



DS

413

W3

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS.

---

*Chap.* 7

*Shelf*

*Copyright - 86.*

---

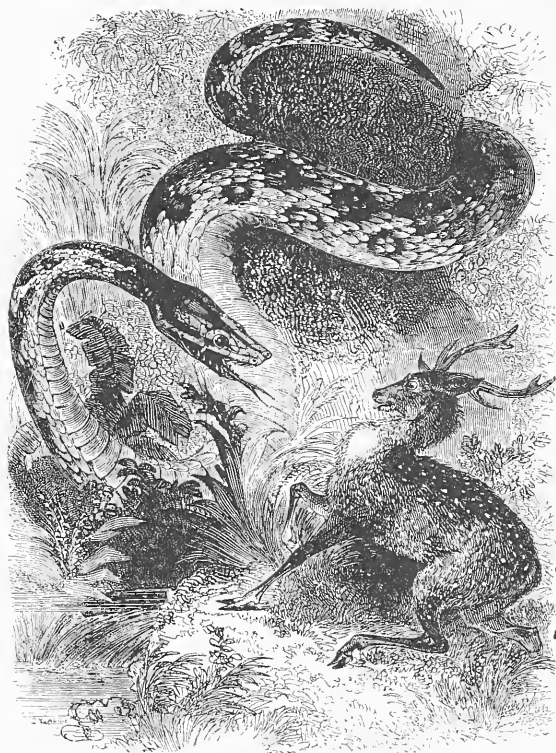
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.







Hindoo Life.



THE BOA CONSTRICTOR AND STAG.

2907.I

# HINDOO LIFE.

WITH

## PICTURES

OF THE

### MEN, WOMEN, AND CHILDREN OF INDIA.

By REV. EDWARD WEBB,

LATE OF MADURA, SOUTH INDIA.



1866  
Chilington

PHILADELPHIA:  
PRESBYTERIAN PUBLICATION COMMITTEE,  
1334 CHESTNUT STREET.  
NEW YORK: A. D. F. RANDOLPH, 770 BROADWAY.

1866

---

Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1866, by

WM. L. HILDEBURN, TREASURER,

*in trust for the*

PRESBYTERIAN PUBLICATION COMMITTEE,

In the Clerk's Office of the District Court for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania.

---

.....  
WESTCOTT & THOMSON,  
Stereotypers,  
PHILADELPHIA.  
.....

18410  
-143



# CONTENTS.



	PAGE
HINDOO LIFE.....	7
A HINDOO WOMAN.....	12
COOKING AND EATING.....	21
CLOTHING AND JEWELRY.....	26
JUGGLERS AND SNAKE CHARMERS.....	35
AN IDOL.....	38
WORSHIPING AN IDOL.....	47
MAKING IDOLS.....	50
A BRAHMIN PRIEST.....	59





# HINDOO LIFE.



---

NDIA is the name of a very large and beautiful country on the other side of the globe. The people that live in that country are called Hindoos.

If you should get so much interested in them by reading this little book, and by looking at the pictures, that you should want to go and see them, you would have to sail across the ocean in a ship. It is so far that it would take you more than a hundred days and nights to get there, going all the time. First you would have to cross over the north Atlantic

ocean down to the equator. Sailors call that "the line." Without stopping there or seeing any land you would sail on farther south, farther and farther, until you got around the cape of Good Hope.

Next you would turn up northward into the Indian ocean. After a few days you would come to the beautiful island of Ceylon. There, cinnamon, nutmegs and other spices grow, and fill the air with a sweet fragrance. The sweet odor of these spices is carried out by the winds far over the sea.

Very soon after passing Ceylon you would come to the city of Madras, and then to Calcutta. These are great cities, larger than Boston and Chicago and Cincinnati, and as large as New York or Philadelphia. Then you would leave the ship and go ashore.

At first you would be half frightened, everything would be so new and strange. The temples and the idols, the queer-looking houses, and the crowds of people, not even half dressed, and all jabbering away in a language you

could not understand. You would say to yourself "what a strange, crazy place this is!" Very likely you would wish you were safely at home again.

And then it is altogether too far for children to go, and takes too long. If you could only fly there in a dream, wake up for an hour or two, and look around, and then just go to sleep and fly back again, that would be fine fun.

Well, the next best thing to going and seeing for oneself is to hear some one that has been there tell all about it, or else to have a book full of nice large pictures, and of reading that is plain and easy. Here is just the book you want, pictures and all. It is written on purpose for you, by a missionary who has been there and seen the place, and the people, and all the things. So now you may just sit down and look at the pictures, and read it over and over as often as you like.

