

Next to the cow the brahman is venerated by the lower castes. He only knows the sacred texts and Mantras, and an ordinary Hindu would rather offend all the gods than a brahman. He argues thus—if I offend against the gods, by paying money to the brahmans, I can compel the gods to be favourable to me. For the brahman by repeating the sacred spells and texts can compel the gods to do what they like (and many stories are told and believed, illustrating the power of the brahmans over the gods). But, if I offend against a brahman—who can avert his cure from me? Manu the Hindu sacred law book teaches that: “A Brahman is a mighty god whether learned or ignorant,” and “from his birth he is regarded as a divinity even by the gods.” While I was at Rutlam, visiting Mr. Campbell, I saw one of these holy men drawn through the streets on a three wheeled coach by his devotees. He was a wretched looking specimen of humanity; but evidently held in high veneration by himself and his worshippers. In these degenerate days the brahmans are not all worshipped in this way. In the first place they are too numerous, numbering some millions. Besides, other influences are at work that have somewhat lessened their power e.g. the English have on more than one occasion, hanged one of these divinities for murder!

I find that I have done little more than entered on my subject yet, some other day I hope to have the pleasure of writing on what I have seen of the twin curses of India: -Caste and Debt. At present I think it wiser not to trespass further on your time, but make my salaams and retire.

Yours sincerely,

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