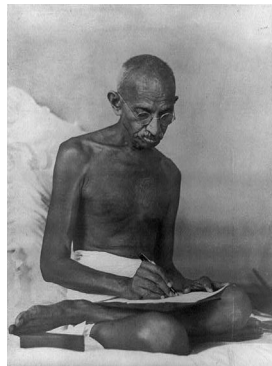


PEOPLE MENTIONED IN A WEEK

THE PEOPLE OF A WEEK: SIR WILLIAM JONES OF 28 LANGUAGES



Sir William Jones and Charles Wilkins are now considered "the fathers of Indology." Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, who traced his commitment to nonviolence to the reading of The *BHAGAVAD-GITÁ*, emphatically asserted that this illumination by the Hindu sacred writings had been possible only through the translations and researches done by Western scholars.



**“NARRATIVE HISTORY” AMOUNTS TO FABULATION,
THE REAL STUFF BEING MERE CHRONOLOGY**



THE PEOPLE OF A WEEK:

SIR WILLIAM JONES

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN A WEEK

A WEEK: One of the most attractive of those ancient books that I have met with is the Laws of Menu. According to Sir William Jones, "Vyasa, the son of Parasara, has decided that the Veda, with its Angas, or the six compositions deduced from it, the revealed system of medicine, the Puranas or sacred histories, and the code of Menu, were four works of supreme authority, which ought never to be shaken by arguments merely human." The last is believed by the Hindoos "to have been promulged in the beginning of time, by Menu, son or grandson of Brahma," and "first of created beings"; and Brahma is said to have "taught his laws to Menu in a hundred thousand verses, which Menu explained to the primitive world in the very words of the book now translated." Others affirm that they have undergone successive abridgments for the convenience of mortals, "while the gods of the lower heaven and the band of celestial musicians are engaged in studying the primary code." – "A number of glosses or comments on Menu were composed by the Munis, or old philosophers, whose treatises, together with that before us, constitute the Dherma Sastra, in a collective sense, or Body of Law." Culluca Bhatta was one of the more modern of these.

PEOPLE OF
A WEEK

SIR WILLIAM JONES

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN A WEEK

1746

September 28, Sunday (Old Style): [William Jones \(Junior\)](#) was born at Beaufort Buildings, Westminster, London. His father William Jones was the mathematician who originated the use of the symbol " π " to indicate the ratio between the circumference of a circle and its diameter.



His father would die while he was still a toddler and he would be raised by the widowed Mrs. Mary Nix Jones.

NOBODY COULD GUESS WHAT WOULD HAPPEN NEXT





THE PEOPLE OF A WEEK:

SIR WILLIAM JONES

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN A WEEK

1768

July 13, Monday: [Nathaniel Brassey Halhed](#), having completed the education at Harrow, entered [Christ Church at Oxford University](#). There he would in addition to his friendship with [Richard Brinsley Sheridan](#) make the acquaintance of [William Jones](#), who would persuade him to study Persian.

LIFE IS LIVED FORWARD BUT UNDERSTOOD BACKWARD?
— NO, THAT'S GIVING TOO MUCH TO THE HISTORIAN'S STORIES.
LIFE ISN'T TO BE UNDERSTOOD EITHER FORWARD OR BACKWARD.



THE PEOPLE OF A WEEK:

SIR WILLIAM JONES

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN A WEEK

1781

[Charles Wilkins](#) was appointed as translator of Persian and Bengali to the Commissioner of Revenue, and as superintendent of the East India Company's press.



During this year and the following one, according to Professor [Joseph-Héliodore-Sagesse-Vertu Garcin de Tassy](#), [Mîr Camar uddîn Mast](#) was associating with an honorable M. Jones (this could not have been [Sir William Jones](#), as during these years he was still on the far side of the world, not yet having embarked aboard the frigate *Crocodile* to set sail toward Calcutta, [India](#)).

THE FUTURE IS MOST READILY PREDICTED IN RETROSPECT





THE PEOPLE OF A WEEK:

SIR WILLIAM JONES

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN A WEEK

1783

September 25, Thursday: [Sir William Jones](#) (recently knighted) arrived in [India](#), at Calcutta after a 6-month voyage aboard the frigate *Crocodile*, to be a judge of the Supreme Court under [Governor-General Warren Hastings](#).

THE FUTURE CAN BE EASILY PREDICTED IN RETROSPECT





THE PEOPLE OF A WEEK:

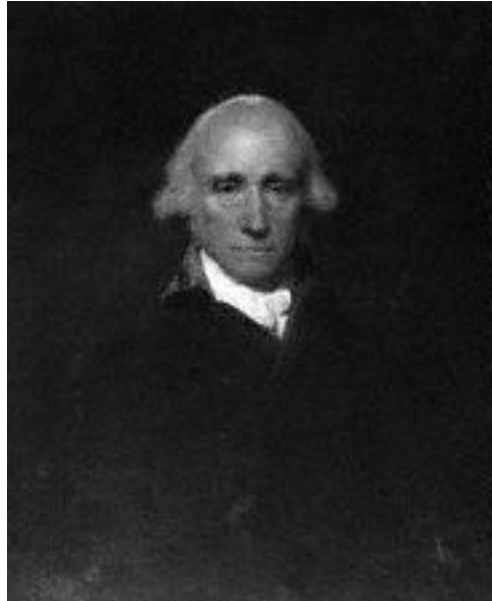
SIR WILLIAM JONES

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN A WEEK

1784

[Charles Wilkins](#) helped [Sir William Jones](#) establish the Asiatic Society of Bengal.

With liberals in England fearing the growing power of [Warren Hastings](#), Parliament abolished the political autonomy of the East India Company. Hastings resigned as governor-general of [India](#).



[Wilkins](#) relocated to Varanasi (Benares) on the River Ganges and there studied Sanskrit under Kalinatha, a Brahmin pandit. He began work on his translation of the *MAHABHARATA*, with the encouragement of the governor of British India, [Hastings](#). Though [Wilkins](#) would never complete the translation (the *MAHABHARATA* is not only big big big in [India](#), it is also long long long in length), portions were later published. The most important would be what he would prepare in 1785 as *THE BHAGVAT-GEETA OR DIALOGUES OF KREESHNA AND ARJOON* (London: Nourse).

BHAGVAT-GEETA

With [Hastings](#)'s departure from India, [Charles Wilkins](#) would lose his main patron.

In this year [Warren Hastings](#) wrote in the manner that [Henry Thoreau](#) would record in [A WEEK ON THE CONCORD AND MERRIMACK RIVERS](#):



THE PEOPLE OF A WEEK:

SIR WILLIAM JONES

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN A WEEK

A WEEK: The New Testament is remarkable for its pure morality; the best of the Hindo Scripture, for its pure intellectuality. The reader is nowhere raised into and sustained in a higher, purer, or **rarer** region of thought than in the Bhagvat-Geeta. Warren Hastings, in his sensible letter recommending the translation of this book to the Chairman of the East India Company, declares the original to be "of a sublimity of conception, reasoning, and diction almost unequalled," and that the writings of the Indian philosophers "will survive when the British dominion in India shall have long ceased to exist, and when the sources which it once yielded of wealth and power are lost to remembrance." It is unquestionably one of the noblest and most sacred scriptures which have come down to us. Books are to be distinguished by the grandeur of their topics, even more than by the manner in which they are treated. The Oriental philosophy approaches, easily, loftier themes than the modern aspires to; and no wonder if it sometimes prattle about them. **It** only assigns their due rank respectively to Action and Contemplation, or rather does full justice to the latter. Western philosophers have not conceived of the significance of Contemplation in their sense. Speaking of the spiritual discipline to which the Brahmans subjected themselves, and the wonderful power of abstraction to which they attained, instances of which had come under his notice, Hastings says: –

"To those who have never been accustomed to the separation of the mind from the notices of the senses, it may not be easy to conceive by what means such a power is to be attained; since even the most studious men of our hemisphere will find it difficult so to restrain their attention, but that it will wander to some object of present sense or recollection; and even the buzzing of a fly will sometimes have the power to disturb it. But if we are told that there have been men who were successively, for ages past, in the daily habit of abstracted contemplation, begun in the earliest period of youth, and continued in many to the maturity of age, each adding some portion of knowledge to the store accumulated by his predecessors; it is not assuming too much to conclude, that as the mind ever gathers strength, like the body, by exercise, so in such an exercise it may in each have acquired the faculty to which they aspired, and [page 112] that their collective studies may have led them to the discovery of new tracks and combinations of sentiment, totally different from the doctrines with which the learned of other nations are acquainted; doctrines which, however speculative and subtle, still as they possess the advantage of being derived from a source so free from every adventitious mixture, may be equally founded in truth with the most simple of our own."

PEOPLE OF
A WEEK

WARREN HASTINGS



THE PEOPLE OF A WEEK:

SIR WILLIAM JONES

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN A WEEK

1785

[Sir William Jones](#) began to translate INSTITUTES OF HINDU LAW; OR, THE ORDINANCES OF MENU, ACCORDING TO THE GLOSS OF CULLUCA, COMPRISING THE [INDIAN](#) SYSTEM OF DUTIES, RELIGIOUS AND CIVIL from Sanskrit into English. Eventually Sir William's statue in St. Paul's Cathedral in [London](#), erected by the British East India Company, would be featuring him holding a copy of this volume:



In his JOURNAL of 1840 Thoreau would make an entry about this, and then he would continue in WEEK:



That title [MENU] ... comes to me with such a volume of sound as if it had swept unobstructed over the plains of Hindustan.



Everywhere the speech of Manu demands the widest apprehension and proceeds from the loftiest plateau of the soul. It is spoken unbendingly to its own level, and does not imply any contemporaneous speaker.



THE PEOPLE OF A WEEK:

SIR WILLIAM JONES

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN A WEEK

A WEEK: One of the most attractive of those ancient books that I have met with is the Laws of Menu. According to Sir William Jones, "Vyasa, the son of Parasara, has decided that the Veda, with its Angas, or the six compositions deduced from it, the revealed system of medicine, the Puranas or sacred histories, and the code of Menu, were four works of supreme authority, which ought never to be shaken by arguments merely human." The last is believed by the Hindoos "to have been promulged in the beginning of time, by Menu, son or grandson of Brahma," and "first of created beings"; and Brahma is said to have "taught his laws to Menu in a hundred thousand verses, which Menu explained to the primitive world in the very words of the book now translated." Others affirm that they have undergone successive abridgments for the convenience of mortals, "while the gods of the lower heaven and the band of celestial musicians are engaged in studying the primary code." – "A number of glosses or comments on Menu were composed by the Munis, or old philosophers, whose treatises, together with that before us, constitute the Dherma Sastra, in a collective sense, or Body of Law." Culluca Bhatta was one of the more modern of these.

PEOPLE OF
A WEEK

SIR WILLIAM JONES



THE PEOPLE OF A WEEK:

SIR WILLIAM JONES

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN A WEEK

A WEEK: I know of no book which has come down to us with grander pretensions than this, and it is so impersonal and sincere that it is never offensive nor ridiculous. Compare the modes in which modern literature is advertised with the prospectus of this book, and think what a reading public it addresses, what criticism it expects. It seems to have been uttered from some eastern summit, with a sober morning prescience in the dawn of time, and you cannot read a sentence without being elevated as upon the tableland of the Ghauts. It has such a rhythm as the winds of the desert, such a tide as the Ganges, and is as superior to criticism as the Himmaleh Mountains. Its tone is of such unrelaxed fibre, that even at this late day, unworn by time, it wears the English and the Sanscrit dress indifferently; and its fixed sentences keep up their distant fires still, like the stars, by whose dissipated rays this lower world is illumined. The whole book by noble gestures and inclinations renders many words unnecessary. English sense has toiled, but Hindoo wisdom never perspired. Though the sentences open as we read them, unexpensively, and at first almost unmeaningly, as the petals of a flower, they sometimes startle us with that rare kind of wisdom which could only have been learned from the most trivial experience; but it comes to us as refined as the porcelain earth which subsides to the bottom of the ocean. They are clean and dry as fossil truths, which have been exposed to the elements for thousands of years, so impersonally and scientifically true that they are the ornament of the parlor and the cabinet. Any **moral** philosophy is exceedingly rare. This of Menu addresses our privacy more than most. It is a more private and familiar, and, at the same time, a more public and universal word, than is spoken in parlor or pulpit now-a-days. As our domestic fowls are said to have their original in the wild pheasant of India, so our domestic thoughts have their prototypes in the thoughts of her philosophers. We are dabbling in the very elements of our present conventional and actual life; as if it were the primeval conventicle where how to eat, and to drink, and to sleep, and maintain life with adequate dignity and sincerity, were the questions to be decided. It is later and more intimate with us even than the advice of our nearest friends. And yet it is true for the widest horizon, and read out of doors has relation to the dim mountain line, and is native and aboriginal there. Most books belong to the house and street only, and in the fields their leaves feel very thin. They are bare and obvious, and have no halo nor haze about them. Nature lies far and fair behind them all. But this, as it proceeds from, so it addresses, what is deepest and most abiding in man. It belongs to the noontide of the day, the midsummer of the year, and after the snows have melted, and the waters evaporated in the spring, still its truth speaks freshly to our experience. It helps the sun to shine, and his rays fall on its page to illustrate it.



