

leading Viṣṇuīte sects declare Viṣṇu to be the one God, and yet they recognize the existence of all the other divinities of the Hindu pantheon. They also hold that Viṣṇu has been incarnate among men a great many times, the latest and chief incarnations being Rāma and Kṛishṇa. Worshippers of Śiva declare that Śiva is the one God, but recognize also all the other gods. A special group of Śivaīte sects has to be noticed, namely, those who pay honour to the wife of Śiva as Kālī or Durgā. Both Viṣṇuītes and Śivaītes worship idols, but among Śivaītes the phallic symbol is more usual than images of the god. Both sects worship their gurus, that is, their teachers, as gods. Both are fully orthodox in the sense that they retain and enforce with great strictness the ancient Hindu rules of conduct which are summed up under the word *dharma*. Both sects claim to be Vedāntists, but each has its own interpretation of the philosophy. Around the Hindu community in every part of the country there lived multitudes of degraded Outcastes, held down in the dirt by Hindu law. They number about fifty millions to-day.

When the century dawned, Hindus were in a pitifully backward condition. Their subjugation by the Muḥammadans about 1200 A.D. had been a very serious trampling under foot; and, while the reasonable rule of the Mughals had given them a breathing-space, the terrific convulsions of the eighteenth century had more than undone all that had been recovered. Learning had almost ceased; ordinary education scarcely existed; spiritual religion was to be met only in the quietest places; and a coarse idolatry with cruel and immoral rites held all the great centres of population. The condition of South Indian Hinduism at the end of the eighteenth century is very vividly reflected in l'Abbé Dubois' famous work, and the Hinduism of the North at the beginning of the nineteenth in the writings of Ram Mohan Ray. The reader may make a rough guess at the state of the Hindu community from the