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BRAHMANISM PAST AND PRESENT.—I.

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Mr. John Lockwood Kipling, in his fascinating book on "Beast and Man in India," uses some excusably strong language about the general misconception of Indian life and character created by the conventional pictures of scholars who work from a dead and done-with literature. "Nothing," he says, "could be more scholarly, amiable, sentimental, or mistaken." And he adds that the administrator, the schoolmaster, and the missionary have equal grounds of complaint.

The subject of this paper almost insensibly tempts one to follow the example of these arm-chair expounders of the Hindu's faith. I have no wish to fall under Mr. Kipling's ban, and therefore begin by saying that it is scarcely too much to assert that there is no such thing in the India of to-day as Brahmanism in the true sense of that word; or at least, that it is the religion of a trifling number out of the millions of India. And yet the system potent in by-gone ages, buried in "a done-with literature," has sunk so deep into Hinduism, that the present religious condition of India would be greatly misapprehended if Brahmanism and its undying influence were not understood.

Let me state it more directly. I have seen *ordinary middle-class Hindus* worship—and by worship I mean kneel and pray with many genuflexions, or make offering of a few grains of rice or jowar or pulse, or burn incense in a cocoanut shell—the following variety of objects :

(1) Trees of various kinds, especially the peal-tree and the Tulsi plant in many places over India ; (2) stones, either single uncouth blocks, or smaller ones of curious shapes, also in many different parts of India ; (3) a jutting bit of rock, spared by the capricious discharge of blasting powder on the Ghat from Ellora to Roza ; (4) a pillar erected to a distinguished officer at Mahabaleshwar ; (5) a curiously shaped hummock on a hill near Secunderabad ; (6) a fossil, an ammonite, the stone worn smooth by the lips of the worshippers ; (7) snakes, monkeys, goats, and cows ; (8) a plough ; (9) bullocks by the owner of the team ; (10) a heap