THE PEOPLE OF A WEEK:

SIR WILLIAM JONES

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN A WEEK

It spends the mornings and the evenings, and makes such an impression on us overnight as to awaken us before dawn, and its influence lingers around us like a fragrance late into the day. It conveys a new gloss to the meadows and the depths of the wood, and its spirit, like a more subtile ether, sweeps along with the prevailing winds of a country. The very locusts and crickets of a summer day are but later or earlier glosses on the Dherma Sastra of the Hindoos, a continuation of the sacred code. As we have said, there is an orientalism in the most restless pioneer, and the farthest west is but the farthest east. While we are reading these sentences, this fair modern world seems only a reprint of the Laws of Menu with the gloss of Culluca. Tried by a New England eye, or the mere practical wisdom of modern times, they are the oracles of a race already in its dotage, but held up to the sky, which is the only impartial and incorruptible ordeal, they are of a piece with its depth and serenity, and I am assured that they will have a place and significance as long as there is a sky to test them by.

NO-ONE'S LIFE IS EVER NOT DRIVEN PRIMARILY BY HAPPENSTANCE



[HDT](#)[WHAT?](#)[INDEX](#)**THE PEOPLE OF A WEEK:****SIR WILLIAM JONES****PEOPLE MENTIONED IN A WEEK****1786**

The [Sir William Jones](#) translation of the *HITOPADESA*.



It was in a famous “third discourse” delivered in this year to an [Indian](#) audience that Sir William laid the foundations for modern comparative linguistics by discerning close affinities between Sanskrit and the classical languages of Europe:

The Sanskrit language, whatever be its antiquity, is of wonderful structure; more perfect than the Greek, more copious than the Latin, and more exquisitely refined than either, yet bearing to both of them a stronger affinity, both in the roots of verbs and in the forms of grammar, than could possibly have been produced by accident; so strong indeed, that no philologer could examine them all three, without believing them to have sprung from some common source which, perhaps, no longer exists; there is a similar reason, though not quite so forcible, for supposing that both the Gothick and the Celtick, though blended with a very different idiom, had the same origin with the Sanscrit; and the old Persian might be added to the same family.... (COLLECTED WORKS, Volume III:34-35).

CHANGE IS ETERNITY, STASIS A FIGMENT



THE PEOPLE OF A WEEK:

SIR WILLIAM JONES

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN A WEEK

1787


[Charles Wilkins](#)'s translation of the Bidpai or Pilpay tales of [India](#) as FABLES AND PROVERBS FROM THE SANSKRIT BEING THE *HITOPADESA*¹ was published by the firm of R. Cruttwell in Bath, England as THE *HEETOPADES OF VEESHNOO-SARMA*, IN A SERIES OF CONNECTED FABLES, INTERSPERSED WITH MORAL, PRUDENTIAL, AND POLITICAL MAXIMS.² From this [Henry Thoreau](#) would extrapolate remarks upon Fable IX, "The Lion and the Rabbit":

WALDEN: Next Spanish hides, with the tails still preserving their twist and the angle of elevation they had when the oxen that wore them were careering over the pampas of the Spanish main, -a type of all obstinacy, and evincing how almost hopeless and incurable are all constitutional vices. I confess, that practically speaking, when I have learned a man's real disposition, I have no hopes of changing it for the better or worse in this state of existence. As the Orientals say, "A cur's tail may be warmed, and pressed, and bound round with ligatures, and after a twelve years' labor bestowed upon it, still it will retain its natural form." The only effectual cure for such inveteracies as these tails exhibit is to make glue of them, which I believe is what is usually done with them, and then they will stay put and stick.

PEOPLE OF
WALDEN

CHARLES WILKINS

1. The *Hitopadesa* or "Salutary Instructions" is a very ancient collection and is also familiarly known to us as "THE FABLES OF *PILPAY*." Many of these tales are condensations of material to be found in the *PANCHATANTRA*, which consists of five apologues recited by a Brahmin teacher name of *Vishnu Sarma* for the instruction of his class of Indian princes in the principles of their princship. Since this collection emphasizes worldly-wiseness, it has been exceedingly popular, indeed more popular than Niccolò Machiavelli's *THE PRINCE*: we know of over 200 different editions in at least 50 languages around the world.

2. Consult the new edition of this, published with new introductions by Michael Franklin by the University of Wales at Aberystwyth in November 2001 



THE PEOPLE OF A WEEK:

SIR WILLIAM JONES

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN A WEEK

The manner in which Wilkins had rendered this fable was as follows:

Raise an evil soul to honour,
and his evil bents remain,
Bind a cur's tail ne'er so straightly,
yet it curleth up again.

In the March 1842 issue of [The Dial](#), the collection "Fables and Stories" would be from this translation by [Charles Wilkins](#) and from that by [Sir William Jones](#).

[A WEEK](#): We occasionally rested in the shade of a maple or a willow, and drew forth a melon for our refreshment, while we contemplated at our leisure the lapse of the river and of human life; and as that current, with its floating twigs and leaves, so did all things pass in review before us, while far away in cities and marts on this very stream, the old routine was proceeding still. There is, indeed, a tide in the affairs of men, as the poet says, and yet as things flow they circulate, and the ebb always balances the flow. All streams are but tributary to the ocean, which itself does not stream, and the shores are unchanged, but in longer periods than man can measure. Go where we will, we discover infinite change in particulars only, not in generals. When I go into a museum and see the mummies wrapped in their linen bandages, I see that the lives of men began to need reform as long ago as when they walked the earth. I come out into the streets, and meet men who declare that the time is near at hand for the redemption of the race. But as men lived in Thebes, so do they live in Dunstable to-day. "Time drinketh up the essence of every great and noble action which ought to be performed, and is delayed in the execution." So says Veeshnoo Sarma; and we perceive that the schemers return again and again to common sense and labor. Such is the evidence of history.

[A WEEK](#): It is written, "The stranger who turneth away from a house with disappointed hopes, leaveth there his own offences, and departeth, taking with him all the good actions of the owner."



THE PEOPLE OF A WEEK:

SIR WILLIAM JONES

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN A WEEK

A WEEK: The carcasses of some poor squirrels, however, the same that frisked so merrily in the morning, which we had skinned and embowelled for our dinner, we abandoned in disgust, with tardy humanity, as too wretched a resource for any but starving men. It was to perpetuate the practice of a barbarous era. If they had been larger, our crime had been less. Their small red bodies, little bundles of red tissue, mere gobbets of venison, would not have "fattened fire." With a sudden impulse we threw them away, and washed our hands, and boiled some rice for our dinner. "Behold the difference between the one who eateth flesh, and him to whom it belonged! The first hath a momentary enjoyment, whilst the latter is deprived of existence!" "Who would commit so great a crime against a poor animal, who is fed only by the herbs which grow wild in the woods, and whose belly is burnt up with hunger?" We remembered a picture of mankind in the hunter age, chasing hares down the mountains; O me miserable! Yet sheep and oxen are but larger squirrels, whose hides are saved and meat is salted, whose souls perchance are not so large in proportion to their bodies.

A WEEK: The lover learns at last that there is no person quite transparent and trustworthy, but every one has a devil in him that is capable of any crime in the long run. Yet, as an Oriental philosopher has said, "Although Friendship between good men is interrupted, their principles remain unaltered. The stalk of the lotus may be broken, and the fibres remain connected."

A WEEK: It is always singular, but encouraging, to meet with common sense in very old books, as the Heetopades of Veeshnoo Sarma; a playful wisdom which has eyes behind as well as before, and oversees itself.

HITOPADESA

WALDEN: Why do precisely these objects which we behold make a world? Why has man just these species of animals for his neighbors; as if nothing but a mouse could have filled this crevice? I suspect that Pilpay & Co. have put animals to their best use, for they are all beasts of burden, in a sense, made to carry some portion of our thoughts.

HITOPADESA

ÆSOP

XENOPHANES

PEOPLE OF
WALDEN



PEOPLE MENTIONED IN A WEEK

THE DIAL for December 1840/January 1841 would present extracts from this THE *HEETOPADES OF VEESHNOO-SARMA*, IN A SERIES OF CONNECTED FABLES, INTERSPERSED WITH MORAL, PRUDENTIAL, AND POLITICAL MAXIMS, translated in this year with explanatory notes by [Charles Wilkins](#), and published at Bath. [Waldo Emerson](#) would have a copy of this, which [Thoreau](#) apparently would access, and which Emerson would utilize in selecting passages for THE DIAL of July 1842. Thoreau would copy the following extracts into his Literary Notebook:³

Veeshnoo – Sarma.

Fortune attendeth that lion amongst men who exerteth himself.
They are weak men who declare fate the sole cause.

Fate succeedeth not without human exertion.

It is said, fate is nothing but the deeds committed in a former state of existence; wherefore, it behooveth a man vigilantly to exert the powers he is possessed of.

When laws are ill-enforced, where are their good morals? To whom is the mere glare of the fire a virtue?

Hospitality is commanded to be exercised, even towards an enemy, when he cometh to thine house. The tree doth not withdraw its shade, even from the woodcutter.

The stranger, who turneth away from a house with disappointed hopes, leaveth there his own offences, and departeth, taking with him all the good actions of the owner.

Behold the difference between the one who eateth flesh, and he to whom it belonged! The first hath a momentary enjoyment, whilst the latter is deprived of existence!

Who would commit so great a crime against a poor animal, who is fed only by the herbs which grow wild in the woods, and whose belly is burnt up with hunger?

There is no one the friend of another; there is no one the enemy of another: Friends, as well as enemies, are created through our transactions.

A man should not form any acquaintance, nor enter into any amusements, with one of an evil character: A piece of charcoal, if it be hot, burneth; and if cold, it blackeneth the hand.

Even amongst brutes, confidence is perceived in those, in whose every action there is innocence: The innate disposition of the good doth not vary from the principles of integrity.

The mind of a good man doth not alter, even when he is in distress: the waters of the ocean are not to be heated by a torch of straw.

A man should not enter into alliance with his enemy, even with the tightest bonds of union: Water made ever so hot, will still quench fire.

Metals unite from fluxility; birds and beasts from motives of convenience; fools from fear and stupidity; and just men at

3. See THOREAU'S LITERARY NOTEBOOK IN THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, ed. Kenneth Walter Cameron (Hartford CT: Transcendental Books, 1964), page 10.



THE PEOPLE OF A WEEK:

SIR WILLIAM JONES

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN A WEEK

sight.

Although friendship between good men be interrupted, still their principles remain unaltered: The stalk of the lotus may be broken, and the fibres remain connected.

Nor bathing with cool water, nor a necklace of pearls, nor anointing with sanders, yieldeth such comfort to the body oppressed with heat, as the language of a good man, cheerfully uttered, doth to the mind.

A wise man moveth with one foot, and standeth fast with the other.

Whether a child, or an old man, or a youth, be come to thy house, he is to be treated with respect; for of all men, thy guest is the superior.

Deprived of riches, all the actions of a man of little judgment disappear, like trifling streams in the summer's heat.

A fire meeteth extinction, before it will yield to be cold.

When a man is in indigence, picking herbs is his philosophy—Want maketh even servitude honorable; light, total darkness; beauty, deformity; and even the words of Haree,⁴ with a hundred good qualities, crimes. What then, shall I nourish myself with another's cake? This would be to open a second door to death.

He whose mind is at ease is possessed of all riches: Is it not the same to one whose foot is inclosed in a shoe, as if the whole surface of the earth were covered with leather?

All hath been read, all hath been heard, and all hath been followed by him, who having put hope behind him, dependeth not upon expectation.

It is, either water without labor, or sweet bread attended by fear and danger.

On the poisonous tree, the world, two species of fruit are produced, sweet as the waters of life: Poetry, whose taste is like the immortal juice, and the society of good men.

To a hero of a sound mind, what is his own, and what a foreign country? Wherever he halteth, that place is acquired by the splendor of his arms.

As frogs to the pool, as birds to a lake full of water; so doth every species of wealth necessarily flow to the hands of him who exerteth himself.

When pleasure is arrived, it is worthy of attention; when trouble presenteth itself, the same: Pains and pleasures have their revolutions like a wheel!

Man should not be overanxious for a subsistence, for it is provided by the Creator. The infant no sooner droppeth from the womb, than the breasts of the mother begin to stream.

He, by whom the geese were formed white, parrots are stained

4. one of the titles of Veeshnoo



PEOPLE MENTIONED IN A WEEK

green, and peacocks painted of various hues, – even he will provide for their support.

He whose inclination turneth away from an object, may be said to have obtained it.

The beauty of Kokeela⁵ is his voice; the beauty of a wife is constancy to her husband; the beauty of the ill-favored is science; the beauty of the penitent is patience.

The body is compounded with disorders, the state of opulence with calamities, advantages with disadvantages! Thus everything is produced with a companion who shall destroy it.

Greatness doth not approach him who is forever looking down; and all those who are looking high are growing poor.

Idleness, the worship of women, the being afflicted with disorder, a foolish partiality for one's own native place, discontentedness, and timidity, are six obstructions to greatness.

He whose days are passed away without giving or enjoying, puffing like the bellows of a blacksmith, liveth but by breathing.

What is a foreign country to those who have science? Who is a stranger to those who have the habit of speaking kindly?

Picture of a servant.

He humbleth himself to be exalted; for a living he expendeth his vitals; he suffereth pain to acquire ease. Who is there so great a fool, as he who serveth?

