence to have become the ruler of the departed; in some passages, however, he is already regarded as the god of death. Although the pantheistic system allowed only a subordinate rank to the old gods, and the actual religious belief of the people was probably but little affected by their existence, they continued to occupy an important place in the affections of the poet, and were still represented as exercising considerable influence on the destinies of man. The most prominent of them were regarded as the appointed *Lokapālas*, or guardians of the world; and as such they were made to preside over the four cardinal and (according to some authorities) the intermediate points of the compass. Thus *Indra*, the chief of the gods, was regarded as the regent of the East; *Agni*, the fire (*ignis*), was in the same way associated with the south-east; *Yama* with the south; *Sūrya*, the sun (*ἥλιος*), with the south-west; *Varuna*, originally the representative of the all-embracing heaven (*Οὐρανός*) or atmosphere, now the god of the ocean, with the west; *Vāyu* (or *Pavana*) the wind, with the north-west; *Kubera*, the god of wealth, with the north; and *Soma* (or *Chandra*) with the north-east. In the institutes of *Manu* the *Lokapālas* are represented as standing in close relation to the ruling king, who is said to be composed of particles of these his tutelary deities. The retinue of *Indra* consists chiefly of the *Gandharvas* (etym. connected with *κέρταρος*), a class of genii, considered in the epics as the celestial musicians; and their wives, the *Apsaras*, lovely nymphs, who are frequently employed by the gods to make the pious devotee desist from carrying his austere practices to an extent that might render him dangerous to their power. *Narada*, an ancient sage, is considered as the messenger between the gods and men, and as having sprung from the forehead of *Brahmā*. The interesting office of the God of love is held by *Kāmadeva*, also called *Ananga*, the bodyless, because, as the myth relates, having once tried by the power of his mischievous arrow to make *Śiva* fall in love with *Pārvatī*, whilst he was engaged in devotional practices, the urchin was reduced to ashes by a glance of the angry god. Two other mythological figures of some importance are considered as sons of *Śiva* and *Pārvatī*, viz., *Kārtikeya* or *Skanda*, the leader of the heavenly armies, who was supposed to have been fostered by the six *Kṛttikās* or Pleiades; and *Ganeśa*, the elephant-headed god of wisdom, and at the same time the leader of the *dii minorum gentium*.

Orthodox Brāhmanical scholasticism makes the attainment of final emancipation (*mukti*, *moksha*) dependent on perfect knowledge of the divine essence. This knowledge can only be obtained by complete abstraction of the mind from external objects and intense meditation on the divinity, which again presupposes the total extinction of all sensual instincts by means of austere practices (*tapas*). The chosen few who succeed in gaining complete mastery over their senses and a full knowledge of the divine nature become absorbed into the universal soul immediately on the dissolution of the body. Those devotees, on the other hand, who have still a residuum, however slight, of ignorance and worldliness left in them at the time of their death pass to the world of *Brahmā*, where their souls, invested with subtile corporeal frames, await their reunion with the