Before you read any further you should look at a map of India. You would see that it is covered all over with

## HINDOO LIFE.

---

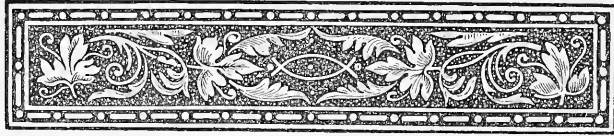
the names of cities and towns and villages. These places are full of men and women and children, just as cities and towns are in our country, only there are six or seven times more of them than there are of us in all these United States.

You must not think that because they are not white, as we are, that they are just like the Indians, or like the negroes. Their skin is very seldom black or copper-colored, but is brownish, and their face and hair, all except the color, are just like ours. They are not at all ugly or unpleasant to look at. Many of the women are very beautiful, and some of the men are noble and handsome. Then they are gentle, polite and well-behaved. You would think the children especially very bright and pretty, and after a time, when you got used to them, you would not be afraid to play with them. For the children play about as they do here, and some of their games are the same as yours. Little girls play with dolls, and the boys fly kites and spin tops. They learn to read and

write their own language just as we do ours, and some of them are very clever in drawing and painting. They all sing, too, in their own way, and sometimes it sounds sweetly.

But there is one thing about them you will be sorry to hear, and that is that they are all *idolaters*. They worship images instead of the true God. Perhaps you have heard this before; but there are some things about it that you have not heard. They will be quite new and strange to you, and you will think it is a great pity such clever people should be so foolish and wicked. When you read these things you must pray to God to send them missionaries to teach them better.





## A HINDOO WOMAN.



ERE is a picture of a woman with her spinning-wheel, and her baby lying on the mat before her. If you should pass through a Hindoo village some time in the afternoon you might see the women sitting down on mats, spread out in the shade of their house, and spinning cotton, just as she is. Sometimes you would see one all by herself, and sometimes half a dozen together. Many of them would be quite as good-looking and good-natured as she seems to be.





HINDOO WOMAN SPINNING.—P. 13.



Some very poor women go with their husbands to work in the fields, because they can earn a little more that way than by spinning. When they do so they take their baby with them and put it to sleep in the shade of a tree, where they leave it, while they are at work, swinging in a long cloth tied around one of the boughs.

Let us look at the picture again. That is her house. The walls are made of clay or moistened earth piled up; these walls they cut down outside and in, smooth them off and leave them to dry in the sun. Then they put on a roof and thatch it with straw or palm-leaf, or cover it in with tiles. That queer-looking animal on the roof is a lizard; there are many of them about, but they don't hurt, so nobody is afraid of them. Those large leaves are the leaves of the beautiful banana-tree. They plant them near the house, not for the fruit only, but for their cool shade and pleasant green.

Would you like to go into her house and see how it looks inside? I do not think she will object. So just

fancy we are leaving her for awhile and going round the corner there to the door on the other side. You see the roof stretches out a good way from the wall in front, so it makes a nice shady place outside; and there is a raised seat under it made of earth like the walls, but it is hard and clean, and is covered with a mat. It must be a pleasant place to sit and talk. Grown people must stoop pretty low or they will bump their heads, but children will have no trouble.

There is no window, so it seems dark to us at first; we shall see clearer in a minute or two. There, now you can see to the end on that side. That is where she cooks. Look at those rests; they are for the earthen pots in which she boils her rice. There is no chimney, so the smoke spreads all about and goes out through the thatched roof. You see those two piles of earthen pots in the corner. What are they for? One holds rice, and another spices and seeds, and another vegetables. Those standing one over the other in that pile are used for cooking. The

---

large one, standing by itself, holds water. There is a little bundle of sticks, too, for the fire in the evening. How neatly she has put everything in its place, and how clean and tidy all looks. Just here where we stand, near the door in the middle of the house, they eat. They never use table or chairs, but spread a mat upon the hard, dry earthen floor, and then sit down on that to eat.