If he is silent he is stupid; if rich in words an empty prattler; by patiently submitting, he is a coward; and if he will not suffer patiently, for the most part, he is not preferred.

Seen on one side, he is, undoubtedly, sitting down; and if standing at a distance, he is not to be found. The duties of servitude are extremely profound, and impracticable, even to Yogees⁶

A declared meeting is comprehended even by brutes: Horses and elephants understand when they are told; but a wise man findeth out even what is not declared.

Sovereigns, O prince, have occasion even for straws, and things to rub the teeth, or pick the ears.

It should not be suspected of a man, whose life hath been spent in noble deeds, that his reason is lost, when he is only involved in trouble. A fire may be overturned, but its flame will never descend.

What wise men have declared proper may be received even from a child. When the sun is invisible, how useful is the appearance

5. a black bird

6. "Such as by severe acts of penance, and a total abstraction, fancy themselves in unity with the Supreme Being"



THE PEOPLE OF A WEEK:

SIR WILLIAM JONES

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN A WEEK

of the lamp?

The sovereign, although but a child, is not to be despised, but to be respected as a man; or as a mighty divinity, who presideth in human form.

The priest, even when the object for which he was engaged hath been completed, refuseth to resign.

Time drinketh up the essence of every great and noble action, which ought to be performed, and is delayed in the execution.

The wicked, even whilst receiving favors, incline to their natural dispositions, as a dog's tail, after every art of anointing and chaffing, to its natural bend.

A cur's tail may be warmed, and pressed, and bound round with ligatures, and, after a twelve year's labor bestowed upon it, still it will return to its natural form.

Riches are attendants of the miser; and the heavens rain plenteously upon the mountains!

The boat was invented upon crossing pieces of water which were difficult to pass; the lamp upon the approach of darkness; the fan, upon a defect of wind; and injuries, to gratify the pride of men blinded by intoxication! In short, there is not anything in the world, wherein the idea of invention was not suggested by Providence.

As out of battle death is certain, and in the field life doubtful, the learned call it the only time of battle.

A wise man is worthy to be advised; but an ignorant one never.

A draught of milk to serpents doth nothing but increase their poison.

A man who, having well compared his own strength or weakness with that of others, after all doth not know the difference, is easily vacuum by his enemies.

If a dog were made king, would he not gnaw his shoe straps?

A distemper, although generated in the body, is malignant; whilst a drug produced in the woods proveth salutary.

Those who eat but to support life, who cohabit but for the sake of progeny, and who speak but to declare the truth, surmount difficulties.

From the same in Works of Sir W. Jones—

"What thou givest to distinguished men, and what thou eatest every day — that, in my opinion, is thine own wealth: whose is the remainder, which thou hoardest?" [Presumably, this item was added during Summer 1841.]

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1789

The reference to “Calidas” and “Sacontala” in the “Spring” chapter of [WALDEN](#) refers to [Kalidasa](#)’s *SACONTALÁ; OR, THE FATAL RING* as translated in this year from the [Indian](#) language into English by [Sir William Jones](#) and republished as part of his *WORKS* in 1807.⁷



SACONTALÁ; OR ...

What [Henry Thoreau](#) would make use of was a speech by the king in the 5th act.

[WALDEN](#): The sulphur-like pollen of the pitch-pine soon covered the pond and the stones and rotten wood along the shore, so that you could have collected a barrel-ful. This is the “sulphur showers” we hear of. Even in Calidas’ drama of Sacontala, we read of “rills dyed yellow with the golden dust of the lotus.” And so the seasons went rolling on into summer, as one rambles into higher and higher grass.

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7. I was doing environmental education work in Saratoga, California in the spring of 1983, in an area of great environmental deterioration and ecosystem disruption, and in the upscale suburbs there one of the prime complaints being made by the householders was of the noise and dust and danger of the incessant string of dump trucks rolling through their community, from an active gravel quarry up in the hills down to various nasty construction sites in the Santa Clara valley. Residents would skim yellow pine pollen from the surface of their swimming pools and offer it to me as poisonous dust from these gravel trucks. I lost track of the number of times I attempted to explain that in this case it was nature which was the “polluter.” Perhaps I should merely have referred these angry suburbanites to [WALDEN](#)?

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[Sir William Jones](#)'s translation from the [Indian](#) language of the *GITA GOVINDA*.



DO I HAVE YOUR ATTENTION? GOOD.



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February 28, Thursday: As President of the Asiatick Society of Bengal, [Sir William Jones](#) delivered its 10th Anniversary Discourse, "On Asiatick History, Civil and Natural":

BEFORE our entrance, gentlemen, into the disquisition, promised at the close of my ninth annual discourse, on the particular advantages, which may be derived from our concurrent researches in Asia, it seems necessary to fix with precision the sense, in which we mean to speak of advantage or utility: now as we have described the five Asiatick regions on their largest scale, and have expanded our conceptions in proportion to the magnitude of that wide field, we should use those words, which comprehend the fruit of all our inquiries, in their most extensive acceptation; including not only the solid conveniences and comforts of social life, but its elegances and innocent pleasures, and even the gratification of a natural and laudable curiosity; for, though labour be clearly the lot of man in this world, yet, in the midst of his most active exertions, he cannot but feel the substantial benefit of every liberal amusement, which may lull his passions to rest, and afford him a sort of repose without the pain of total inaction, and the real usefulness of every pursuit, which may enlarge and diversify his ideas, without interfering with the principal objects of his civil station or economical duties; nor should we wholly exclude even the trivial and worldly sense of utility, which too many consider as merely synonymous with lucre, but should reckon among useful objects those practical, and by no means illiberal, arts, which may eventually conduce both to national and to private emolument. With a view then to advantages thus explained, let us examine every point in the whole circle of arts and sciences, according to the received order of their dependence on the faculties of the mind, their mutual connexion, and the different subjects, with which they are conversant: our inquiries indeed, of which Nature and Man are the primary objects, must of course be chiefly Historical; but, since we propose to investigate the actions of the several Asiatick nations, together with their effective progress in science and art, we may arrange our investigations under the fame three heads, to which our European analysts have ingeniously reduced all the branches of human knowledge; and my present address to the society shall be confined to history, civil and natural, or the observation and remembrance of mere facts independently of ratiocination, which belongs to philosophy, or of imitations and substitutions, which are the province of art.

Were a superior created intelligence to delineate a map of general knowledge (exclusively of that sublime and stupendous theology, which himself could only hope humbly to know by an infinite approximation) he would probably begin by tracing with NEWTON the system of the universe, in which he would assign the true place to our little globe; and, having enumerated its



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various inhabitants, contents, and productions, would proceed to man in his natural station among animals, exhibiting a detail of all the knowledge attained or attainable by the human race; and thus observing, perhaps, the same order, in which he had before described other beings in other inhabited worlds: but, though BACON seems to have had a similar reason for placing the history of Nature before that of Man, or the whole before one of its parts, yet, consistently with our chief object already mentioned, we may properly begin with the civil history of the five Asiatick nations, which necessarily comprises their Geography, or a description of the places, where they have acted, and their astronomy, which may enable us to fix with some accuracy the time of their actions; we shall thence be led to the history of such other animals, of such minerals, and of such vegetables, as they may be supposed to have found in their several migrations and settlements, and shall end with the uses to which they have applied, or may apply, the rich assemblage of natural substances.

I. IN the first place, we cannot purely deem it an inconsiderable advantage, that all our historical researches have confirmed the Mosaick accounts of the primitive world; and our testimony on that subject ought to have the greater weight, because, if the result of our observations had been totally different, we should nevertheless have published them, not indeed with equal pleasure, but with equal confidence; for Truth is mighty, and, whatever be its consequences, must always prevail: but, independently of our interest in corroborating the multiplied evidences of revealed religion, we could scarce gratify our minds with a more useful and rational entertainment, than the contemplation of those wonderful revolutions in kingdoms and states, which have happened within little more than four thousand years; revolutions, almost as fully demonstrative of an all-ruling Providence, as the structure of the universe and the final causes, which are discernible in its whole extent and even in its minutest parts. Figure to your imaginations a moving picture of that eventful period, or rather a succession of crowded scenes rapidly changed. Three families migrate in different courses from one region, and, in about four centuries, establish very distant governments and various modes of society: Egyptians, Indians, Goths, Phenicians, Celts, Greeks, Latians, Chinese, Peruvians, Mexicans, all sprung from the fine immediate stem, appear to start nearly at one time, and occupy at length those countries, to which they have given, or from which they have derived, their names: in twelve or thirteen hundred years more the Greeks overrun the land of their forefathers, invade [India](#), conquer Egypt, and aim at universal dominion; but the Romans appropriate to themselves the whole empire of Greece, and carry their arms into Britain, of which they speak with haughty contempt: the Goths, in the fulness of time, break to pieces the unwieldy Colossus of Roman power, and seize on the whole of Britain, except its wild mountains; but even those wilds become subject to other invaders of the same Gothick lineage: during all these transactions, the Arabs possess both coasts of the Red Sea, subdue the old seat of their first progenitors, and extend

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their conquests on one side, through Africk, into Europe itself; on another, beyond the borders of India, part of which they annex to their flourishing empire: in the fame interval the Tartars, widely diffused over the rest of the globe, swarm in the north-east, whence they rush to complete the reduction of CONSTANTINE'S beautiful domains, to subjugate China, to raise in these Indian realms a dynasty splendid and powerful, and to ravage, like the two other families, the devoted regions of Iràn: by this time the Americans and Peruvians, with many races of adventurers variously intermixed, have peopled the continent and isles of America, which the Spaniards, having restored their old government in Europe, discover and in part overcome: but a colony from Britain, of which CICERO ignorantly declared, that it contained nothing valuable, obtain the possession, and finally the sovereign dominion, of extensive American districts; whilst other British subjects acquire a subordinate empire in the finest provinces of [India](#), which the victorious troops of ALEXANDER were unwilling to attack. This outline of human transactions, as far as it includes the limits of Asia, we can only hope to fill up, to strengthen, and to colour by the help of Asiatick literature; for in history, as in law, we must not follow streams, when we may investigate fountains [211], nor admit any secondary proof, where primary evidence is attainable: I should, nevertheless, make a bad return for your indulgent attention, were I to repeat a dry list of all the Muselman historians, whose works are preserved in Arabick, Persian, and Turkish, or expatiate on the histories and medals of China and Japan which may in time be accessible to members of our Society, and from which alone we can expect information concerning the ancient state of the Tartars; but on the history of India, which we naturally consider as the centre of our enquiries, it may not be superfluous to present you with a few particular observations.

Our knowledge of civil Asiatick history (I always except that of the Hebrews) exhibits a short evening twilight in the venerable introduction to the first book of MOSES, followed by a gloomy night, in which different watches are faintly discernible, and at length we see a dawn succeeded by a sunrise more or less early according to the diversity of regions. That no Hindu nation, but the Cashmirians, have left us regular histories in their ancient language, we must ever lament; but from Sanscrit literature, which our country has the honour of having unveiled, we may still collect some rays of historical truth, though time and a series of revolutions have obscured that light which we might reasonably have expected from so diligent and ingenious a people. The numerous Puránas and Itihásas, or poems mythological and heroick, are completely in our power; and from them we may recover some disfigured, but valuable, pictures of ancient manners and governments; while the popular tales of the Hindus, in prose and in verse, contain fragments of history; and even in their dramas we may find as many real characters and events, as a future age might find in our own plays, if all histories of England were, like those of India, to be irrecoverably lost: for example, a most beautiful



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poem by So'MADÉVA, comprising a very long chain of instructing and agreeable stories, begins with the famed revolution at Pataliputra by the murder of King NANDA, with his eight sons, and the usurpation of CHANDRAGUPTA; and the same revolution is the subject of a tragedy in Sanscrit, entitled the Coronation of CHANDRA, the abbreviated name of that able and adventurous usurper. From these, once concealed but now accessible, compositions, we are enabled to exhibit a more accurate sketch of old Indian history than the world has yet seen, especially with the aid of well-attested observations on the places of the colures. It is now clearly proved, that the first Purána contains an account of the deluge, between which and the Mohammedan conquests the history of genuine Hindu government must of course be comprehended; but we know from an arrangement of the seasons in the astronomical work of PARÁSARA, that the war of the PÁNDAVAS could not have happened earlier than the close of the twelfth century before CHRIST, and SELEUCUS must, therefore, have reigned about nine centuries after that war; now the age of VICRAMÁDITYA is given; and, if we can fix on an Indian prince, contemporary with SELEUCUS, we shall have three given points in the line of time between RAMA, or the first Indian colony, and CHANDRABÍJA, the last Hindu monarch, who reigned in Behár; so that only eight hundred or a thousand years will remain almost wholly dark; and they must have been employed in raising empires or states, in framing laws, in improving languages and arts, and in observing the apparent motions of the celestial bodies. A Sanscrit history of the celebrated VICRAMÁDITYA was inspected at Banares by a Pandit, who would not have deceived me, and could not himself have been deceived; but the owner of the book is dead and his family dispersed; nor have my friends in that city been able, with all their exertions, to procure a copy of it: as to the Mogul conquests, with which modern Indian history begins, we have ample accounts of them in Persian, from ALI of Yezd and the translations of Turkish books composed even by some of the conquerors, to GHULÁM HUSAIN,⁸ whom many of us personally know, and whose impartiality deserves the highest applause, though his unrewarded merit will give no encouragement to other contemporary historians, who, to use his own phrase in a letter to myself, may, like him, consider plain truth as the beauty of historical composition. From all these materials, and from there alone, a perfect history of [India](#) (if a mere