supreme. The pantheistic doctrine which forms the foundation of the Brāhmanical belief found its earliest systematic exposition in the *Mīmāṃsā* philosophy. Inasmuch as its tenets were supposed to be in perfect harmony with the sacred scriptures, the *Mīmāṃsā* was regarded as the only true orthodox school of philosophy. It divided itself into two parts or branches, viz., the *Pūrva* (prior) or *Karma* (work) *Mīmāṃsā*, the practical, and, no doubt, older school of *Jaimini*, which propounds a system of reasoning with a view of facilitating the correct interpretation of the *Veda*; and the *Uttara* (latter) or *Brahma-Mīmāṃsā*, or commonly called *Vedānta* (conclusion of the *Veda*), the metaphysical system ascribed to *Vyasa*, which professes to supply a complete exposition of the theological doctrines advanced in the *Veda*, especially in its speculative portions, the *Upanishads*. But other *darśanas*, or philosophical systems, were started, which, though admitted into the pale of orthodoxy, were yet considered as not altogether compatible with a belief in the revealed character of the scriptures. These were the *Sāṅkhya* school, founded by *Kapila*, with its more modern branch, the theistic *Yoga* of *Patanjali*; and the dialectic *Nyāya* of *Gotama*, with the atomistic *Vaiśeṣika* of *Kanāda*. The time at which these several schools originated is still very uncertain; but it is highly probable that at least the two *Mīmāṃsās* and the *Sāṅkhya* preceded Buddhism. The *Vedānta* seemed to be unable satisfactorily to account for the origin of matter, the existence of which its followers in later times found themselves compelled altogether to deny, and to declare to be a mere illusion (*māyā*) produced by imperfect knowledge of the soul. *Kapila* cut the knot by proclaiming the eternal existence of a material principle, unconscious, but endowed with volition in regard to its own development; from it all matter had emanated, and into it it would ultimately resolve itself. He called it *Pradhāna*, ("principal" thing) or *mūla-Prakṛiti* ("original nature"). By the side of this plastic element he recognizes the existence of a primary spiritual essence (*ātman*, "soul," or *puruṣa*, "person"), which is not one but manifold, and has from all beginning entered into matter. It is in itself unintelligent; but being in the first place indued with a subtile body termed the "great one" (*mahat*), which consists of intelligence (*buddhi*), and is the first emanation of plastic nature, it thereby receives the faculty of knowing. A being composed only of these elements is the *Sāṅkhya* deity which is thus partly material, its subtile body (*buddhi*) being the secondary source of all further developments. The immediate production of the intellectual principle is the *ahankāra* ("I-making," i.e., egotism, self-consciousness), which, combined with the spiritual element, constitutes the intelligent, self-conscious, individual soul. In this way *Kapila* derives all that exists from twenty-five principles (including the two primary essences), perfect knowledge of which qualifies the soul for emancipation from its connection with matter, the source of all pain. By predicating volition of the spiritual principle and withholding it from matter, the eternal existence of which he likewise recognized, *Patanjali* became the founder of the theistic (*śeṣvara*) *Sāṅkhya* (i.e., the system with a god, *śvara*); whereas *Kapila's* doctrine was termed *nirīśvara*, atheistical. The *Nyāya*, including the *Vaiśeṣika*, on the other hand, represents the universe as having emanated from nine primary substances, five of them—viz., earth, water, light, air, and mind (*manas*)—existing eternally in the form of atoms; three (ether, time, and place) being one and infinite; and soul (*ātman*) being either one and infinite as the supreme spirit, the omniscient Lord (*īśvara*), or manifold in the shape of the vital spirit of animate beings (*jīvātman*).