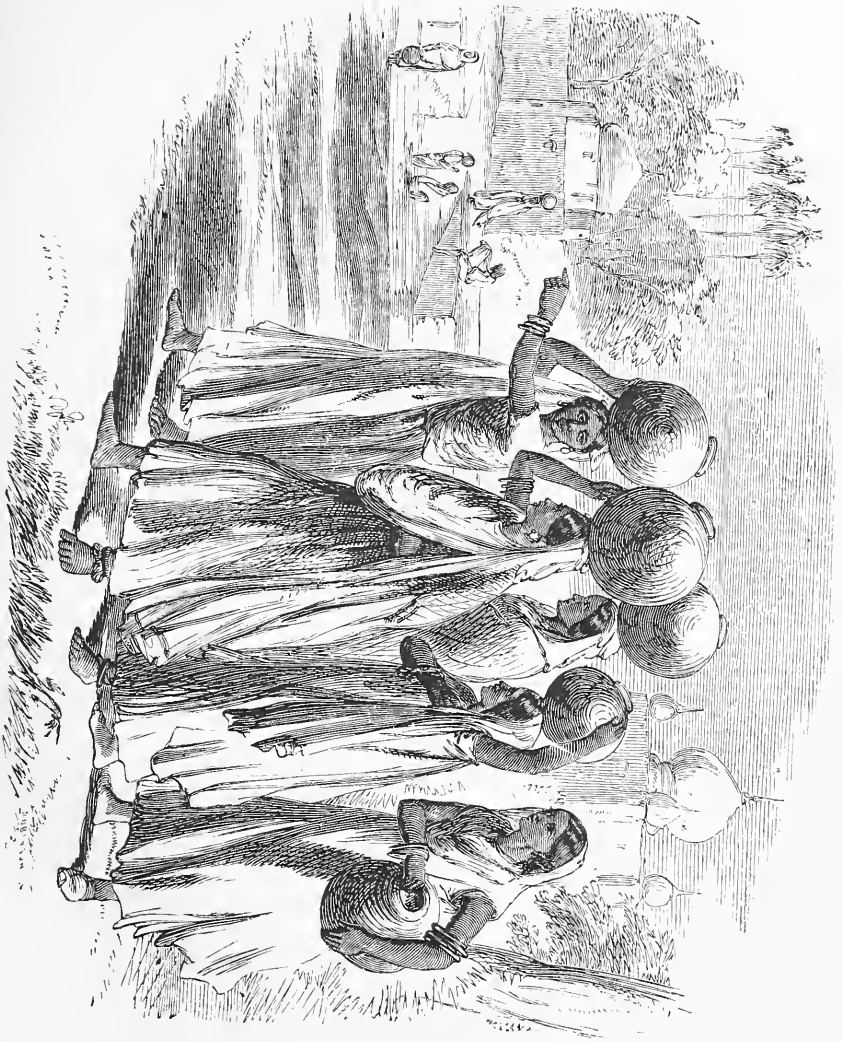
But, where do they sleep and what do they sleep on? Those mats neatly rolled up and standing in the corner there, at the other end, take the place of bed and bedstead. At night she makes a swinging cradle for her baby of a long cloth hung round one of the cross-beams. They are just as happy here as they would be in a house with many rooms and plenty of rich furniture, because they are contented, and are not all the time wishing for something more or better.

Oh, if now they only knew what we know about the way to be saved, and had the blessed Bible in their house! That is what the missionaries go for, you know.

They tell them about Jesus, the holy Saviour, and persuade them to be Christians.

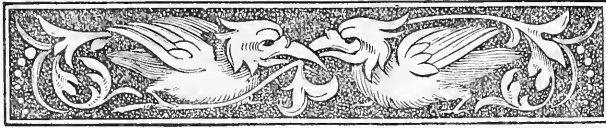
Now let us go back and look at that woman again. Since you have seen her house do you not feel more interested in her? It seems as if she were looking at her work and thinking about her babe, and the little thing is laughing and kicking and looking up at her, just as our babies do. Out of that roll of cotton which she holds in her left hand she is spinning the thread, while she turns the wheel with her right. The cotton grows in the fields around. When it is picked and brought home, the seeds are separated from it by means of a little simple machine which she has in her house. Then it is *carded*, that is, the fibres are all drawn out one from another. This is done by an instrument like a bow which boys play with. It is then made up into small rolls, and is ready for spinning. This thread is afterwards sold to the weavers, who make muslin of it for jackets and cloths such as she has on.

HINDOO WOMEN GOING TO THE WELL.—P. 19.









## COOKING AND EATING.



BEFORE the sun sets this woman will put away her spinning, and begin to prepare for her husband's return. He has been at work in the fields ever since early morning, and will come home, by-and-by, hungry and tired; so she must have a warm supper ready for him.

The first thing to be done is to get fresh water from the well. The well, or tank, as it is called in India, is very large, and is just outside the village. There is but one for all the families in the place. In the picture on

the opposite page you see a company of women going to the tank with their water-pots. Does it not make you think of the woman of Samaria, who came to draw water, and found Jesus sitting and resting by the well? This well is very different from Jacob's, which she came to, for that was deep and needed a long rope to reach the water. There are steps down into this, and the women all go down to the water, dip their vessels in and fill them. Then they place a little coil made with the end of their cloth on the top of the head, into which they set their water-pot. This holds it, so that they do not steady, or even touch it with their hands on their way home.