8. Jones is alluding here respectively to Sharaf-uddin Ali Yezdi and to Ghulam Husain Khan. The first lived at the court of Sultan Ibrahim, son of Shahrukh Mirza, at whose request he wrote Zafarnama, or Tarikh Sahid Quivari, a history of the conqueror Timaur (Tamerlan) achieved in 1425 AD. This work was translated by Pétis de la Croix. Aly Yezdi may be considered the panegyrist of Timaur, while the work of Ahmad-inb Arabshah is a coarse satire on that conqueror. He is the author also of Sharb Burda. Ghulam Husain Khan of Bengal, author of the Persian history called Riyad-al-salatin (chronogramme of 1207 AH/1792-93 AD, date of its achievement) written about the year 1780 AD. Ghulam, a native of Awadh, in the northern part of the Indian peninsula, migrated near to the English factory of New Malda, in Bengal, where he became collector of revenue at the time when George Udney was commercial resident of the East [India](#) Company. It was on demand of the latter that Ghulam wrote the above mentioned history of Bengal, whose English translation was published as The Riyaz-al-salatin by Maulan Abdul Salam in Calcutta, 1902-1904. Ghulam, who was also a member of the native court of judicature under the Nawab Ali-Ibrahim Khan, just in the years when Jones was in Bengal, died 1233/1817 (see Henry George Keene, An Oriental Biographical Dictionary, founded on materials collected by the late Thomas William Beale. A New Edition revised and enlarged, London, W. H. Allen, 1894, Kraus Reprint, Millwood, NY, 1980, pp. 379 and 144; on Ghulaim see also Encyclopédie de l'Islam. Nouvelle édition sous la direction de B. Lewis, Ch. Pellat et J. Schacht, Leyde, E. J. Brill, Paris, G.-P. Maisonneuve, 1965, vol. II, p. 1118.



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compilation, however elegant, could deserve such a title) might be collected by any studious man, who had a competent knowledge of Sanscrit, Persian, and Arabick; but, even in the work of a writer so qualified, we could only give absolute credence to the general outline; for, while the abstract Sciences are all truth, ant, the fine arts all fiction, we cannot but own, that, in the details of history, truth and fiction are so blended as to be scarce distinguishable.

The practical use of history, in affording particular examples of civil and military wisdom, has been greatly exaggerated; but principles of action may certainly be collected from it; and even the narrative of wars and revolutions may serve as a lesson to nations and an admonition to sovereigns: a desire, indeed, of knowing past events, while the future cannot be known, and a view of the present gives often more pain than delight, seems natural to the human mind; and a happy propensity would it be, if every reader of history would open his eyes to some very important corollaries, which flow from the whole extent of it. He could not but remark the constant effect of despotism in benumbing and debasing all those faculties, which distinguish men from the herd, that grazes; and to that cause he would impute the decided inferiority of most Asiatick nations, ancient and modern, to those in Europe, who are blest with happier governments; he would see the Arabs rising to glory, while they adhered to the free maxims of their bold ancestors, and sinking to misery from the moment, when those maxims were abandoned. On the other hand he would observe with regret, that such republican governments as tend to produce virtue and happiness, cannot in their nature be permanent, but are generally succeeded by Oligarchies, which no good man would wish to be durable. He would then, like the king of Lydia, remember SOLON, the wisest, bravest, and more accomplished of men, who asserts, in four nervous lines, that, "as hail and snow, which mar the labours of husbandmen, proceed from elevated clouds, and, as the destructive thunderbolt follows the brilliant flash, thus is a free state ruined by men exalted in power and splendid in wealth, while the people, from gross ignorance, chuse rather to become the slaves of one tyrant, than they may escape from the domination of many, than to preserve themselves from tyranny of any kind by their union and their virtues". Since, therefore no unmixed form of government could both deserve permanence and enjoy it, and since changes even from the worst to the best, are always attended with much temporary mischief, he would fix on our British constitution (I mean our publick law, not the actual state of things in any given period) as the best form ever established, though we can only make distant approaches to its theoretical perfection. In these Indian territories, which providence has thrown into the arms of Britain for their protection and welfare, the religion, manners, and laws of the natives preclude even the idea of political freedom; but their histories may possibly suggest hints for their prosperity, while our country derives essential benefit from the diligence of a placid and submissive people, who multiply with such increase, even after the ravages of famine, that, in one collectorship out



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of twenty-four, and that by no means the largest or best cultivated (I mean Crishna-nagar) there have lately been found, by an actual enumeration, a million and three hundred thousand native inhabitants; whence it should seem, that in all India there cannot now be fewer than thirty millions of black British subjects.

Let us proceed to geography and chronology, without which history would be no certain guide, but would resemble a kindled vapour without either a settled place or a steady light. For a reason before intimated I shall not name the various cosmographical books, which are extant in Arabick and Persian, nor give an account of those, which the Turks have beautifully printed in their own improved language, but shall expatiate a little on the geography and astronomy of [India](#); having first observed generally, that all the Asiatick nations must be far better acquainted with their several countries than mere European scholars and travellers; that, consequently, we must learn their geography from their own writings; and that, by collating many copies of the same work, we may correct the blunders of transcribers in tables, names, and descriptions.

Geography, astronomy, and chronology have, in this part of Asia, shared the fate of authentick history, and, like that, have been so masked and bedecked in the fantastick robes of mythology and metaphor, that the real system of Indian philosophers and mathematicians can scarce be distinguished: an accurate knowledge of Sanscrit and a confidential intercourse with learned Bráhmens, are the only means of separating truth from fable; and we may expect the more important discoveries from two of our members; concerning whom it may be safely averted, that, if our society would have produced no other advantage than the invitation given to them for the publick display of their talents, we would have a claim to the thanks of our country and of all Europe. Lieutenant WILFORD⁹ has exhibited an interesting specimen of the geographical knowledge deducible from the Puráνας, and will in time present you with so complete a treatise on the ancient world known to the Hindus, that the light acquired by the Greeks will appear but a glimmering in comparison of that, which He will diffuse; while Mr. DAVIS,¹⁰ who has given us a distinct idea of Indian computations and cycles, and ascertained the place of the colures at a time of great importance in history, will hereafter disclose the systems of Hindu astronomers from NÁRED and PARÁSAR to MEYA, VARÁHAMIHIR, and BHÁSCAR, and will soon, I trust, lay before you a perfect delineation of all the Indian asterisms in both hemispheres, where you will perceive so strong a general resemblance to the

9. Francis Wilford (1750/51-1822), a Lieutenant in the survey service in [India](#), was member of the Bengal Engineers, worked in the surveyor general's office (1783-88), then participated to the Benares survey (1788-94) and after 1800 was secretary of the Benares Sanskrit College (for the context of his activity see Matthew Edney, Mapping an Empire. The Geographical Construction of British India, 1765-1843, Chicago, Ill., The University of Chicago Press, 1999, pp. 82, 137 and 348). He was author of a long essay "On the Chronology of the Hindus", published in the Asiatick Researches, vol. IV, 1793, pp. 241-295. The problem of Hindu ancient chronology had already attracted William Jones, that had composed an essay thereon, called "On the Chronology of the Hindus", written in 1788, printed in the Asiatick Researches, II, 1790, pp. 111-147 and reprinted in Jones' Works, IV, pp. 1 ff. (see the same text in The British Discovery of Hinduism in the Eighteenth Century, ed. P. J. Marshall, Cambridge, 1970).

10. Samuel Davis (1760-1819), a district judge in Bengal, was the author of "On the Indian Cycle of Sixty Years", in Asiatick Researches, vol. III, 1792, pp. 209-227.



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constellations of the Greeks, as to prove that the two systems were originally one and the same, yet with such a diversity in parts, as to show incontestably [219], that neither system was copied from the other; whence it will follow, that they must have had some common source.

The jurisprudence of the Hindus and Arabs being the field, which I have chosen for my peculiar toil, you cannot expect, that I should greatly enlarge your collection of historical knowledge; but I may be able to offer you some occasional tribute, and I cannot help mentioning a discovery, which accident threw in my way; though my proofs must lie reserved for an essay, which I have delineated for the fourth volume of your Transactions. To fix the situation of that Palibothra (for there may have been several of the name), which was visited and described by MEGASTHENES had always appeared a very difficult problem; for, though it could not have been Prayága, where no ancient metropolis ever stood, nor Cányacubja, which has no epithet at all resembling the word used by the Greeks, nor Gaur, otherwise called Lacshmanavati, which all know to be a town comparatively modern, yet we could not confidently decide that it was Pátaliputra, though names and most circumstances nearly correspond, because that renowned capital extended from the confluence of the Sone and the Ganges to the site of Patna, while Palibothra stood at the junction of the Ganges and Erannoboas, which the accurate M. D'ANVILLE had pronounced to be the Yamunà: but this only difficulty was removed, when I found in a classical Sanscrit book, near two thousand years old, that Hiranyabáhu, or golden armed, which the Greeks changed into Erannoboas, or the river with a lovely murmur, was in fact another name for the Sona itself, though MEGASTHENES, from ignorance or inattention, has named them separately. This discovery led to another of greater moment; for CHANDRAGUPTA, who, from a military adventurer, became, like SANDRACOTTUS, the sovereign of upper Hindustàn, actually fixed the seat of his empire at Pataliputra, where he received ambassadors from foreign princes, and was no other than that very SANDRACOTTUS, who concluded a treaty with SELEUCUS Nicator; so that we have solved another problem, to which we before alluded, and may in round numbers consider the twelve and three hundredth years before CHRIST as two certain epochs between RÁMA, who conquered Silán a few centuries after the flood, and VICRAMÁDITYA, who died at Ujjayinì fiftyseven years before the beginning of our era.

II. SINCE these discussions would lead us too far, I proceed to the history of Nature distinguished, for our present purpose, from that of Man; and divided into that of other animals who inhabit this globe, of the mineral substances, which it contains, and of the vegetables, which so luxuriantly and so beautifully adorn it.

1. Could the figure, instincts, and qualities of birds, beasts, insects, reptiles, and fish be ascertained either on the plan of BUFFON, or on that of LINNÆUS, without giving pain to the objects of our examination, few studies would afford us more solid instruction or more exquisite delight; but I never could



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learn by what right, nor conceive with what feelings, a naturalist can occasion the misery of an innocent bird and leave its young, perhaps, to perish in a cold nest, because it has gay plumage and has never been accurately delineated, or deprive even a butterfly of its natural enjoyments, because it has the misfortune to be rare or beautiful; nor shall I ever forget the couplet of FIRDAUSI,¹¹ for which SADI, who cites it with applause, pours blessings on his departed Spirit:

Ah! spare yon emmet, rich in hoarded grain
He lives with pleasure, and he dies with pain.

This may be only a confession of weakness, and it certainly is not meant as a boast of peculiar sensibility; but, whatever name may be given to my opinion, it has such an effect on my conduct, that I never would buffer the Cócila, whose wild native woodnotes announce the approach of spring, to be caught in my garden for the sake of comparing it with BUFFON'S description; though I have often examined the domestick and engaging Mayanà, which bids us good morrow at our windows, and expects, as its reward, little more than security: even when a fine young Manis or Pangolin was brought me, against my will, from the mountains, I solicited his restoration to his beloved rocks, because I found it impossible to preserve him in comfort at a distance from them. There are several treatises on animals in Arabick, and very particular accounts of them in Chinese with elegant outlines of their external appearance; but I have met with nothing valuable concerning them in Persian, except what may be gleaned from the medical dictionaries; nor have I yet seen a book in Sanscrit, that expressly treats of them: on the whole, though rare animals may be found in all Asia, yet I can only recommend an examination of them with this condition, that they be left, as much as possible, in a state of natural freedom, or made as happy as possible, if it be necessary to keep them confined.

2. The history of minerals, to which no such objection can be made, is extremely simple and easy, if we merely consider their exterior look and configuration, and their visible texture; but the analysis of their internal properties belongs particularly to the sublime researches of Chymistry, on which we may hope to find useful disquisitions in Sanscrit, since the old Hindus unquestionably applied themselves to that enchanting study; and even from their treatises on alchymy we may possibly collect the results of actual experiment, as their ancient astrological works have preserved many valuable facts relating to the Indian sphere and the precession of the equinox: both in Persian and Sanscrit there are books on metals and minerals, particularly on gems, which the Hindu philosophers considered (with an

11. Firdausi is the great Persian poet, who lived between 931 and 1020. Called also The Homer of Persia, Firdausi is known for his Shahnamah, composed at the request of Sultan Muhammad of Ghazna. Founded on the Bastah Namah, the materials (chronicles, traditions, histories) collected by order of the last Sasanid king of Persia Yezdyard III, it contains the annals of the ancient kings of Persia from the reign of Kaiomur to the death of Yezdyard III (641 AD). The Sadi mentioned a little farther is Sadi Shaikh, a Persian poet born at Shiraz in 1175 AD, died in 1292; he was the author of Ghulisthan, that was translated into English by Francis Gladwin, a member of the Asiatic Society of Bengal and intimate friend of Jones, at the end of the XVIIIth century.