The teachings of these masters, especially those of

*Kapila*, were thus decidedly antagonistic to the doctrine of an omnipotent creator of the world on which the Brāhmanical system was based. So far, however, from acknowledging their heterodoxy, they never failed to fall back on the *Veda*, as the revealed source of religious belief, to establish the truth of their theories; and so much had liberty of speculative thought become a matter of tradition and necessity, that no attempt seems ever to have been made by the leading theological party to put down such heretical doctrines, so long as the sacred character of the privileges of their caste was not openly called in question. Yet internal dissensions on such cardinal points of belief could not but weaken the authority of the hierarchical body; and as they spread beyond the narrow bounds of Brāhmanical schools, it wanted but a man of moral and intellectual powers, and untrammelled with class prejudices, to render them fatal to priestly pretensions. Such a man arose in the person of a *Śākya*, prince of *Kapilavastu*, *Gautama*, the founder of Buddhism (about the 5th or 6th century B.C.) Had it only been for the philosophical tenets of Buddha, they need scarcely have caused, and probably did not cause, any great uneasiness to the orthodox theologians. He did, indeed, go one step beyond *Kapila*, by altogether denying the existence of the soul as a substance, and admitting only certain intellectual faculties as attributes of the body, perishable with it. Yet the conception which Buddha substituted for the transmigratory soul,—viz., that of *karma* ("deed"), as the sum total of the individual's good and bad actions, being the determinative element of the form of his future existence, might have been treated like any other speculative theory, but for the practical conclusions he drew from it. Buddha recognized the institution of caste, and accounted for the social inequalities attending on it as being the effects of *karma* in former existences. On the other hand he altogether denied the revealed character of the *Veda* and the efficacy of the Brāhmanical ceremonies deduced from it, and rejected the claims of the sacerdotal class to be the repositories and divinely appointed teachers of sacred knowledge. That Buddha never questioned the truth of the Brāhmanical theory of transmigration shows that this early product of speculative thought had become firmly rooted in the Hindū mind as a point of belief amounting to a moral conviction. To the Hindū philosopher this doctrine seemed to account satisfactorily for the apparent essential similarity of the vital element in all animate beings, no less than for what elsewhere has led honest and logical thinkers to the stern dogma of predestination. The belief in eternal bliss or punishment, as the just recompense of man's actions during this brief term of human life, which their less reflective forefathers had at one time held, appeared to them to involve a moral impossibility. The equality of all men, which Buddha preached with regard to the final goal, the *nirvāna*, or extinction of *karma* and thereby of all future existence and pain, and that goal to be reached, not by the performance of penance and sacrificial worship, but by practising virtue, could not fail to be acceptable to many people. It would be out of place here to dwell on the rapid progress and internal development of the new doctrine. Suffice it to say that, owing no doubt greatly to the sympathizing patronage of ruling princes, Buddhism appears to have been the state religion in most parts of India during the early centuries of our era. To what extent it became the actual creed of the body of the people it will probably be impossible ever to ascertain. One of the chief effects it produced on the worship of the old gods was the rapid decline of the authority of the orthodox Brāhmanical dogma, and a considerable development of sectarianism. Among the great variety of deities of the pantheon, *Śiva*, *Vishnu*, and *Pārvatī* have since claimed



by far the largest share of adoration, and it is in special accounts of the *Saiva*, *Vaishnava*, and *Sakta* sects rather than in an exposition of the Brahmanical belief, that the religious history of India from about the beginning of our era can be dealt with satisfactorily. At that time the worship of Vishnu in his most popular avatār, in the person of *Krishna*, appears to have received much countenance at the hands of the priests, with a view of counteracting the growing influence of Buddhism. The sectarian spirit gave gradually rise to a special class of works, the modern *Purānas* composed for the express purpose of promoting the worship of some particular deity. In the 8th or 9th century *Sankara-āchārya*, a Malabar Brahman of the Saiva sect and Vedānta school of philosophy, made an attempt, by engaging in controversy with the leaders of various sects, to restore the Brahmanical system of belief to its former imposing position. His example and teachings seem to have inspired the Brahmanical community with a good deal of religious zeal, and even fanaticism, and thus to have greatly contributed to the final overthrow of the Buddhists. In the 7th century the authority of *Sākya-muni's* doctrine was already on the wane, as is evident from Hiouen Tshang's complaints of the number of ruined temples and deserted monasteries, and the great proportion of heretics. At the time of Sankara its decline must have been still more advanced, and a few more centuries probably sufficed to make the last living remains of the Buddhist faith disappear from the continent of India; except, indeed, in Nepal, where it prevails to this day. There also still exists in India a very important sect which seems to have early branched off from the Buddhist doctrine, viz., the *Jains*. Although, in the long run, Buddhism has been unable to maintain the ground it had won from the Brahmans, the humanizing spirit of its doctrines has left a deep impress on the Hindū mind. One of the practical and least salutary effects it has produced is the adoption of monastic institutions by most of the Brahmanical sects. The *maths* or convents, in which a considerable portion of the clergy of the various religious bodies reside together, are presided over by *mahānts* or superiors, and are scattered all over India. Sankara founded several establishments of this kind in various parts, especially one still existing at Sringeri, on the Western Ghats. In spite of its levelling tendencies, Buddhism seems never to have succeeded in checking the further development of the caste system. At the time of Sankara seventy-two mixed classes, or eighteen subdivisions of each of the four original castes, are said to have existed, and ever since they have become more and more numerous. Indeed, there can be no doubt that Hindūs do not feel, and perhaps never felt, their class restrictions as being in any way burdensome, or still less a disgrace to them, and that even the lowest man looks upon his caste as a privilege as high as that of the Brahman. In the opinion of the Brahmans only one original caste is now extant, viz., their own, all the others having resulted from successive intermixtures.

