

that they only conceive of the life she leads as one of bitterness : and for all the indignity which is heaped upon her, the husband finds authority in those writings which some would persuade us are a suitable substitute for the Bible. The Skanda Purana, one of their sacred books, says " Let the wife who wishes to perform sacred ablutions, wash the feet of her husband and drink the water ; for a husband is to a wife greater than Shankara or Vishnu. *

Should she be left a widow, she is not permitted to marry again, and she has before her a life of bitterness. Perhaps she is charged with her husband's death, or she is told that he has been taken away, to punish her sin in a former body. She is treated with cruelty by every person. The Bible tells us that one of the manifestations of a religious spirit, is the exercise of compassion toward that class. " True religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, to visit the fatherless and the widow in their affliction"—the religion of the Brahmins on the contrary, teaches him to execrate and despise the widow.

No finite mind can estimate the amount of injury resulting from such causes as have now been pointed out. The persons themselves might, reasonably enough, desire death rather than such a life. But they are not the only victims of that devilish system of irreligious teaching that prevails throughout India. The children of these mothers are launched upon society, without that previous instruction and preparation which none can give so effectually as a mother—which none will take the trouble to give, but those who possess the capacity and who, at the same time, are governed by an all-controlling love which will be turned aside by no difficulty. We have scarcely ever heard of a great and good man who did not attribute much of that superiority by which he was distinguished, to an

* If the Hindoos have a name for Jesus Christ it is this word Vishnu.