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exception of the diamond) as varieties of one crystalline substance either simple or compound: but we must not expect from the chymists of Asia those beautiful examples of analysis which have but lately been displayed in the laboratories of Europe.

3. We now come to Botany, the loveliest and most copious division in the history of nature; and, all disputes on the comparative merit of systems being at length, I hope, condemned to one perpetual night of undisturbed slumber, we cannot employ our leisure more delightfully, than in describing all new Asiatick plants in the Linnæan style and method, or in correcting the descriptions of those already known, but of which dry specimens only, or drawings, can have been seen by most European botanists: in this part of natural history we have an ample field yet unexplored; for, though many plants of Arabia have been made known by GARCIAS, PROSPER ALPINUS, and FORSKOËL, of Persia, by GARCIN, of Tartary, by GMELIN and PALLAS, of China and Japan, by KÆMPFER, OSBECK, and THUNBERG, of [India](#), by RHEEDE and RUMPHIUS, the two BURMANS, and the much lamented KOENIG,¹² yet none of those naturalists were deeply versed in the literature of the several countries, from which their vegetable treasures had been procured; and the numerous works in Sanscrit on medical substances, and chiefly on plants, have never been inspected, or never at least understood, by any European attached to the study of nature. Until the garden of the India Company shall be fully stored (as it will be, no doubt, in due time) with Arabian, Persian, and Chinese plants, we may well be satisfied with examining the native flowers of our own provinces; but, unless we can discover the Sanscrit names of all celebrated vegetables, we shall neither comprehend the allusions, which Indian poets perpetually make to them, nor (what is far worse) be able to find accounts of their tried virtues in the writings of Indian physicians; and (what is worst of all) we shall miss an opportunity, which never again may present itself; for the Pandits themselves have almost wholly forgotten their ancient appellations of particular plants, and, with all my pains, I have not yet ascertained more than two hundred out of twice that number, which are named in their medical or poetical compositions. It is much to be deplored, that the illustrious VAN RHEEDE had no acquaintance with Sanscrit, which even his three Brahmens, who composed the short preface engraved in that language, appear to have understood very imperfectly, and certainly wrote with disgraceful inaccuracy: in all his twelve volumes I recollect only Punarnavâ in which the Nâgari letters are tolerably right; the Hindu words in Arabian characters are shamefully incorrect; and the Malabar, I am credibly informed, is as bad as the rest. His delineations, indeed, are in general excellent; and, though LINNÆUS himself could not extract from his written descriptions the natural character of every plant in the collection, yet we shall be able, I hope, to describe them all from the life, and to add a considerable number of new species, if not of new genera, which RHEEDE, with all his noble exertions, could never procure. Such of our learned members, as profess medicine, will, no doubt, cheerfully assist in these researches, either by their own observations, when they have



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leisure to make any, or by communications from other observers among their acquaintance, who may reside in different parts of the country: and the mention of their art leads me to the various uses of natural substances, in the three kingdoms or classes to which they are generally reduced.

III. You cannot but have remarked, that almost all the sciences, as the French call them, which are distinguished by Greek names and arranged under the head of philosophy, belong for the most part to history; such are philology, chymistry, physicks, anatomy, and even metaphysicks, when we barely relate the phenomena of the human mind; for, in all branches of knowledge,

12. Jones is making reference here to the works by several naturalists and travellers. Prosper Alpinus was an Italian physician and botanist, born in 1553; student at the university of Padoua, he was a member of the expedition of the Venetian consul in Egypt Georg Ems from 1580 to 1584; physician onboard the Spanish fleet commanded by Gian Andrea Doria, he became professor of [botanical](#) sciences in Padoua, where he died in 1617; among his works, *De plantiis Ægyptii, Venetiis*, 1592 and, posthumously published, *Historia naturalis Ægyptii Libri IV, Lugduni Batavorum*, 1735. Jan (1707-1780) and Nicholas Laurent (1734-1793) Burmann, respectively father and son, were two Dutch botanists who contributed to the knowledge of Asian and American flora. Jan Burmann was the author of *Thesaurus Zeylanicus, exhibens plantas in insula Zeylana nascentes*, Amsterdam, 1737, in-4° and of *Flora Malabarica, sive Index in omnes tomos Horti Malabarici*, Amsterdam, 1769, in-fol.; and edited Rumphius *Herbarium Amboinense* (q. v.); he was director of the botanical garden of Amsterdam and one of the founders of that of Batavia; Nicholas Laurent succeeded his father on the chair of botanical science in Amsterdam and was editor of *Flora Indiæ: accedit series zoophytorum Indicorum*, Leyde, 1768, in-4°; he was in relationship with many scientists of his time and it was he who persuaded Thunberg (q. v.) to leave for the Cape of Good Hope and Japan. Peter Forskoël (1736-1763) was a remarkable Swedish naturalist and traveller, friend of Linnæus and member of the Danish expedition of Carsten Niebhur, van Haven and Cramer in Egypt and Arabia; among his works, *Flora Ægyptiaca-Arabica*, Copenhaguen, 1775, in-4°, and *Icones rerum naturalium quas in itinere orientale depingi curavit*, Copenhaguen, 1776, in-4°; Garcin is probably the French naturalist Laurent Garcin (1683-1752 ca.), born in Grenoble, who studied medicine at Reims and served as a calvinist preacher onboard a vessel of the French Compagnie des Indes Orientales, before settling at Neuchâtel as a Huguenot refugee. Botanist, physician and scholar, he travelled in the region of the Cape of Good Hope, [India](#) and Malaysia, and was the author of several essays of natural history published in the *Journal helvétique*, 1735-1748; he contributed also to Savary de Bruslons' *Dictionnaire de Commerce* (see *Dictionnaire de Biographie française*, sous la direction de M. Prevost, Romand d'Amat, H. Tribout de Morembert, Paris, Letouzey, 1982, vol. XV, col. 387). Johan Georg Gmelin (1709-1755) is the German botanist who participated with G. F. Müller and Delisle de la Croÿere to the Russian expedition in Siberia in the years 1733-1743; he was author of *Flora Sibirica, sive historia plantarum Sibiricæ*, St. Petersburg, 1747-70, 4 vols. in-4° and of *Voyage en Sibérie fait pendant les années 1733-43 [...] traduction de l'allemand par M. de Kéralio*, Paris, Desaint, 1767, 2 vols. en 8° (German original, 1747); Engelbert Kämpfer (1651-1716) was a German traveller, naturalist and physician; after a long journey in northern Europe, Russia and Central Asia, he was in Egypt, Arabia, Persia, India, Dutch Indies and Japan. He wrote important works, such as *Herbarii trans-Gangeticæ specimen*, in-fol., *Icones selectarum plantarum quas in Japonia collegit et delineavit Eng. Kaempfer* (London, 1691), *Amoenitarum exoticarum politico-physico-mediearum fasciculi V* (Lemgo, 1712) and most of all *The History of Japan* (London, 1727, 2 vols. in-fol.). Johan Gerhardt Koenig (1728-1785) was a Danish botanist trained in Sweden at the school of Linnæus. He travelled extensively in the East Indies, especially in India. Peter Osbeck (1722-1805), a Swedish traveller formed as well at the Linnæan school of natural history, was in Asia during the fifties and published a *Voyage aux Indes orientales fait dans les années 1750, 51, 52, avec des observations sur l'histoire naturelle, la langue, les moeurs, l'économie domestique des peuples étrangers*, Stockholm, 1757, in-8°; as a member of the Swedish Academy of Sciences he wrote several dissertations and memoirs of natural history published in the *Transactions of the Swedish Academy*. Peter Simon Pallas is the traveller and scientist author of *Voyage du Professeur Pallas dans plusieurs provinces de l'Empire de Russie et dans l'Asie septentrionale*, Paris, 1778-93, 5 vols. in-4° (German original, 1776). Heinrich Adrien Draakenstein van Rheede was a Dutch naturalist active between the second half of the XVIIIth and the first years of the XVIIIth century; he was an administrator of the VOC and became governor general of the Dutch possessions in Malabar; his fondness for natural history led him to compose and publish a *Hortus Indicus Malabaricus*, 1678-1703, 12 vols. in-fol. Georg Rumphius (1626-1693), German botanist, lived for a long time in the Dutch East Indies, in particular in the Sonda isles; he wrote, but did not publish during his lifetime, a civil history of Amboina. He dedicated most of his energies to natural history; he corresponded widely since 1683 onwards with many scientists and authors residing in the Indies and his letters were collected by Michel-Bernard Valentijn in the *India litterata*; his major work was published only forty years after his death by Jan Burmann as *Amboinese Herbal*, 1741-55, 7 vols. in fol.; before it had been published his *D'Amboinische Rariteitkamer*, in Dutch (Amsterdam, 1705). Carl Peter Thunberg (1743-1828), a Swedish naturalist disciple and then successor to Linnæus as professor of botanical sciences at Upsala, was the author of *Travels in Europe, Africa and Asia* (in Swedish, 1788-93, 4 vols. in-8°), particularly interesting for a sound portrayal of Japanese culture, that Thunberg experienced personally during a one-year residence in Japan between June 1775 and June 1776; another fruit of this stay was the *Flora Japonica* (1784) and *Icones plantarum Japonicarum* (1794-1805, in-fol.). This voyage relation contains also an interesting description of the region of the Cape of Good Hope, whose knowledge from a naturalistic standpoint led to the composition of *Flora capensis*, Stuttgart, 1823, in-8°). All these notices are drawn from the *Biographie universelle*, save otherwise stated. Unfortunately we have not been able to identify "Garcias".



PEOPLE MENTIONED IN A WEEK

we are only historians, when we announce facts, and philosophers, only when we reason on them: the same may be confidently said of law and of medicine, the first of which belongs principally to civil, and the second chiefly to natural, history. Here, therefore, I speak of medicine, as far only as it is grounded on experiment; and, without believing implicitly what Arabs, Persians, Chinese, or Hindus may have written on the virtues of medicinal substances, we may, surely, hope to find in their writings what our own experiments may confirm or disprove, and what might never have occurred to us without such intimations.

Europeans enumerate more than two hundred and fifty mechanical arts, by which the productions of nature may be variously prepared for the convenience and ornament of life; and, though the Silpasāstra reduce them to sixty-four, yet ABU'L FAZL¹³ had been assured, that the Hindus reckoned three hundred arts and sciences: now, their sciences being comparatively few, we may conclude, that they anciently practised at least as many useful arts as ourselves. Several Pandits have informed me, that the treatises on art, which they call Upavēdas and believe to have been inspired, are not so entirely lost, but that considerable fragments of them may be found at Banares; and they certainly possess many popular, but ancient, works on that interesting subject. The manufactures of sugar and indigo have been well known in these provinces for more than two thousand years; and we cannot entertain a doubt, that their Sanscrit books on dying and metallurgy contain very curious facts, which might, indeed, be discovered by accident in a long course of years, but which we may soon bring to light, by the help of Indian literature, for the benefit of manufacturers and artists, and consequently of our nation, who are interested in their prosperity. Discoveries of the same kind might be collected from the writings of other Asiatick nations, especially of the Chinese; but, though Persian, Arabick, Turkish and Sanscrit are languages now so accessible, that in order to obtain a sufficient knowledge of them, little more seems required than a strong inclination to learn them, yet the supposed number and intricacy of the Chinese characters have deterred our most diligent students from attempting to find their way through so vast a labyrinth: it is certain, however, that the difficulty has been magnified beyond the truth; for the perspicuous grammar by M. FOURMONT,¹⁴ together with a copious dictionary, which I possess, in Chinese and Latin, would enable any man, who pleased, to compare the original works of CONFUCIUS, which are easily procured, with the literal translation of them by COUPLET;¹⁵ and,

13. Abu'l Fazl, first minister and royal historiographer of the Moghul emperor Akbar, lived in the second half of the XVIth century in [India](#) and died in 1013 Heg. (1604 A. D.). He composed by order of Akbar a historical work intitled Akbar-Namah (Book of Akbar), 3 vols. in-fol., including a distinct, independent work, the Ayin-i-Akbari (Institutes of Akbar), containing a geographical, physical, military, administrative and historical description of Hindostan. An English translation of the latter work was made by Francis Gladwin and published in Calcutta (1783-86). Abu-l Fazl was also a translator from Sanscrit into Persian of works like Hitopadesa by Vishnu Sarma.

14. Etienne Fourmont (1683-1745) was one of the most active French erudite of the Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres. Professor of Arabic language at the Collège Royale since 1719, he studied particularly the Chinese language and literature and published one Grammatica sinica (1742) and five dictionaries, amounting to a total of seventeen volumes in folio. He was author also of Réflexions critiques sur les histoires des anciens peuples (Paris, 1735, 2 vols. in-4°).



THE PEOPLE OF A WEEK:

SIR WILLIAM JONES

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN A WEEK

having made that first step with attention, he would probably find, that he had traversed at least half of his career. But I should be led beyond the limits assigned to me on this occasion, if I were to expatiate farther on the historical division of the knowledge comprised in the literature of Asia; and I must postpone till next year my remarks on Asiatick philosophy and on those arts, which depend on imagination; promising you with confidence, that, in the course of the present year, your inquiries into the civil and natural history of this eastern world will be greatly promoted by the learned labours of many among our associates and correspondents.