Mr Sherring, in his *Hindu Tribes and Castes*, makes the following remarks on the Brahmanical caste at the present day:—"The Brahman occupies the highest rank among Hindūs for at least three reasons. The first is his assumed sanctity. By the people generally he is regarded as a pure, stainless, twice-born being, divine as well as human, worthy of unbounded admiration and worship. He is the priest of the Hindu religion, directing the ceremonies performed at the temples, sacred wells, sacred tanks, sacred rivers, and at all hallowed places throughout the land. He is present to sanction, and give effect to, the great social festivals of his countrymen held at marriages, at births of sons, and at deaths. He casts the horoscope, tells the lucky days, gives spiritual counsel, whispers *mantras* or mysterious words,

executes magical incantations and charms, and is at once household god, family priest, and general preceptor and guide in behalf of the many millions of Hindūs residing in the vast country lying between the Himalayas and Cape Comorin. The second reason of the Brahman's superiority is that, for many ages, perhaps from the outset of his career, when with other Aryans he first entered the plains of India, he has been intellectually in advance of the rest of the Hindu race. . . . The third reason is a consequent of the second. The Brahman is not only a thinking, but also a reading man. He possesses and, perhaps, reads the holy canon—Vedas, Shastras, and Purānas. He has been the author of Hindu literature. . . . Light of complexion, his forehead ample, his countenance of striking significance, his lips thin, and mouth expressive, his eyes quick and sharp, his fingers long, his carriage noble and almost sublime, the true Brahman, uncontaminated by European influence and manners, with his intense self-consciousness, with the proud conviction of superiority depicted in every muscle of his face, and manifest in every movement of his body, is a wonderful specimen of humanity walking on God's earth. Yet the Brahman has lived his day. His prestige is rapidly on the decline, and is only maintained at its ancient pitch in remote villages and in the fastnesses of superstition in great cities. Here, as of old, it envelopes him like a glory. But the further he moves from such places, the more dim becomes the glory until it fades away altogether. Education and other influences are treating the Brahman roughly. Yet the fault is his own. He has had a better start by reason of his great natural endowments than any Hindu of the other castes below him; but he has neglected his opportunities. I fear he has been too proud, too self-satisfied to avail himself of them."

On the modern observance of religious duties Professor Wilson remarks:—"Now it is true that in the present constitution of Indian society the distribution of the periods of life, beyond that of the student, is never regarded except by a few, who prefer a life of lazy mendicancy, or by some half-crazed enthusiast, who thinks it possible to realize the letter of the law. The great body of the people, Brahmans included, pursue their worldly avocations as long as their faculties permit, spend the decline of life in the bosom of their families, and die peaceably and decently at home. But although the practice is discontinued, the doctrine remains and influences opinion; and devotional ceremonies, pilgrimage, penance, and abstract contemplation have an undue preponderance in the estimation of the people, even the best informed among them, over active duties and the precepts of morality. As to the common people they have a still lower scale, and they find a ready substitute for the inconveniences of all moral restraint in the fervour of that faith which they place in Vishnu, and the unwearied perseverance with which they train a parrot or a starling to repeat his names, to articulate *Krishna-Rādhā*, or *Sitā-Kām*."

The study of the ancient literature of the Hindūs has taught us that some practices which have hitherto, or until recently, prevailed in India, and which have contributed so much to bringing Hindū morals into disrepute, are but comparatively modern innovations. Thus, the rite of *suttē* (properly *satī*, i.e., "the faithful wife"), or voluntary immolation of widows, which was abolished some thirty years ago with considerable difficulty, seems to have sprung up originally as a local habit among the *Kshatriyas*, and, on becoming more and more prevalent, to have at length received Brahmanical sanction. The alleged conformity of the rite to the Hindū scriptures has been shown to have rested chiefly on a misquotation, if not an intentional garbling, of a certain passage of the *Rigveda*, which, so far from authorizing the cremation of the widow, bids her

return from the funeral pile to her home and resume her worldly duties.