Some persons say that it is by carrying the water on their heads in this way that the Hindoo women have such erect and graceful forms.

Do you see some persons on the other side of the bank, standing in the water and filling their vessels? From the manner in which they are dressed we judge they are Mohammedans. Their cloths are drawn over their heads

and their arms also are covered. There are a great many Mohammedans in India. Those buildings in the distance, on the other side of the tank, are temples, or mosques, in which they worship.

In this company of women can you pick out our friend whom we saw spinning?

She will now hasten home with the water, kindle the fire, and prepare the curry to eat with it. She makes the curry of meat or vegetables, cut up into small pieces and fried or boiled, with butter, cocoanut-milk, red pepper and other hot spices. Now she lights the little oil-lamp that stands in the place made for it in the wall. There comes her husband. She has some water all ready to pour on his hands. Now she spreads out the dining-mat for him. After he is seated she brings the rice steaming in the pot in which it was boiled, and piles it up on a leaf or in a brass plate in front of him. For this purpose she uses a ladle or spoon made of a portion of a shell of a cocoanut, through which a split piece of a bamboo

is thrust for a handle. She now brings the curry and ladles it out in the same way, pouring it into and all over the rice.

All is now ready; but has she not forgotten something? He has no spoon, or knife, or fork. No! he does not need anything of the kind. He uses his fingers only; but he has learned to use them very skilfully and even neatly. You observe that he does not soil them above the second joint. First he mixes up the curry with the rice, a portion of it only at once, and, when he has eaten that, another portion, and so on. He takes upon his fingers about as much as a dessert-spoon would hold, then, with a few movements, works it into a ball, which he raises towards his mouth and shoots it in with his thumb. While he eats she stands by to bring him whatever he needs.

Now he has done and she brings him water to drink. It is not rude to watch him at this distance, and you need not mind laughing even if you feel like it. Just

look at him as he throws back his head, opens his mouth and pours in a stream without touching the cup with his lips. The Hindoos all drink so, because they think it defiles anything to touch it with the lips. On this account they will not use a spoon, because it passes so often from the food into the mouth, and from the mouth into the food again. When he has risen and she has once more poured water on his hands she will take her own supper, and not till then. If she had sons they would eat with their father, but her daughters would always have to eat with her. She is almost like a slave. She can not read, for they say it is not right for a woman to learn. So there are no girls' schools. When she goes out with her husband she must walk behind him, carrying her baby and the food for the way.

The Hindoos treat their women so because they are heathen and do not know better; but the missionaries teach them that a woman is as good as a man, and that a girl is worth as much as a boy, and a little more, too.



## CLOTHING AND JEWELRY.



—o—o—o—o—o—

THE dress of the Hindoos is very different from ours. A piece of muslin about a yard wide and ten yards long folded gracefully around and fastened firmly is all the clothing a Hindoo woman has. A few, who have seen the way in which white ladies dress, sometimes wear a little jacket with short sleeves, as the spinning-woman in the picture, but that is not very common out of the cities.

The Hindoo woman puts on her cloth just as it comes from the bazaar, without cutting or sewing. She has a



FEMALE ORNAMENTS IN INDIA.—P. 27.





way of tucking it in and fixing it so firmly that it needs no extra fastening, no pins, or hooks, or buttons. It hangs down to the feet, and leaves only her arms and one of her shoulders uncovered. She never wears either bonnet or cap, and would think it as strange to cover her hands with gloves, or her feet with socks and shoes, as we do for her to wear a large ring in her nose, as that lady in the picture opposite does. Sometimes, when she is going to walk a long way or over a very rough road, she puts on sandals, but always slips them off before she goes into a house. Instead of wearing a bonnet or hat she loosens one end of her cloth and raises it up from behind upon her head, allowing it to fall in free and graceful folds over her arms. Are you not surprised that she is able to dress so neatly and so modestly with so little clothing?

You must not think from this that there are no fine ladies in India, and that they can not possibly spend much time or money upon their dress, for they talk as

## HINDOO LIFE.

---

much about dress and fashion there as here; only the fashion here is to change to some new style, whilst there it is not to change at all, but to keep to the old style. Their cloth may be of any color or any figure; it may be of cotton or silk; it may be of any quality, too. It is sometimes made of fine lace or muslin, worked with various figures and embroidered; sometimes the silk is ornamented with gold and silver tissue. It has generally a handsome border, which they take much pains to display. The very poorest can not afford more than one or two coarse white cloths; those that are a little better off have a colored one for best. The wealthy have a great variety of rich and handsome patterns. But whatever the pattern or quality, it is put on in the same way. So, too, their hair, which is black and glossy, is always parted in the middle, and gathered up in a knot near the neck, at the back of the head. In doing it up they often sprinkle in the petals of the jasmine and other sweet-scented flowers.

