

In the case of some, as Súrya, S'ukra, Garutmat, Br̥haspati, Vasishṭha, S'akra, Pitámaha, the Great Bear, it is so evident that few would deny it. But there is no difference of character between the sun, &c., and Garga, Paráçara, Káçyapa, Vajra, &c. If to the generality of Hindus Garga, Paráçara, Nárada are persons, instead of personifications, it is because Súrya, Indra and Pitámaha are persons in the same manner. They have the merit of being at least consistent. That there were historical persons bearing patronymics derived from Vasishṭha, Garga, Bharadvāja and *tutti quanti*, proves as little for the historical existence of those R̥shis, as the undoubtedly historical existence of the Heraclidæ proves Hercules to have been a person, instead of the sun in his yearly course. Paráçara, Garga and Vajra are, so far as I am able to see, nothing else but synonyms of Br̥haspati. Whatever opinion one may en-

history of the English East India Company, on hearing the brilliant achievements of Company Bahadoor from the time of his birth till his death, during a life of about 250 years, would smile in unbelief at the absurdity of the story. Yet there is nothing absurd, nay more, the story is strictly true, provided one substitute a personification for a person. The whole of religious and not-religious mythology (for myths are by no means exclusively religious) would be perfectly true, if we had the key to them. But this is not the case as yet. The key to mythology in general has been found long ago, but not to every myth, because they were exposed to the modifications and corruptions by more or less rationalizing influences. A curious example of a palpably corrupted myth, struck me in Cardwell's excellent Dravidian Grammar, p. 80, where it is stated that Agastya (Canopus) is believed by the majority of orthodox Hindus to be still alive, *although invisible to ordinary eyes.*" The first part is a true myth, Canopus does exist, but the second part of the myth is adulterated, it ought to be: "although not always visible," i. e. during the time of its heliacal setting Agastya is invisible.

There are many who are in the habit of calling the natural explanation of myths an attempt on the part of *destructive* criticism. To those it seems perfectly natural that generations after generations of individuals and nations have quietly sat down to frame fables which would be most stupid, preposterous and immoral, unless their meaning is unriddled by *destructive* criticism. Happily criticism, whether right or wrong, has the merit of holding the more charitable view.