

O Sivā,\* I have already said in the Srutis, Smritis and Purāṇas that in Kali sensible people should worship the deities according to the methods prescribed by the Agamas (8). Verily there is no deliverance for those who, passing the Agamas by, betake themselves to any other course (9). All the Vedas, all the Purāṇas, all the Smritis and all the Samhitās combine to establish Me: Lord, the universe, hath none save Me (10). Every one of them† consider my region as capable of sanctifying people. Those that are averse to my path are heretics, and come by the sin of slaying a Brāhmaṇa (11). And O goddess, any acts, that are performed by a person without regard for my views, come to naught; and the author thereof goes to hell (12). That foolish individual, who, renouncing my views, adopts any other's, surely comes by the sins of slaying a Brāhmaṇa, his own sire, and a woman (13). In Kali all the Mantras are fraught with fruit and yield speedy success, and they are highly effectual in all rites, Japa,† sacrifices, etc. (14). The Mantras contained in the Vedas are devoid of all energy, and resemble serpents devoid of venom. In the Satya and other ages, they were effective; in Kali they are as it were dead (15). All the Mantras (save those inculcated in the Tantras) resemble idols painted against a wall, wh† albe† furnished with all the organs, are incompetent to perform any action (16). Acts, performed to other Ma are like knowing a barren woman; they yield no fruit; as all trouble only (17). In Kali the perverse person, that seeks for emancipation by following the path pointed out by other works, being oppressed with thirst, sinks a well on the banks of the Jāhnavī§ (18). He that, renouncing the religion

\* The feminine of Siva—his wife.

† The Vedas, etc.

‡ The recitation of the attributes of the Supreme Deity.

§ A name of the river Ganges so called from its coming out of the thigh of the sage Jānu.

## CHAPTER II.

H EARING this speech of the goddess, that mighty man of mercy Sankara, engaged in bringing about the welfare of the worlds, spoke words fraught with truth (1). And the auspicious Sadācivā said:—O righteous one, O thou intent on bringing about the welfare of the world, thou hast asked well; such a question bearing on the good (of humanity) was never put by any one formerly (2). Blessed art thou; thou knowest all about righteous acts; and thou art desirous of securing the good of people living in Kali. Every thing, thou hast said, is indeed true, O gentle lady (3). O Supreme Spirit, thou art omniscient, cognizant of the three times,\* and covariant with religion. Beloved one, all that thou hast advanced on religion respecting the past, present and future, is, without doubt, true, just, and proper (4). O Mistress of the celestials, burdened with the unrighteousness of Kali, and not distinguishing between what is pure and what is not, the twice-born,† and the other orders cannot attain purity through processes prescribed in the Sruti;† man will not be able to work out their end by following either the Samhitās or the Smritis (5—6). I truly tell thee again and again, in Kali, my love, there is no other way (for mankind) than that laid down by the Agama (7).

\* Past, present, and future.

† The Brāhmaṇa is born again (spiritually) on his being invested with the holy thread.

‡ The sacred literature of the Hindus are divided into three classes Srutis, Smritis and Samhitās. The first includes the Vedas and Upanishads which constitute the fountain source of their faith. The various Law Books, ecclesiastical and social, pass by the name of Smritis which have a considerable influence upon the every day life of a Hindu. The various Purāṇas and Tantras pass by the name of Samhitās.

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expounded by me, seeks any other, renounceth the ambrosi that is in his own home, and goeth after the exudations of the Arka (tree) (19). No other way can conduce to emancipation,—nor can it bring us happiness here and hereafter in the same way as the course, prescribed by the Tantras, contributes to the felicity and emancipation (of mankind) (20). Having regard to the great number of Paçus (living among men), I have enjoined secrecy in the performance of their rites in certain classes of followers, in consideration of their claims. And sometimes I have prescribed methods capable of enlisting the sympathy of people; and, my dear, I have assigned various gods and goddesses (with an eye to personal bias or idiosyncracies (21—23). I have also spoken of Bhairavas,\* Vetālas, Vatukas, Nāyikās, Śāktas,

\* These are some of the various sects of the Hindus that are still found all over the country. (1) Bhairavas—followers of an inferior manifestation of Shiva. Bhairava is a name of Shiva, but more specially an inferior manifestation or form of the deity, eight of which are called by the common name Bhairava and are severally termed Asitanga, Rudra, Chanda, Krodha, Unmatta, Kupati, Bhishana, and Sanhara all alluding to terrific properties of mind and body.

(2) Vetālas:—This is also a sect of Shaiva worshippers: they worship spirits or goblins haunting cemeteries and animating dead bodies.

Vatukas—are religious students.

Nayikas—a sort of goddess, an inferior form of Durga and attendant upon her.—There are eight Nayikas.

(5) Śāktas—are the worshippers of the Sakti the power or energy of the Divine Nature in action. The adoration of Prakriti or Sakti has been to a certain extent sanctioned by the Puranas, but the principal rites and formulæ are derived from a series of works which pass by the name of Tantras. Although any of the goddesses may be objects of the Śakta worship, and the term Sakti comprehends them all yet the homage of the Śāktas is almost restricted to the wife of Siva and to Siva himself as identified with his consort. These Śāktas flourish chiefly in Bengal and their great festival Durga Puja is not celebrated with so much eclat in any other province of India.

Sarvas Vaishnavas, Sauras, and Ganapatis; I have spoken of various Mantras and Yantras, and various means of securing success, all requiring great labor, but yielding the results (ascribed to them) (24—25). And my beloved, with the view of securing his welfare, I have answered his questions, having regard to the manner in which he hath put them, to his own personality, and the occasion on which he hath set those questions (26). No one had before now asked such questions as thou, O Pārvati, in harmony with the morality of the Yugas,\* hast done with discernment, in the interests of all creatures, and solicitous of the welfare

(6) Saivas are the worshippers of Siva. It appears to be the most popular and prevalent of all the modes of adoration to judge by the number of shrines dedicated to the only form under which Siva is revered, that of the Linga. But very few votaries resort to these temples except to that of Visheshwara in Benares. There are nine sects amongst the Saivas of India, namely Dandis, Jogis, Jangamas, Paramahansas, Urdhavaḥsus, etc. There are no popular legends of Siva in Northern India and there are no teachers of ancient repute except Sankaracharya.

(7) Vaishnavas are the worshippers of Vishnu as Narayana: they consider him as the prime deity; they wear marks on forehead and promise themselves a paradise in Vaikuntha. The principal subdivisions are Bhaktas, Bhagvatas, Vaishnavas, Chakrinās, Vaikhanasas and Karmahinas. But all these sects are not extant now. The most important sect that now flourishes constitutes the followers of Ramanuja.

(8) Sauras are the worshippers of the sun as the creator and cause of the world: a few Sauras, chiefly Brahmanas, still exist as a sect but the divisions enumerated by Anand Giri are not known.

(9) Ganapatyas are the worshippers of Ganapati or Ganesh, and can scarcely be considered as a distinct sect: all the Hindus, in fact, worship this deity as the obviator of difficulties and impediments and never commence any work or set off on a journey without invoking his protection. Some pay him more particular devotion than the rest.

\* In every Yuga according to varying circumstances people have got different duties to satisfy. The Hindu Rishis laid down rules of life and conduct according to the exigencies of time.