Both men and women are passionately fond of jewelry. Many native ladies seem to be covered from the crown of the head to the soles of the feet with ornaments made of gold and silver, in which are often seen sparkling diamonds and other precious stones. On the top of the head a gold plate is fastened, around which is hung a string of pearls from which pendants hang over the forehead; the ears are loaded with jewels; the nose is bored on both sides and in the center to receive more; the neck is circled with gold bands, with necklaces of gold beads, and pearls and precious stones; the arms are covered both above and below the elbow with armlets and wristlets; there are rings of various patterns for each of the fingers; the ankles are burdened with heavy silver anklets, like fetters, several inches round; and, like the fingers, almost every toe has its own particular ornament.

Of course only those who are very rich can afford to wear so much; but every woman sets her heart on getting as much as she can. Before they are a year old little

girls are taken to have their ears bored. The hole which is bored is constantly stretched to make it larger and larger. For this purpose three or four heavy leaden rings are hung into each ear. It is funny to see the little girls when they run holding up these rings with their hands, for fear the weight of them as they dangle about should tear their ear apart.

The men, too, wear jewelry in their ears and nose, on one of the fingers and on several of the toes. Their dress is different from that of the women. They have two shorter cloths of white cotton. One is tied tight around the waist and then wrapped round several times. The other is thrown like a scarf over the shoulders. Instead of a hat or cap they wear a turban. This is generally made of a long narrow strip of thin muslin wrapped many times around the head. They wear slippers, too, more frequently than the women. These are made of colored leather, pointed at the toes and turning upward.



HINDOO JUGGLERS AND SNAKE CHARMERS.—P. 33.





## JUGGLERS AND SNAKE CHARMERS.



HERE are a great many serpents, scorpions and other venomous reptiles in India. The poor natives are often bitten or stung in their houses and when walking out of doors after dark. At that time they always carry a torch with them, or walk clapping their hands, to frighten them out of the path, lest they should tread on them. The most deadly of the snakes is called the cobra. It is seven or eight feet long and nearly as large as your arm.

These are cobras, or cobra di capellas, that those men

are playing with in the picture. The men are jugglers or snake charmers. They make a great deal of money by going from place to place, as showmen do in our country. There are five men in this company. Two of them have serpents coiled about them, and are holding them up and playing with them. One man is playing on a musical instrument a tune which seems to bewilder, or, as we say, charm the venomous creatures so that they can not bite; another is keeping time by beating upon a drum.

You see another with his hand in a basket. There is a snake coiled up in that, and he is going to take it out. They carry all the serpents about in little round flat baskets like that. Sometimes these men are bitten and die, though they say their charms will keep the snakes from biting, or destroy their poison if they should. With the sword and balls lying there in front, they perform some curious and wonderful feats of jugglery. The gentlemen on horseback are European officers. The houses



## HINDOO LIFE.

---

are very different from the spinning-woman's that we saw. You see such as those in the large towns and cities. You will find something more about snakes if you read on a little farther. The natives call the cobra a god, and are on that account afraid to kill it. The snake in the picture on the title page is a boa. It is so large that it can even swallow a deer.





## AN IDOL.



—o—o—o—o—o—

HERE you have a picture of one of their idols. It is one they are very fond of, and worship oftener than any other. You will wonder what there is in that disagreeable-looking thing to be so fond of, that they should even fall down and worship it.

That mother has brought her little boy and is teaching him to pray to it. See how she puts his little hands together and tries to make him repeat its name. She thinks that ugly-looking stone image can see and hear



CHILD TAUGHT TO WORSHIP A HINDOO IDOL.—P. 39.



and can bless her boy and can take care of him. So, before he can stand alone or speak plainly, she wants him to begin to worship it. Christian mothers that love the souls of their dear children do so too, only they bring their little children to the blessed Saviour, and teach them to pray and to lisp the name of Jesus.

Whilst I am writing this there is a real image, just like that in the picture, standing on my table. It is made of stone and is no bigger than your hand, and has often been worshiped in India. Once, when the man to whom it belonged was carrying it, he let it fall. By that fall one of its hands was broken off. When he saw this he brought it to a missionary and left it with him; "For," he said, "if it can not take care of itself it can not help me." After that he became a Christian.

