

The doctrine of "future rewards and punishments" is not discarded from the religion of the Hindoos ; but it would be impossible to gather from their writings any such representation of their belief as would be, in all respects, satisfactory. I do not find sufficient to satisfy me that they believe in the doctrine of eternal punishment. Their idea of punishment is that it is corrective—intended to act as a purifier. Sometimes, it is described in such a way as to make us think of the purgatory of the Papist ; and in reading other parts of these ancient writings, we almost imagine that we have fallen upon that mine of ancient lore from which such men as Ballou, Chapin, and Theodore Parker have drawn their inspiration.

I may add that people who do not relish the doctrine of future punishment, and yet do not want to "break off their sins by righteousness," will find in these writings some very interesting suggestions. For example, we have an account of a very wicked man—"whose mouth," as the Apostle would say, "was full of cursing and bitterness." Even the superior gods did not escape the lash of his profane tongue. He was too bad altogether. The gods could stand it no longer. He was killed, with the intention of sending his soul to the place of punishment—when lo ! it is found that the impious wretch has made such free use of the name of one of the superior gods, in uttering his curses, that he escapes punishment altogether. For, so different is their doctrine from the Law promulgated from Mount Sinai, which denounces certain punishment against him who "takes the name of God in vain," according to the above account, the frequent repetition of the name had such a virtue in it that the man got to heaven in spite of the god !

Before making any farther remarks respecting the religious belief of the Hindoos, it may be profitable to make some inquiries respecting their *morality*. In judging of any religious system, it would be quite unfair to overlook its effects upon