Cases of infanticide are still, unfortunately, too common in many parts of India, especially among the *Rājputs*. To the honour of the priests be it said, however, that they have never sanctioned this abominable practice. Its origin has, it appears, to be sought in the enormous extravagance of wedding feasts, and a mistaken notion of parents being disgraced by their daughters remaining husbandless. Hence also the practice of early marriages, which is the more mischievous, as Hindū law does not allow widows to marry.

The cow has been held in high honour in India from early times. This religious feeling was not, however, carried formerly to the extreme to which it is carried now-a-days, when the slaughtering and eating the flesh of kine is considered as one of the most heinous crimes. It has, on the contrary, been shown conclusively by a Hindū scholar, that beef formed in former times a staple article of food in India, and that in showing hospitality to an honoured guest it played as prominent a part "as did the killing of the fatted calf among the Jews."

See H. H. Wilson, *Essays on the Religion of the Hindūs*; J. Muir, *Original Sanskrit Texts*; M. Müller, *History of Ancient Sanskrit Literature*; C. Lassen, *Indische Alterthumskunde*; Elphinstone, *History of India*, ed. by E. B. Cowell. (J. E.)

**BRAHMAPUTRA**, one of the largest rivers of India, with a total length of 1800 miles, rises near the lake *Mānsarowar* in the plateau of Thibet, where it is known by the name of *Sānpu*, flows eastward for about 1000 miles, and skirting round the eastern passes of the Himalayas not far from the *Yang-tse-kiang* and the great river of Cambodia, enters the plain of British India on the north-eastern frontier of Assam. It then runs westward, dividing the province of Assam into two unequal portions, turns southward into Eastern Bengal, and joins the Ganges opposite *Goālanda*, the terminus of the Eastern Bengal Railway. The united stream then flows south-west, joins the *Meghnā*, and after another southern stretch of about 100 miles, empties itself into the Bay of Bengal. The body of water formed by the union of these three noble rivers, the *Brahmaputra*, *Ganges*, and *Meghnā*, expands during the latter part of its course into a vast estuary, studded with large islands. The *Brahmaputra* proper in Assam is formed by the union of three streams, in 27° 45' N. lat. and 95° 30' E. long.—the *Sānpu* or *Dihang*, the *Dibang*, and another stream, which, although the least of the three, the Hindūs have taken as the main branch, honouring it with the name of *Brahmaputra*, and sanctifying it in their mythology. This branch, which many European writers have accepted as the main *Brahmaputra*, takes its rise in a valley called the *Brahmakunda*, on the side of the eastern extremity of the Himalaya Mountains beneath the snowy range.

The upper part of the *Brahmaputra* is entirely in Thibet, and divides the broad plateau drained by the very elevated Thibetian lakes from the narrow plateau which divides the northern and southern Himalayan ranges, where the affluents of the Ganges spring from perennial snow. At the western extremity of the *Brahmaputra* basin the main river is 14,000 feet above the sea, and after a course of 600 miles it is still 11,000 feet high. Nothing is known of its passage across the Himalaya Mountains. The features of the passage are probably similar to those exhibited by the gorge of the *Sutlej*; but it is a reproach to the science and enterprise of the 19th century to allow such a problem to remain unsolved. Eastward the basin of the *Brahmaputra* is bounded by that of the *Yang-tse-Kiang*, which here flows through tremendous gorges on its way to the plains of China and the Yellow Sea. Some contend that the basins of the *Iravadi*, *Salwin*, and *Cambodia* rivers, are interposed between the *Brahmaputra* and the *Yang-tse-Kiang*, although they approach each other within 150 miles. On the south, the *Pātkai* Mountains, terminating in the *Manipur* and *Chittagong* hills, separate the *Brahmaputra* from the *Iravadi* and the basins of the *Arakan* coast. The principal tributaries of the *Brahmaputra* are the *Dibru*, *Buri Dihing*, *Disang*, *Subansiri*, *Manās*, *Bāghmi*, *Diarlā*, and *Tista*. The *Brahmaputra*

