

Seventh Day. Sabbath.

No material creation. Introduction of the moral world. Age of man.
—*Literary World.*

FIRE WORSHIPPERS.

ALL that relates to the Parsees—their religion, their customs, and their history—is of the deepest interest, an interest given by and rising from that hoariest antiquity to which they belong. A religion that is of the most ancient of the earth, and one that, although few and unimportant are its adherents to-day, at one time bade fair to be the creed of almost the whole civilized world. It was the belief of Cyrus, Darius, and Xerxes; and, had not the advancing armies of the Persians fallen before the phalanges of the Greek, the religion of the East, the worship of one God, might have flowed over Europe and raised it from the paganism in which it grovelled until the doctrines of Christ, centuries after, spread and were received. Marathon, that greatest battle of the world, preserved the integrity of Greece, but it stayed the purer teaching of Zoroaster from flowing to the West, as it would have done under the empire of the eastern satraps. Long after in the East was Ormuzd worshipped; long did the Persian temples shelter the pure flame of their holy fire; and not until the fierce followers of Mahomet with fire and sword—true fanatics' weapons—conquered them in Arabia, did the followers of Zoroaster dwindle in number and decline in power, till at length, persecuted and oppressed by a power they could not resist but to which they would not bow, they migrated, 1,200 years ago, to India, where, in Bombay and Poonah, the remnants of this ancient faith still linger with their worship.

Zerdusht, or Zoroaster, about whose birth and childhood later superstition has flung an almost impenetrable veil of fable and of myth, was one of those great leaders of men—philosophic and enthusiastic—that only the ardent East seems powerful to produce; one of those men whose belief in their own teaching is so intense and perfect as to convince all