15. Le Père Philippe Couplet was a Flemish Jesuit missionary in China at the end of the XVIIth century and author of *TABULA CHRONOLOGICA TRIUM FAMILIARUM IMPERIALIUM MONARCHIÆ SINICÆ A HOAM TI PRIMO GENTIS IMPERATORE, PARISIIS, EX BIBLIOTHECA REGIA*, 1686, a fundamental work for fixing the Jesuit attitude toward the chronological problems posed by ancient Chinese history: with its conclusion, according to which biblical history was indispensable to explain the uncertainties of Chinese history, “la chronologie du P. Couplet devient une sorte de catéchisme à l’usage des futurs missionnaires” (V. Pinot, *LA CHINE ET LA FORMATION DE L’ESPRIT PHILOSOPHIQUE EN FRANCE* (1640-1740), Genève, 1971, p. 215). Couplet must be remembered also for his translations – with the cooperation of the RR. PP. Intorcetta and Rougemont – of Confucius’ maxims with the title *CONFUCIUS SINARUM PHILOSOPHUS*, Parisiis, 1687. Together with the *LETTRES ÉDIFIANTES ET CURIEUSES* and Du Halde’s *DESCRIPTION DE L’EMPIRE DE LA CHINE* (Paris, 1735, 4 vols. in-fol.), Couplet’s *CONFUCIUS* is one of the most important products of Jesuit literature on China and one of the works that most influenced the XVIIIth-century European image of China, in particular for the idea that the ancient Chinese believed in a personal God, creator of the world.



THE PEOPLE OF A WEEK:

SIR WILLIAM JONES

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN A WEEK

1794

April 27, Sunday: [William Jones](#) died in Kolkata, India:



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THE PEOPLE OF A WEEK:

SIR WILLIAM JONES

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN A WEEK

1794

Posthumous publication of [Sir William Jones](#)'s translation of INSTITUTES OF *HINDU LAW*; OR THE ORDINANCES OF M E N U, *ACCORDING TO THE GLOSS OF CULLÚCA* [BHATTA], COMPRISING THE INDIAN SYSTEM OF DUTIES RELIGIOUS AND CIVIL: VERBALLY TRANSLATED FROM THE ORIGINAL SANSKRIT. PRINTED BY THE ORDER OF GOVERNMENT. Calcutta. M DCC XCIV.



(It had been an obvious choice, when [Sir William Jones](#) had chosen to translate 1st into English the *MANAVA DHARMASATRA* (which is what THE ORDINANCES OF MENU are known as in [India](#)), rather than some other of the Dharmasatras — for there is no question that this one was more highly regarded in India than any other. Not only had Brhaspati, one of Manu's successors, declared in about the 5th Century CE that any text that contained something that would contradict anything in Manu would be a text of no validity, but also, a total of nine commentaries had been written on this Dharmasatra and were still extant at this point at which the administration of law was being taken over by the British colonial authorities, which is more than on any other Dharmasatra.)



THE PEOPLE OF A WEEK:

SIR WILLIAM JONES

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN A WEEK



Because we wanted to evaluate this as a possible source for [Henry Thoreau](#)'s "Artist of Kouroo" parable in WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS, I have made a careful inspection of a copy of the 1st edition, in the Houghton Rare Book Room of Harvard University (the volume had been signed by [James Elliot Cabot](#) in 1844 and had been donated to Harvard during January 1904, and still sports the Cabot bookplate figuring three codfish, heads pointing upward).

Page v: "We are loft in an inextricable labyrinth of imaginary aftronomical cycles, *Yugas*, *Maháyugas*, *Calpas*, and *Menwantaras*, in attempting to calculate the time, when the firft MENU, according to the *Bráhmens*, governed this world, and became the progenitor of mankind, who from him are called *mánaváh*; nor can we, fo clouded are the old hiftory and chronology of *India* with fables and allegories, afcertain the precife age, when the work, now prefented to the publick, was actually compofed; abut we are in poffeffion of fome evidence, partly extrinfick and partly internal, that it is really one of the oldeft compofitions exifting."

I will excerpt the relevant passage, which is from page 201. This is the passage that would be quoted by [Waldo Emerson](#) in his Bowdoin Prize essay "The Present State of Ethical Philosophy" as he completed his senior year at [Harvard College](#) in 1821. In this essay Emerson would draw upon Southey's CURSE OF KEHAMA at a point at which Southey was quoting Sir William's INSTITUTES (this is JMN I 259 in Emerson's journals), in the process of contrasting the ancient wisdom of the Indians with the shallowness of medieval Catholicism: "The Hindoo had gone far beyond them in his moral estimates. 'If thou be not,' says the law-giver Menu, 'at variance, by speaking falsely, with Yama, the subduer of all, with Vaivaswata, the punisher, with that great divinity who dwells in the breast, go not on a pilgrimage to the river Ganga, nor to the plains of Curu, for thou has no need of expiation.'" Here is the passage as it actually appears in this original 1794 edition of INSTITUTES OF HINDU LAW:

92 "If thou beeft not at variance, by fpeaking falſely, with YAMA, or th ſubduer of all, with VAIVASWATA, or the puniſher, with that great divinity, who dwells in thy breaſt, go not on a pilgrimage to the river Gangà, nor to the plains of CURU, for thou haſt no need of expiation."



THE PEOPLE OF A WEEK:

SIR WILLIAM JONES

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN A WEEK

ARTIST OF KOUROO

(I wasn't able to figure out what the quotation mark at the start was intended to signify.) As we can see, this would be an unlikely source for [Henry Thoreau](#)'s parable of the "Artist of Kouroo," since it is spelled "Curu" rather than "Kuru" or "Kouroo," since there is no city and no artist, since nobody goes for a walk, since there is no stick or stock, and since there is no parable. (Although a staff is indeed mentioned at one point in this volume of [Indian](#) law, the only variable in regard to this staff is length: there must be a slightly different, but definitive, length for each of the castes of Hindu society. No carving as mentioned by Thoreau in WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS would have been possible, since the text mandates that all the bark be left on such a staff.)

[A WEEK](#): The wisest conservatism is that of the Hindoos. "Immemorial custom is transcendent law," says Menu. That is, it was the custom of the gods before men used it. The fault of our New England custom is that it is memorial. What is morality but immemorial custom? Conscience is the chief of conservatives.

[A WEEK](#): One of the most attractive of those ancient books that I have met with is the Laws of Menu. According to Sir William Jones, "Vyasa, the son of Parasara, has decided that the Veda, with its Angas, or the six compositions deduced from it, the revealed system of medicine, the Puranas or sacred histories, and the code of Menu, were four works of supreme authority, which ought never to be shaken by arguments merely human."

[A WEEK](#): The last is believed by the Hindoos "to have been promulged [??] in the beginning of time, by Menu, son or grandson of Brahma," and "first of created beings"....

[A WEEK](#): Brahma is said to have "taught his laws to Menu in a hundred thousand verses, which Menu explained to the primitive world in the very words of the book now translated." Others affirm that they have undergone successive abridgments for the convenience of mortals, "while the gods of the lower heaven and the band of celestial musicians are engaged in studying the primary code."



THE PEOPLE OF A WEEK:

SIR WILLIAM JONES

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN A WEEK

A WEEK: "A number of glosses or comments on Menu were composed by the Munis, or old philosophers, whose treatises, together with that before us, constitute the Dherma Sastra, in a collective sense, or Body of Law." Culluca Bhatta was one of the more modern of these.

A WEEK: "When that power awakes, then has this world its full expansion; but when he slumbers with a tranquil spirit, then the whole system fades away."

A WEEK: Nor will we disturb the antiquity of this Scripture; "From fire, from air, and from the sun," it was "milked out." One might as well investigate the chronology of light and heat. Let the sun shine.

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A WEEK: Menu understood this matter best, when he said, "Those best know the divisions of days and nights who understand that the day of Brahma, which endures to the end of a thousand such ages, [infinite ages, nevertheless, according to mortal reckoning,] gives rise to virtuous exertions; and that his night endures as long as his day." Indeed, the Mussulman and Tartar dynasties are beyond all dating. Methinks I have lived under them myself. In every man's brain is the Sanscrit. The Vedas and their Angas are not so ancient as serene contemplation. Why will we be imposed on by antiquity? Is the babe young? When I behold it, it seems more venerable than the oldest man; it is more ancient than Nestor or the Sibyls, and bears the wrinkles of father Saturn himself. And do we live but in the present? How broad a line is that? I sit now on a stump whose rings number centuries of growth. If I look around I see that the soil is composed of the remains of just such stumps, ancestors to this. The earth is covered with mould. I thrust this stick many aeons deep into its surface, and with my heel make a deeper furrow than the elements have ploughed here for a thousand years. If I listen, I hear the peep of frogs which is older than the slime of Egypt, and the distant drumming of a partridge on a log, as if it were the pulse-beat of the summer air. I raise my fairest and freshest flowers in the old mould. Why, what we would fain call new is not skin deep; the earth is not yet stained by it. It is not the fertile ground which we walk on, but the leaves which flutter over our heads. The newest is but the oldest made visible to our senses. When we dig up the soil from a thousand feet below the surface, we call it new, and the plants which spring from it; and when our vision pierces deeper into space, and detects a remoter star, we call that new also. The place where we sit is called Hudson, – once it was Nottingham, – once –

We should read history as little critically as we consider the landscape, and be more interested by the atmospheric tints and various lights and shades which the intervening spaces create, than by its groundwork and composition. It is the morning now turned evening and seen in the west, – the same sun, but a new light and atmosphere. Its beauty is like the sunset; not a fresco painting on a wall, flat and bounded, but atmospheric and roving or free. In reality, history fluctuates as the face of the landscape from morning to evening. What is of moment is its hue and color. Time hides no treasures; we want not its **then**, but its **now**. We do not complain that the mountains in the horizon are blue and indistinct; they are the more like the heavens.

[EGYPT](#)[DISTANT DRUMMING](#)

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1796

[Sir William Jones's](#) INSTITUTES OF HINDU LAW: OR, THE ORDINANCES OF MENU, ACCORDING TO THE GLOSS OF CULLUCA. COMPRISING THE [INDIAN](#) SYSTEM OF DUTIES, RELIGIOUS AND CIVIL. VERBALLY TRANSLATED FROM THE ORIGINAL SANSKRIT. WITH A PREFACE Calcutta: printed by the order of the Government London: reprinted for J. Sewell ... and J. Debrett. (This is one of the editions that [Bronson Alcott](#) would have in his library at the point of his death that [Henry Thoreau](#) definitely knew about, and therefore may have studied.)





THE PEOPLE OF A WEEK:

SIR WILLIAM JONES

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN A WEEK

1805



July: The magazine put out by Reverend William Emerson's The Anthology Club in Boston printed Act I of the Sanskrit play "Sakuntala, or the Fatal Ring" by Calidasa in the translation from its [Indian](#) source by [Sir William Jones](#). (At some point during this year, the Reverend William Emerson ceased to be the editor of the magazine.)



THE PEOPLE OF A WEEK:

SIR WILLIAM JONES

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1807



THE WORKS OF [SIR WILLIAM JONES](#). WITH THE LIFE OF THE AUTHOR, BY LORD TEIGNMOUTH. IN THIRTEEN VOLUMES. (London: Printed for J. Stockdale, Piccadiley; and John Walker, Paternoster-Row).

WORKS OF WM. JONES 1

WORKS OF WM. JONES 2

WORKS OF WM. JONES 3

WORKS OF WM. JONES 4

WORKS OF WM. JONES 5

WORKS OF WM. JONES 6

WORKS OF WM. JONES 7

WORKS OF WM. JONES 8

WORKS OF WM. JONES 9

WORKS OF WM. JONES 10

WORKS OF WM. JONES 11

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WORKS OF WM. JONES 13



THE PEOPLE OF A WEEK:

SIR WILLIAM JONES

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN A WEEK

1814



In Boston, The Christian Disciple and the Theological Review, a magazine published from 1813 to 1823, printed Sir William Jones's "On the Gods of Greece, Italy and India."



THE PEOPLE OF A WEEK:

SIR WILLIAM JONES

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN A WEEK

1822



At the end of the journal entries for this year, [Waldo Emerson](#) listed his recent readings in Oriental materials:
“[Zoroaster](#) (?); Arabian Nights; [Sir William Jones](#), To Narayena.”

INDIA



THE PEOPLE OF A WEEK:

SIR WILLIAM JONES

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN A WEEK

1838

In this year the British government disassociated the East India Company from obligations into which it had entered, to maintain the temples of [India](#). Forget your promises, that's an order!

The [Reverend William Adam](#) abandoned [India](#) and joined his family in the United States. He would further journey from Boston to London, to attend the initial meeting of an antislavery group, the British India Society.

[James Robert Ballantyne](#)'s A GRAMMAR OF THE HINDUSTANI LANGUAGE (Edinburgh).

[Monier Williams](#) matriculated at King's College School, [Balliol College of Oxford University](#).

At the end of the journal entries for this year, [Waldo Emerson](#) listed his readings in Oriental materials during the period: "Hermes Trismegistus; Synesius; Proclus; Thomas Taylor; Institutes of Menu; [Sir William Jones](#), Translations of Asiatic Poetry; Buddha. [Zoroaster](#); [Confucius](#)."

