

books than with their kith and kin. But the case of the Hindu is different. Among the followers of different paths, he alone is bewildered in regard to this question. He does not know which book he may term his scripture. If a mention is made of the Vedas he confesses he has never had occasion to see or handle such books as these, let alone the question of getting acquainted with their contents. Many a Hindu, may mention with some hesitance this or that as the sacred book from which he draws inspiration and guidance. But one who is widely read in the Hindu lore wavers before making a pronouncement of this kind. This dilemma is due to the immensity of the Hindu scriptures. The popular conviction is that the Vedas are the direct or indirect sources of all the sacred books pertaining to Hinduism. Several portions of the Vedas are said to have become extinct in the march of time. But the cream of the Vedas is the Upanishads, and these have been piously guarded both against extinction and mutilation. All the systems of philosophy in India derive their inspiration and authority from these Upanishads. They are also called the Forest Books because of the environment in which they became revealed to the sages, popularly known as Rishis. A synopsis and classification of the contents of the Upanishads goes by the name of the Brahma Sutras or the Vedanta Sutras. These Sutras are aphorisms elucidating the Vedanta Philosophy. These aphorisms are somewhat abstruse and unintelligible. Without a commentary it is rather difficult to follow them. But the position of the third book called the Bhagavad Gita