

pursuits, they never live on their farms, but in little villages, which are found all over the country at distances of one or two miles; from these the laborers go in the early morning to their fields, taking their cattle and sheep with them, for these also return with their owners to the village every evening. The people living in these villages are miserably fed and clothed, and most degraded, ignorant and superstitious.

Various religions are professed in India, the two principal being Mohammedanism and Brahmanism. The latter is an extraordinary system of idolatry, which has for ages exercised tremendous power over the great mass of the inhabitants. Their religious books are called Vedas; there are some good things in them, but there is as great a difference between them and our Bible as there is between light and darkness. The three principal deities are Brahma, the Creator; Vishnu, the Preserver; and Siva, the Destroyer; and all three are represented as full of vice and cruelty. Besides these there are a vast number of inferior gods, 333,000,000 it is said, and many objects in nature which are considered sacred; one of these is the river Ganges. The Hindus say that the touch of its waters takes away all sin, and at the full moon of October or November thousands gather on its banks, bathe in the holy water, and worship the goddess of the river. The sick are brought long distances to die beside it; the bodies of the dead are burnt, and the ashes thrown into the sacred river, and, until it was forbidden by the British Government, numbers of people drowned themselves, and thousands of infants were cast into its waters every year. To show what god he worships a Hindu generally wears on his forehead a peculiar mark, either tattooed or painted in colors of red or white, *e.g.*, worshippers of the god Siva have three white lines marked on the brow and arms, so that they are known wherever they go. The forms of worship are almost as varied as the gods are numerous, and many of the worst sins are committed as part of their religion. They fast, say prayers, make pilgrimages, give alms, and offerings at temples and tombs, all with the hope of pleasing the gods, and making it better for themselves in a future state of existence, for they believe that a human soul may have a number of births, inhabit bodies of different kinds, and thus be punished in one state of being for sins committed in another. A person who offends some cruel god or proud priest