Again [Emerson](#) copied extracts from the Confucian canon into his journals, extracts such as "Action, such as Confucius describes the speech of God."

EMERSON AND CHINA

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN A WEEK

1840

The Reverend [Theodore Parker](#)'s "Cudworth's INTELLECTUAL SYSTEM" appeared in [The Christian Examiner](#). ([Waldo Emerson](#) had the Thomas Birch edition of 1820 in his library.)

- CUDWORTH'S SYSTEM, I
- CUDWORTH'S SYSTEM, II
- CUDWORTH'S SYSTEM, III

Republication of [Joseph-Héliodore-Sagesse-Vertu Garcin de Tassy](#)'s 1826 *DOCTRINES ET DEVOIRS DE LA RELIGION MUSELMANE*.

At the end of the journal entries for this year, [Emerson](#) listed his readings in Oriental materials during the period: "[Buddha](#); Vedas; [Sir William Jones](#); [Zoroaster](#); Koran; [Ockley](#), History of the Saracens."



CHALDEAN ORACLES



PEOPLE MENTIONED IN A WEEK

1841

March 10, Wednesday: [Waldo Emerson](#) lectured at the [Concord Lyceum](#) in [Concord](#) on “Reforms.”



June 7. Monday. The inhabitants of those Eastern plains seem to possess a natural and hereditary right to be conservative and magnify forms and traditions. “Immemorial custom is transcendent law,” says [Menu](#). That is, it was the custom of gods before men used it. The fault of our New England custom is that it is memorial. What is morality but immemorial custom? It is not manner but character, and the conservative conscience sustains it.

We are accustomed to exaggerate the immobility and stagnation of those eras, as of the waters which levelled the steppes; but those slow revolving “years of the gods” were as rapid to all the needs of virtue as these bustling and hasty seasons. Man stands to revere, he kneels to pray. Methinks history will have to be tried by new tests to show what centuries were rapid and what slow. Corn grows in the night. Will this bustling era detain the future reader longer? Will the earth seem to have conversed more with the heavens during these times? Who is writing better Vedas? How science and art spread and flourished, how trivial conveniences were multiplied, that which is the gossip of the world is not recorded in them; and if they are left out of our scripture, too, what will remain?

Since the Battle of Bunker Hill we think the world has *not* been at a standstill.

When I remember the treachery of memory and the manifold accidents to which tradition is liable, how soon the vista of the past closes behind, — as near as night’s crescent to the setting day, — and the dazzling brightness of noon is reduced to the faint glimmer of the evening star, I feel as if it were by a rare indulgence of the fates that any traces of the past are left us, — that my ears which do not hear across the interval over which a crow caws should chance to hear this far-travelled sound. With how little coöperation of the societies, after all, is the past remembered!

I know of no book which comes to us with grander pretensions than the “Laws of [Menu](#),” and this immense presumption is so impersonal and sincere that it is never offensive or ridiculous. Observe the modes in which modern literature is advertised, and then consider this Hindoo prospectus. Think what a reading public it addresses, what criticism it expects. What wonder if the times were not ripe for it?

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THE PEOPLE OF A WEEK:

SIR WILLIAM JONES

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN A WEEK

Summer: [Henry David Thoreau](#) continued his reading in [Sir William Jones](#)'s translation of INSTITUTES OF HINDU LAW; OR, THE ORDINANCES OF MENU, ACCORDING TO THE GLOSS OF CULUCCA, COMPRISING THE [INDIAN](#) SYSTEM OF DUTIES, RELIGIOUS AND CIVIL.¹⁶



[A WEEK](#): The wisest conservatism is that of the Hindoos. "Immemorial custom is transcendent law," says Menu. That is, it was the custom of the gods before men used it. The fault of our New England custom is that it is memorial. What is morality but immemorial custom? Conscience is the chief of conservatives.

[A WEEK](#): One of the most attractive of those ancient books that I have met with is the Laws of Menu. According to Sir William Jones, "Vyasa, the son of Parasara, has decided that the Veda, with its Angas, or the six compositions deduced from it, the revealed system of medicine, the Puranas or sacred histories, and the code of Menu, were four works of supreme authority, which ought never to be shaken by arguments merely human."

[A WEEK](#): The last is believed by the Hindoos "to have been promulged [??] in the beginning of time, by Menu, son or grandson of Brahma," and "first of created beings"....

16. It is to be noted in passing that back in 1837 when Thoreau had been involved in a whipping-of-students incident, he had not yet consulted THE LAWS OF MENU and there discovered that it was allowed that "a wife, a son, a slave, a pupil, ... who have committed faults, may be beaten with ropes or split bamboo, but on the back part of the body only, never on noble parts." We may well note also that when he did in this year begin to make selections from that ancient treatise, he would refrain from excerpting any such materials.



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SIR WILLIAM JONES

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A WEEK: Brahma is said to have "taught his laws to Menu in a hundred thousand verses, which Menu explained to the primitive world in the very words of the book now translated." Others affirm that they have undergone successive abridgments for the convenience of mortals, "while the gods of the lower heaven and the band of celestial musicians are engaged in studying the primary code."

A WEEK: "A number of glosses or comments on Menu were composed by the Munis, or old philosophers, whose treatises, together with that before us, constitute the Dherma Sastra, in a collective sense, or Body of Law." Culluca Bhatta was one of the more modern of these.

A WEEK: "When that power awakes, then has this world its full expansion; but when he slumbers with a tranquil spirit, then the whole system fades away."

A WEEK: Nor will we disturb the antiquity of this Scripture; "From fire, from air, and from the sun," it was "milked out." One might as well investigate the chronology of light and heat. Let the sun shine.

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A WEEK: Menu understood this matter best, when he said, "Those best know the divisions of days and nights who understand that the day of Brahma, which endures to the end of a thousand such ages, [infinite ages, nevertheless, according to mortal reckoning,] gives rise to virtuous exertions; and that his night endures as long as his day." Indeed, the Mussulman and Tartar dynasties are beyond all dating. Methinks I have lived under them myself. In every man's brain is the Sanscrit. The Vedas and their Angas are not so ancient as serene contemplation. Why will we be imposed on by antiquity? Is the babe young? When I behold it, it seems more venerable than the oldest man; it is more ancient than Nestor or the Sibyls, and bears the wrinkles of father Saturn himself. And do we live but in the present? How broad a line is that? I sit now on a stump whose rings number centuries of growth. If I look around I see that the soil is composed of the remains of just such stumps, ancestors to this. The earth is covered with mould. I thrust this stick many aeons deep into its surface, and with my heel make a deeper furrow than the elements have ploughed here for a thousand years. If I listen, I hear the peep of frogs which is older than the slime of Egypt, and the distant drumming of a partridge on a log, as if it were the pulse-beat of the summer air. I raise my fairest and freshest flowers in the old mould. Why, what we would fain call new is not skin deep; the earth is not yet stained by it. It is not the fertile ground which we walk on, but the leaves which flutter over our heads. The newest is but the oldest made visible to our senses. When we dig up the soil from a thousand feet below the surface, we call it new, and the plants which spring from it; and when our vision pierces deeper into space, and detects a remoter star, we call that new also. The place where we sit is called Hudson, – once it was Nottingham, – once –

We should read history as little critically as we consider the landscape, and be more interested by the atmospheric tints and various lights and shades which the intervening spaces create, than by its groundwork and composition. It is the morning now turned evening and seen in the west, – the same sun, but a new light and atmosphere. Its beauty is like the sunset; not a fresco painting on a wall, flat and bounded, but atmospheric and roving or free. In reality, history fluctuates as the face of the landscape from morning to evening. What is of moment is its hue and color. Time hides no treasures; we want not its **then**, but its **now**. We do not complain that the mountains in the horizon are blue and indistinct; they are the more like the heavens.

[EGYPT](#)[DISTANT DRUMMING](#)

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN A WEEK



June 7. Monday. The inhabitants of those Eastern plains seem to possess a natural and hereditary right to be conservative and magnify forms and traditions. “Immemorial custom is transcendent law,” says [Menu](#). That is, it was the custom of gods before men used it. The fault of our New England custom is that it is memorial. What is morality but immemorial custom? It is not manner but character, and the conservative conscience sustains it.

We are accustomed to exaggerate the immobility and stagnation of those eras, as of the waters which levelled the steppes; but those slow revolving “years of the gods” were as rapid to all the needs of virtue as these bustling and hasty seasons. Man stands to revere, he kneels to pray. Methinks history will have to be tried by new tests to show what centuries were rapid and what slow. Corn grows in the night. Will this bustling era detain the future reader longer? Will the earth seem to have conversed more with the heavens during these times? Who is writing better Vedas? How science and art spread and flourished, how trivial conveniences were multiplied, that which is the gossip of the world is not recorded in them; and if they are left out of our scripture, too, what will remain?

Since the Battle of Bunker Hill we think the world has *not* been at a standstill.

When I remember the treachery of memory and the manifold accidents to which tradition is liable, how soon the vista of the past closes behind, — as near as night’s crescent to the setting day, — and the dazzling brightness of noon is reduced to the faint glimmer of the evening star, I feel as if it were by a rare indulgence of the fates that any traces of the past are left us, — that my ears which do not hear across the interval over which a crow caws should chance to hear this far-travelled sound. With how little coöperation of the societies, after all, is the past remembered!

I know of no book which comes to us with grander pretensions than the “Laws of [Menu](#),” and this immense presumption is so impersonal and sincere that it is never offensive or ridiculous. Observe the modes in which modern literature is advertised, and then consider this Hindoo prospectus. Think what a reading public it addresses, what criticism it expects. What wonder if the times were not ripe for it?

August: Just as [Nathaniel Hawthorne](#) was preparing a saving-the-appearances exit strategy from the [Brook Farm](#) experiment in communal living in West Roxbury on the Newton line, [Henry Thoreau](#) was considering becoming a member. Also, in August, he was studying Hugh Murray’s HISTORY AND DESCRIPTIVE ACCOUNT OF BRITISH [INDIA](#), the 2nd volume of [Simon Ockley](#)’s THE CONQUEST OF SYRIA, PERSIA, AND ÆGYPT, BY THE SARACENS CONTAINING THE LIVES OF ABUBEKER, OMAR, AND OTHMAN, THE IMMEDIATE SUCCESSORS OF MAHOMET, GIVING AN ACCOUNT OF THEIR MOST REMARKABLE BATTLES, SIEGES, &C...., entitled THE HISTORY OF THE SARACENS...: COLLECTED FROM THE MOST AUTHENTICK ARABICK AUTHORS, [Luís Vaz de Camões](#)’s *LUSIADS*, the [Sir William Jones](#) translation from Sanskrit of INSTITUTES OF HINDU LAW; OR, THE ORDINANCES OF MENU, ACCORDING TO THE GLOSS OF CULUCCA, COMPRISING THE INDIAN SYSTEM OF DUTIES, RELIGIOUS AND CIVIL, [Edward Gibbon](#)’s AUTOBIOGRAPHY, and [Professor Charles Lyell](#)’s PRINCIPLES OF [GEOLOGY](#). (Lyell was spending this year and part of the next, travelling in the United States, Canada and Nova Scotia. During this visit he sought the assistance and fellowship of [Dr. Augustus Addison Gould](#), conchologist at Boston. During this month he was in the vicinity of Rochester, New York).



That title —The Laws of Menu with the Gloss of Culluca— comes to me with such a volume of sound as if it had swept unobstructedly over the plains of Hindostan, and when my eye rests on yonder birches — or the sun in the water — or the shadows of the trees — it seems to signify the laws of them all. They are the laws of you and me — a fragrance wafted down from those old-times, and no more to be refuted than the wind. {One-fifth page blank} The impression which those sublime sentences made on me last night, has awakened me before any cock-crowing— Their influence lingers around me like a fragrance or as the fog hangs over the earth late into the day. When my imagination travels eastward and backward to those remote years of the gods, I seem to draw near to the habitation of the morning — and the dawn at length has a place. I remember the book as an hour before sunrise.





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August 28, Saturday: Elections for delegates were held in [Rhode Island](#)'s towns to the People's Constitutional Convention. All white male citizens over 21 were allowed to vote for the delegates.

[Henry Thoreau](#) recorded in his journal a snippet of poetry that would be placed into his [A WEEK ON THE CONCORD AND MERRIMACK RIVERS](#):



Aug. 28. Saturday. A great poet will write for his peers alone, and indite no line to an inferior. He will remember only that he saw truth and beauty from his position, and calmly expect the time when a vision as broad shall overlook the same field as freely.

Johnson can no more criticise Milton than the naked eye can criticise Herschel's map of the sun.

The art which only gilds the surface and demands merely a superficial polish, without reaching to the core, is but varnish and filigree. But the work of genius is rough-hewn from the first, because it anticipates the lapse of time and has an ingrained polish, which still appears when fragments are broken off, an essential quality of its substance. Its beauty is its strength. It breaks with a lustre, and splits in cubes and diamonds. Like the diamond, it has only to be cut to be polished, and its surface is a window to its interior splendors.

True verses are not counted on the poet's fingers — but on his heart strings.
My life hath been the poem I would have writ,
But I could not both live and live to utter it.

In the Hindoo scripture the idea of man is quite illimitable and sublime. There is nowhere a loftier conception of his destiny. He is at length lost in Brahma himself, "the divine male." Indeed, the distinction of races in this life is only the commencement of a series of degrees which ends in Brahma.