The idol in the picture looks as though it might be very large, perhaps six feet or more in height; sometimes they are made larger even than that. Some are made of wood and of brass, and some even of silver and gold

and of precious stones. This idol has a great many names. One of the most common is Gana-pathi, which means "lord of hosts;" another very common one is Pilliyar, meaning "the great child." It has a very stout body, fat short legs and arms, and an elephant's head tusk and trunk.

The stories they tell about the way this god came to have an elephant's head are very foolish, but they really believe them, so I will tell you one of them. They say he was once a little baby like any other baby, only his parents were gods. His father's name was Siva and his mother's Durga. Soon after he was born some of the other gods came to see him. Among them there was one whose name was Sani, the god of the planet Saturn. Sani hung down his head and would not look at the child, because he knew some dreadful thing would happen to it if he did. Durga, the mother of the child, did not know this, and so she scolded him for treating her and her child in that way. Sani then became angry and

fixed his fiery eyes on the head of Gana-pathi, which was instantly consumed, and the child was left headless. The mother, full of grief and anger, went directly to a very powerful god named Brah-ma to complain. Brah-ma ordered Sani to go into the woods and to cut off the head of the first animal he should find and bring it along. The first animal he found was an elephant, whose head he brought. Brah-ma then directed him to fix it on the body of Gana-pathi, and there it remained and grew. He is now worshiped all over India more than any other god. This idol is set up in every house and in every school-room, and the children pray to it as they go into the room and before they begin to learn their lessons. This is one of the prayers which they say:

“Great Gana-pathi, thou in sport  
Dost clap thy hands and dance,  
Dost crack six cocoanuts, and eat  
Bushels of rice at once.  
Like us thou lovest sweetmeats too,  
So look on us and help us now.

Once in a year the grown people honor him with a great feast. Then the children make images of him out of clay and get their parents and others to give them plenty of cakes and candies for offerings to him, after which they have a good time; for if Gana-pathi can not eat them they know who can.

The Hindoos think that this God is able to help them to do anything they desire by taking away whatever hinders it or prevents it from succeeding. They call upon him for aid by repeating a prayer or by making his sign. If they are going to build a house they make it in the sand; if they are about to write a letter to a friend that mark is always made first at the top of the page. Sometimes, instead of that mark, they write these words, "By the help of Gana-pathi." May we not learn a good lesson from these poor heathen, and remember what Jesus says to us: "Without me ye can do nothing."





A BRAHMIN ANOINTING AN IDOL WITH OIL.—P. 15.





## WORSHIPING AN IDOL.



He idol in this picture is the same as that in the other. There is a man standing in front of it, pouring oil upon its head. Some of you will remember that this is just what Jacob did at Bethel, when he took the stone he had used for a pillow and set it up and "poured oil upon it." God told him to set up the stone, that whenever he saw it he might remember the wonderful vision he had had there, and then to pour the oil upon it, just to mark it, so that he might always know it from the other stones. -But Jacob

knew better than to worship it. Perhaps the Hindoos got into the way of pouring oil upon their idols in this way and from hearing of this thing which Jacob did. But they think they do a great honor to their gods when they anoint them. You would not think it was an honor when you saw what black, filthy and unpleasant-looking objects it made them.

This idol is set up out of doors, in a grove. The tree growing near, with branches stretching over it, looks like a banyan. The others are cocoanut-trees. Those in the distance, over the river, are Palmyra-trees.

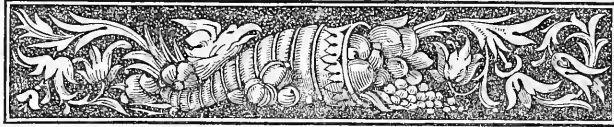
Wherever you go in India you see idols—by the roadside, in the palm-groves and under the green wide-spreading banyan. This idol stands upon a square stone. Behind it is a pillar, on which stands an oil-lamp. On still nights this is lighted. The man pouring the oil is probably the priest. Under his arm is a garland of flowers, which he will leave there. He has also some sacred ashes, with which he will mark its forehead. He

## HINDOO LIFE.

---

does this every day. Sometimes he brings fruit and sugar and rice as an offering. All the while he stands there doing these things he keeps repeating his prayers, or muntras, as he calls them. Should we not be more earnest in praying to the great and holy Saviour than he is in praying to his dumb idol?



