

devotions? Haste, haste, thou Brahmin to S'ankara the ocean of knowledge. Obtain perfect faith in Hari, as set forth by Vaishnavas, the same which divides and cuts asunder the chains of the world."

It is remarkable that S'ankara, or S'iva, should be impressed to inculcate the supremacy of his rival Vishṇu, or Kṛishṇa, and thereby sign, seal, and sanction his own degradation. The Brahmins knew that there could not be a more effectual method of enforcing the claims of their favourite god, than by the confession of the very divinity under whose banner their old enemies, the Rákshas and Daityas, had marshalled their powers against Vishṇu and the rites and ceremonies of the Vedas. The Brahminical stratagem has completely succeeded. This assignment of divine supremacy to the principal incarnate forms of Vishṇu has been respected all over India—and S'iva has ever since remained a sort of *pensioned* divinity, in full enjoyment of his former titles, acknowledged and worshipped by the Brahmins themselves, but unable to direct or stimulate the sanctimonious devotion of aspirants after transcendental excellencies.

The Mahábhárata relates a curious fact about the same Nárada, here represented as receiving a voice from heaven. The divine sage had seen from the top of Mount Meru the S'weta-dwipa,* or white continent, on the north side of the ocean of milk. Nárada repaired to that fair land, and obtained a vision of Vishṇu such as was never vouchsafed elsewhere—or to any but *ekántins*, or worshippers of one exclusive God, which the inhabitants of that white land were, and which was a peculiar characteristic of Nárada himself.

* Mahabharat. XII. sections 337-341.