forms many islands during its course; among which that of *Mājuli*, enclosed by the *Brahmaputra* and its branch the *Lohit*, contains an area of 282,165 acres, and is well inhabited and cultivated. In Assam the *Brahmaputra* also bears the name of the *Hiranya*, and above its junction with the Ganges it is called the *Jamunā*. The principal towns on its banks in Assam are *Dibrugarh*, *Tezpur*, *Gauhati*, *Goāpāra*, and in Bengal *Sirajganj*. Its volume of water has been computed at *Goāpāra* during its lowest ebb at 146,188 cubic feet per second. During the rains, when the river attains a height of 30 to 40 feet above its common level, its body of water may fairly be computed at four times the above quantity. The *Brahmaputra* is navigable as far as *Dibrugarh*, but in the dry season only for steamers of light draught. In the rains it overflows its banks and spreads over the country for hundreds of square miles. At *Goālanda*, where it joins the Ganges, the current is so strong during the rains, and the eddies and whirlpools formed by the meeting of the waters so numerous, that large and powerful river steamers are often unable to make headway, and have to lie for days until the river subsides. The main branch of the *Brahmaputra* formerly flowed through the eastern district of *Maimansingh*, but the greater part of its water now finds its way through the *Jamunā*. The total length, as above stated, is 1800 miles; but if its source be taken at the *Brahmakunda*, the length of the river only amounts to 930 miles. Until 1765 the *Brahmaputra* River was unknown in Europe as a first-class river, and *Major Rennel*, on exploring it, was surprised to find it larger than the Ganges. The *boze*, or upward wave caused by the sudden influence of the tide, occurs in all the passages between the islands of the estuary formed by the united streams of the *Brahmaputra*, *Ganges*, and *Meghnā*. (W. W. H.)

**BRAIN**. See ANATOMY, PHYSIOLOGY, PSYCHOLOGY, and MENTAL DISEASES.

**BRAINERD, DAVID**, one of the most zealous and successful of modern Christian missionaries, was born at *Haddam*, in the state of Connecticut, in 1718, and died October 9, 1747, in the house of his friend President *Edwards*. His heroic and self-denying labours among the American Indians wore out in the course of a few years a naturally feeble constitution, but left behind them important fruits. The narrative of his mission is contained in his journal published in 1746. His life, compiled chiefly from his own diary, was written by President *Edwards*, and has gone through many editions. Brainerd was a man of strong mental powers, extensive knowledge, and great sagacity; and as a preacher he was forcible and pathetic.

**BRAINTREE**, the *Raines of Domesday Book*, a market-town of Essex, eleven miles N. by E. of *Chelmsford*. It is one of the polling-places for North Essex, and is the seat of the *Braintree Poor Law Union*. The parish church, *St Michael's*, is a fine Gothic edifice of early date. A corn exchange and a mechanics' institute may also be mentioned. The bishops of London had at one time a palace in the town, but there are no remains of the building. The manufactures of silk and crape, which employ about 1000 persons, have quite superseded that of woollen cloth, which was introduced by the *Flemings* who fled to England to escape the persecution of the duke of *Alva*. Straw-plaiting is also carried on. There is a free school in the town, besides several charities. Two annual fairs of three days each are held here, commencing May 7 and October 2. Population of the parish in 1871, 4790.

**BRAKE**, a town in the Grand Duchy of Oldenburg, on the left bank of the *Weser*, about half-way between *Bremen* and the mouth of the river. It was for centuries the port of *Bremen*; and though, since the founding of *Bremerhaven*, it no longer possesses a monopoly of the river traffic as before, it still continues to flourish. Large docks have been recently constructed, and a railway has been opened from the town to *Bremen*. Shipbuilding and the weaving of woollen cloths are carried on to some extent. Population in 1871, 3800.

**BRAKE** is an instrument by means of which mechanical energy may be expended in overcoming friction. It is used for several entirely different purposes, the principal of these being (a) to limit or decrease the velocity of, or in some cases to bring completely to rest, the body or system