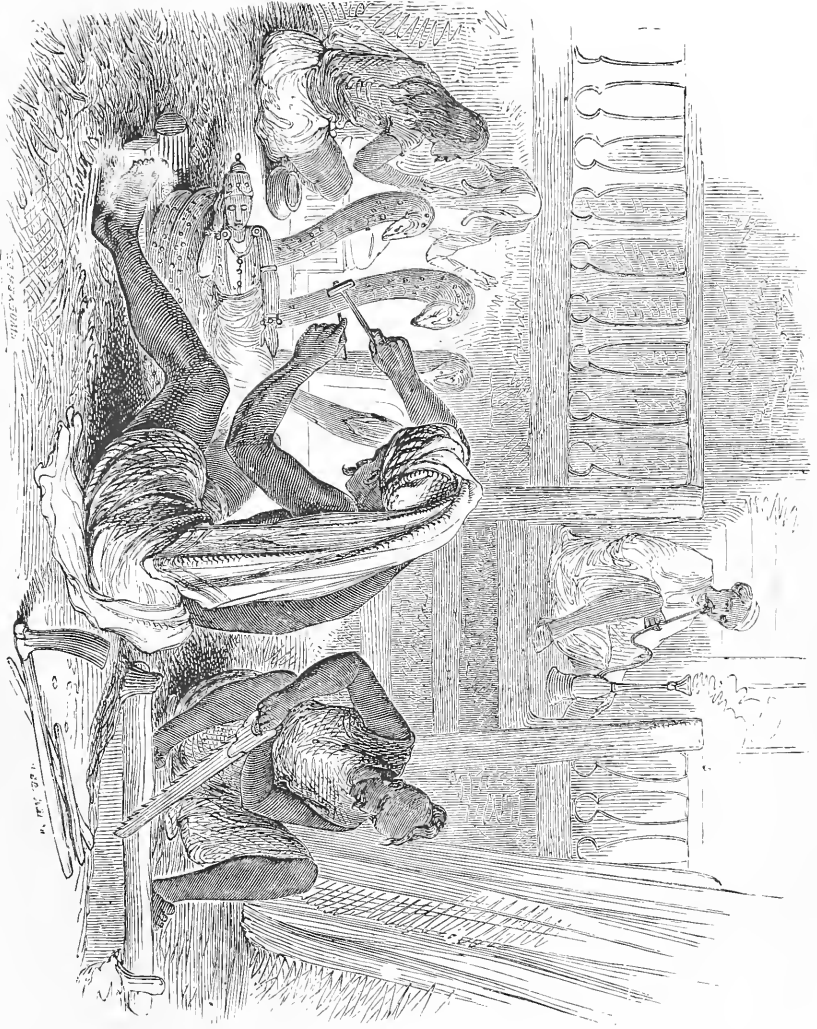


## MAKING IDOLS.



ERE in this picture you see the Hindoos at work making their idols.

That man on the right-hand side is sawing a stick of wood. One piece of it is for an idol; and when he has finished it he will worship it and pray to it, and will say, "Deliver me, for thou art my god." With the rest he will kindle a fire, and will warm himself and say, "Aha, I am warm," as the prophet Isaiah says of the heathen in his day in chapter xlv. The man at the back there, on the left-hand side, has nearly finished an image of Gana-pathi.



HINDOO IDOL MAKERS.—P. 51.





The workman in front is just touching off one of the four heads of a serpent. On its body, which is coiled up below, there is a god sleeping. The name of that god is Vishnoo. The story which is told of this god in their sacred books is very curious. The serpent, they say, was an enormous one, with a thousand heads. It lay floating upon a shoreless, fathomless ocean of milk. It was floating there long before the world, or any of the gods even, were created. During all this time the god Vishnoo, who was the father of all the gods, lay sleeping on the folds of its enormous body. He had lain there for millions and millions of years, when there sprung up out of him a lotus flower. Out of this flower there came another great god called Brahma. As soon as Brahma was born he created a number of big elephants and made them stand on the heads of the serpent. Then he created the world and put that on the backs of the elephants.

How thankful we should be that we were not taught to believe such foolish stories, but have the holy Bible,

which was given to us by the true God, who, by his almighty power, created the world. The Hindoos worship both Vishnoo and the serpent on which he lies. Everywhere you see images of the cobra. They even build temples for it, and pray to it and make it many offerings. When they have one in their houses, as they often do, they do not dare to kill it, but give it milk and fruit, and treat it with great respect. Besides the serpent, they worship many other animals.

