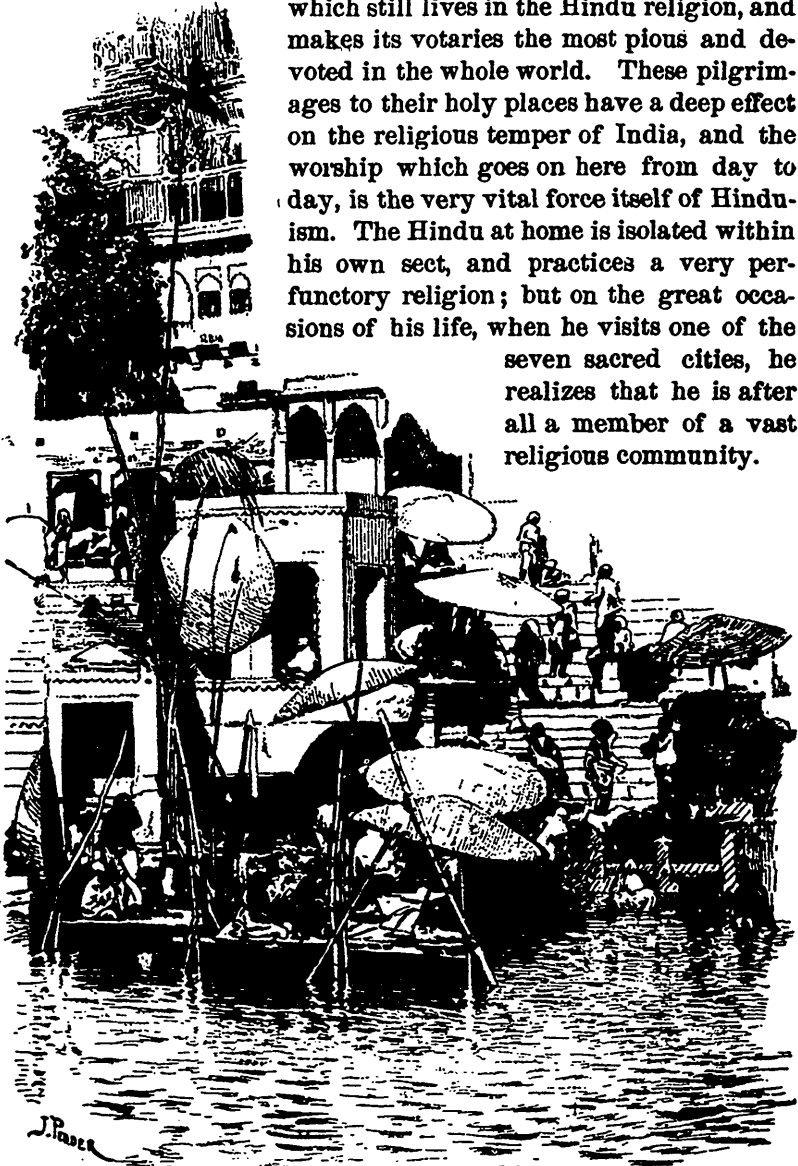


It is only when face to face with the eager crowds from every part of India, which throng the ghats and temples of Benares, that we realize to the full the latent power which still lives in the Hindu religion, and makes its votaries the most pious and devoted in the whole world. These pilgrimages to their holy places have a deep effect on the religious temper of India, and the worship which goes on here from day to day, is the very vital force itself of Hinduism. The Hindu at home is isolated within his own sect, and practices a very perfunctory religion; but on the great occasions of his life, when he visits one of the seven sacred cities, he realizes that he is after all a member of a vast religious community.



A CORNER ON THE GANGES, BENARES.

The Holy of Holies at Benares is the famous sanctuary of the terrible Siva. He is, more than any god, cruel, and exacts a