They call the *cow* the "mother of the gods." If a man kills a cow they say he will be punished in the other world for as many years as there are hairs on her body. Some of them think they are sure of going to heaven, if, when they die, they hold in their hand the tail of a cow. The sacred ashes, which they rub upon their idols, and with which they mark themselves every morning, are made by burning cow-dung. Bulls are an especial object of reverence. You often see them walking about around the temples; large, fat, sleek-looking fellows; they get

to be very bold and self-willed, because everybody feeds them and treats them well. They go through the bazaars, or market-places, and help themselves to grain or fruit from the stalls, and the shop-keepers do not dare to beat them away, lest they should offend the god. Thus the Hindoos have to pay for their folly. These Brahminee bulls often stand about in the narrow streets and block up the way. Sometimes you hear a man beg one of them to get out of the way. He will say, "Please, my lord, be so good as to stand aside and let me pass."

They worship the monkey, too. There is a monkey-god, of whom they tell the most wonderful and ridiculous stories. When he was quite a child, he one day saw the rising sun, and thinking it was a ripe fruit, he leaped up to seize and eat it. One of the gods, seeing what he was doing, struck him with a thunderbolt, upon which he fell to the earth and broke his cheek-bone; so from that they called him Hanu-man, for hanu, in that language, means cheek-bone. They say he was wonderfully strong. When

## HINDOO LIFE.

---

only ten years old he lifted up and carried off a rock that was nearly twenty miles in circumference. He did this to trouble some holy men who cursed him and for a time took away all his strength. As they do not like to drive away monkeys, in many places they become very troublesome indeed to the people, though to you they would be very amusing. The Hindoos not only worship beasts, but birds, and even fishes.





A BRAHMIN RECEIVING WORSHIP.—P. 57.





## A BRAHMIN PRIEST.



HE man who stands looking up and stretching out his hand in that picture is a priest, or gooroo, as they call him. He is also called a Brahmin. It is his business to read and explain the vedas to the people. The vedas are to them what the Bible is to us. There are four of them. They are all written in a language which the common people do not understand. They are not translated as the Bible is; so that when the people want to know what the vedas say they are obliged to ask the Brahmins. These Brahmins

say they are gods, and try to make the people believe it. In the vedas they say there is the following verse:

Creation bows before its Maker's nod,  
But muntras can enchain the power of God,  
Yet muntras do before the sacred Brahmins bow,  
So Brahmins are the gods of mortals, and immortals now.

Muntras are short prayers, the meaning of which the priests themselves do not always understand. There is one which they think possesses very great power. It has these five syllables, Na, Ma, Si, Va, Ya. When these are all pronounced as they should be, it is said they produce the most wonderful effects. Once fire was seen to come straight down from heaven and burn up all the sin in the man who pronounced them; and at another a flock of crows were seen to fly out of the body of a man. These, the gooroo said, were the sins which he had committed before he was born. Some muntras have power sufficient to destroy an army, and some to make even the gods tremble.



You will say that all this is very foolish and wicked; and so it is. We know, however, that there is great power in the prayer of a good man, for the Bible says that "the effectual, fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much." And the prayer of a child even, when it comes from his heart, has power enough "to move the hand that moves the world."

In the picture there is a man worshiping a Brahmin. He has fallen down before him with his face to the ground. The Brahmin is repeating a muntra and holding out his hand to give him his blessing. But the poor man must give him some money for that. The place where he stands looks like a temple. Many Brahmins live all the time in these temples, and receive many presents from pilgrims that come from a distance, as well as from the people who live near by.

The white marks on his arms and forehead are made with the sacred ashes. He has a cord and a string of beads about his neck. They think the cord is very

sacred; it is a sign that he is a Brahmin. It is first put on to Brahmin boys when they are about eight years old. He is as proud of his cord as a nobleman is of his stars, or as a soldier of his medals. He uses those beads when he repeats his prayers. He says a short prayer over and over a great many times, and he thinks the value of his prayer depends on the number of the times he repeats it, so he keeps count with his beads. How much this makes us think of what the Saviour says about praying,—“Use not vain repetitions as the heathen do.”

The two men talking together, in the same picture, are also Brahmins. You notice that they have only a knot of hair on the top of their head, and that all the rest is shaved off. They are very careful of that lock of hair, for they think they could not be saved without it. How strange it seems that such good-looking men should believe such foolish things! and how very sad it is they should teach all the people to believe them!

You will be glad to know that since the missionaries

## HINDOO LIFE.

---

have gone and told them of the Saviour who died upon the cross for all men, many of the people, and some Brahmins even, have given up the worship of their false gods and have believed in him. Still there are many millions in India who have never even once heard of Jesus and the true way to be saved. Many more missionaries should be sent there. When you grow up would you not like to go?

















LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



0 019 611 786 6