The veneration in which the Vedas are held is itself a remarkable fact. Their code embraced the whole moral life of the Hindoo, and in such a case there is no other truth than sincerity. Truth is such by reference to the heart of man within, not to any standard without. There is no creed so false but faith can make it true.

In inquiring into the origin and genuineness of this scripture it is impossible to tell when the divine agency in its composition ceased, and the human began. "From fire, from air, and from the sun" was it "milked out."

There is no grander conception of creation anywhere. It is peaceful as a dream, and so is the annihilation of the world. It is such a beginning and ending as the morning and evening, for they had learned that God's methods are not violent. It was such an awakening as might have been heralded by the faint dreaming chirp of the crickets before the dawn.

The very indistinctness of its theology implies a sublime truth. It does not allow the reader to rest in any supreme first cause, but directly hints of a supremer still which created the last. The creator is still behind, increate. The divinity is so fleeting that its attributes are never expressed.

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A WEEK: The true poem is not that which the public read. There is always a poem not printed on paper, coincident with the production of this, stereotyped in the poet's life. It is **what he has become through his work**. Not how is the idea expressed in stone, or on canvas or paper, is the question, but how far it has obtained form and expression in the life of the artist. His true work will not stand in any prince's gallery.

My life has been the poem I would have writ,
But I could not both live and utter it.

THE POET'S DELAY.

In vain I see the morning rise,
In vain observe the western blaze,
Who idly look to other skies,
Expecting life by other ways.
Amidst such boundless wealth without,
I only still am poor within,
The birds have sung their summer out,
But still my spring does not begin.
Shall I then wait the autumn wind,
Compelled to seek a milder day,
And leave no curious nest behind,
No woods still echoing to my lay?



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1842

March 23, Wednesday: Announcement, that the United States of America had entered into a treaty with the Chippewa of the Mississippi and Lake Superior by which all tribal land, in return for a temporary annual stipend and some other goods and services, was ceded from the mouth of Chocolate river of Lake Superior; thence northwardly across said lake to intersect the boundary line between the United States and the Province of Canada; thence up said Lake Superior, to the mouth of the St. Louis, or Fond du Lac river (including all the islands in said lake); thence up said river to the American Fur Company's trading post, at the southwardly bend thereof, about 22 miles from its mouth; thence south to intersect the line of the treaty with the Chippewas of the Mississippi; thence along said line to its southeastwardly extremity, near the Plover portage on the Wisconsin river; thence northeastwardly, along the boundary line, between the Chippewas and Menomonees, to its eastern termination on the Skonawby river of Green Bay; thence northwardly to the source of Chocolate river; thence down said river to its mouth, the place of beginning; it being the intention of the parties to this treaty, to include in this cession, all the Chippewa lands eastwardly of the aforesaid line running from the American Fur Company's trading post on the Fond du Lac river to the intersection of the line of the treaty made with the Chippewas of the Mississippi.



March 23. Wednesday [1842]. Plain speech is always a desideratum. Men write in a florid style only because they would match the simple beauties of the plainest speech. They prefer to be misunderstood, rather than come short of its exuberance. Hussein Effendi praises the epistolary style of Ibrahim Pasha to the French traveller Botta, because of "the difficulty of understanding it: there was, he said, but one person at Jidda who was capable of understanding and explaining the Pasha's correspondence." A plain sentence, where every word is rooted in the soil, is indeed flowery and verdurous. It has the beauty and variety of mosaic with the strength and compactness of masonry. All fullness looks like exuberance. We are not rich without superfluous wealth; but the imitator only copies the superfluity. If the words were sufficiently simple and answering to the thing to be expressed, our sentences would be as blooming as wreaths of evergreen and flowers.' You cannot fill a wine-glass quite to the brim without heaping it. Simplicity is exuberant.

When I look back eastward over the world, it seems to be all in repose. Arabia, Persia, Hindostan are the land of contemplation. Those Eastern nations have perfected the luxury of idleness. Mount Saber, according to the French traveller and naturalist Botta, is celebrated for producing the Kat tree. "The soft tops of the twigs and tender leaves are eaten," says his reviewer, "and produce an agreeable soothing excitement, restoring from fatigue, banishing sleep, and disposing to the enjoyment of conversation." What could be more dignified than to browse the tree-tops with the camelopard? Who would not be a rabbit or partridge sometimes, to chew mallows and pick the apple tree buds? It is not hard to discover an instinct for the opium and betel and tobacco chewers.

After all, I believe it is the style of thought entirely, and not the style of expression, which makes the difference in books. For if I find any thought worth extracting, I do not, wish to alter the language. Then the author seems to have had all the graces of eloquence and poetry given him.

I am pleased to discover myself as much a pensioner in Nature as moles and titmice. In some very direct and simple uses to which man puts Nature she stands in this relation to her. Oriental life does not want this grandeur. It is in Sadi and the Arabian Nights and the Fables of Pilpay. In the New England noontide I have discovered more materials of Oriental history than the Sanskrit contains or [Sir W. Jones](#) has unlocked. I see why it is necessary there should be such history at all. Was not Asia mapped in my brain before it was in any geography? In my brain is the Sanskrit which contains the history of the primitive times. The Vedas and their Angas are not so ancient as my serene contemplations. My mind contemplates them, as Brahma his scribe.

I occasionally find myself to be nothing at all, because the gods give me nothing to do. I cannot brag; I can only congratulate my masters.

In idleness I am of no thickness, I am thinnest wafer. I never compass my own ends. God schemes for me.

We have our times of action and our times of reflection. The one mood caters for the other. Now I am Alexander, and then I am Homer. One while my hand is impatient to handle an axe or hoe, and at another to [sic] pen. I am



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sure I write the tougher truth for these calluses on my palms. They give firmness to the sentence. The sentences of a laboring man are like hardened thongs, or the sinews of the deer, or the roots of the pine.

A WEEK: There are moments when all anxiety and stated toil are becalmed in the infinite leisure and repose of nature. All laborers must have their nooning, and at this season of the day, we are all, more or less, Asiatics, and give over all work and reform. While lying thus on our oars by the side of the stream, in the heat of the day, our boat held by an osier put through the staple in its prow, and slicing the melons, which are a fruit of the East, our thoughts reverted to Arabia, Persia, and Hindostan, the lands of contemplation and dwelling-places of the ruminant nations. In the experience of this noontide we could find some apology even for the instinct of the opium, betel, and tobacco chewers. Mount Sabér, according to the French traveller and naturalist, Botta, is celebrated for producing the Kát-tree, of which "the soft tops of the twigs and tender leaves are eaten," says his reviewer, "and produce an agreeable soothing excitement, restoring from fatigue, banishing sleep, and disposing to the enjoyment of conversation." We thought that we might lead a dignified Oriental life along this stream as well, and the maple and alders would be our Kát-trees.

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A WEEK

PAUL ÉMILE BOTTA

July: [Henry Thoreau](#) contributed poems and [NATURAL HISTORY OF MASSACHUSETTS](#) to [THE DIAL](#). [Nathaniel Hawthorne](#) liked this review of the nature literature — but [Waldo Emerson](#) disliked it.

Cruickshank commentary

Professor of [Geology](#) Robert M. Thorson of the University of Connecticut has indicated on pages 34-5 of his [WALDEN'S SHORE: HENRY DAVID THOREAU AND NINETEENTH-CENTURY SCIENCE](#) why it is that the dust jacket of that history-of-science text published by Harvard University Press happens to be decorated with a photograph of a granite pebble containing a sparkling vein of quartz. The granite is intended to represent the Andover Granite bedrock far underneath the glacial detritus within which the waters of [Walden Pond](#) are situated. The pebble's quartz vein presents the "frost-work of a longer night" of which Thoreau wrote in his essay for [THE DIAL](#) "[NATURAL HISTORY OF MASSACHUSETTS](#)" — it is an emblem of Thoreau's affiliation with Vulcan rather than Neptune, [Plutonism](#) rather than [Neptunism](#) in the history of the development of scientific understanding — and the regular ovoid shape of the specimen would be indicative of its subsequent tumbling down a streambed of time. The one thing of which we are not informed in this text is whether or no this particular photographed pebble is one of those Henry **himself** picked out for the mineral collection he kept in his attic room in the Concord boardinghouse, a mineral collection that is now in storage at the Fruitlands Museum in Harvard, Massachusetts (and perhaps this would be something that matters only to me):

Being a big fan of Vulcan made Thoreau an easy mark for the plutonist school of thought, despite his formal education during the neptunian era. He sensed beneath Concord the presence of a





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great "subterranean fire," one responsible for creating gemlike crystals of quartz within the veins of the Andover Granite. These, he collected for his specimen cabinet. These he interpreted as the "frost-work of a longer night." This six-word snippet of prose-poetry densely abstracts three Huttonian verities. Crystals of water-ice and silica-ice were indeed both hexagonal "frosts" originating from fluids, whether vapor or liquid. Freezing quartz requires a "longer night" than freezing water. And these respective nights have different causes. In Playfair's words, the "revolutions within the earth are independent of revolutions within the celestial spheres." Thoreau correctly envisioned planet Earth emerging from an initially molten state under darkened skies. "Mornings of creation, I call them ... A morning which carries us back beyond the Mosaic creation, where crystallizations are fresh and unmelted. It is the poet's hour." This passage was inspired by a Promethean scene coming from a Concord field on a moonless night. From a distance, Henry saw a burning "heap of stumps half covered with earth," a "phosphorescence ... a strange, Titanic thing this Fire, this Vulcan.... within are fiery caverns, incrustated with fire as a cave with saltpetre ... the glass men are nearer the truth than the men of science." This last clause offered playful support for the plutonists who, as "glass men," invoked a molten origin for local rock. Conversely, it was a dig at the neptunist thrall for their aqueous version of creation.



"Entomology extends the limits of being in a new direction, so that I walk in nature with a sense of greater space and freedom. It suggests besides, that the universe is not rough-hewn, but perfect in its details. Nature will bear the closest inspection; she invites us to lay our eye level with the smallest leaf, and take an insect view of its plain. She has no interstices; every part is full of life. I explore, too, with pleasure, the sources of the myriad sounds which crowd the summer noon, and which seem the very grain and stuff of which eternity is made. Who does not remember the shrill roll-call of the harvest fly? There were ears for these sounds in Greece long ago, as Anacreon's ode will show"



ANACREON

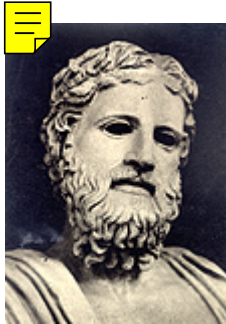
- [Henry Thoreau](#)
 "Natural History of Massachusetts"
 July 1842 issue of [The Dial](#)¹⁷

17. [Franklin Benjamin Sanborn](#) reported that "one of [Harvard College](#)'s natural historians" (we may presume this to have been [Dr. Thaddeus William Harris, Thoreau](#)'s teacher in natural science in his senior year) had remarked to Bronson Alcott that "if Emerson had not spoiled him, Thoreau would have made a good [entomologist](#)."

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Anacreon's Ode to the Cicada 

We pronounce thee happy, cicada,
For on the tops of the trees,
Sipping a little dew
Like any king thou singest.
For thine are they all,
Whatever thou seest in the fields,
And whatever the woods bear.
Thou art the friend of the husbandmen.
In no respect injuring any one;
And thou art honored among men,
Sweet prophet of summer.
The muses love thee,
And Phoebus himself loves thee,
And has given thee a shrill song;
Age does not wrack thee,
Thou skilful – earth-born – song-loving,
Unsuffering – bloodless one;
Almost thou art like the gods.





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NUTTALL
ARISTOTLE

I have by me one of a pair of ospreys, which have for some years fished in this vicinity, shot by a neighboring pond, measuring more than two feet in length, and six in the stretch of its wings. Nuttall mentions that "The ancients, particularly Aristotle, pretended that the ospreys taught their young to gaze at the sun, and those who were unable to do so were destroyed. Linnæus even believed, on ancient authority, that one of the feet of this bird had all the toes divided, while the other was partly webbed, so that it could swim with one foot, and grasp a fish with the other." But that educated eye is now dim, and those talons are nerveless. Its shrill scream seems yet to linger in its throat, and the roar of the sea in its wings. There is the tyranny of Jove in its claws, and his wrath in the erectile feathers of the head and neck. It reminds me of the Argonautic expedition, and would inspire the dullest to take flight over Parnassus.

NUTTALL

The booming of the bittern, described by Goldsmith and Nuttall, is frequently heard in our fens, in the morning and evening, sounding like a pump, or the chopping of wood in a frosty morning in some distant farm-yard. The manner in which this sound is produced I have not seen anywhere described. On one occasion, the bird has been seen by one of my neighbors to thrust its bill into the water, and suck up as much as it could hold, then raising its head, it pumped it out again with four or five heaves of the neck, throwing it two or three feet, and making the sound each time.

In this issue of [THE DIAL](#) appeared [Thoreau](#)'s translation of one of [Anacreon](#)'s odes in *CARMINUM POETARUM NOUEM*, under the title "Return of Spring": "the works of men shine," etc.

In this issue of [THE DIAL](#), in the context of an article "Prayers" by [Waldo](#), a poem appeared in quotation without any attribution and without title. We suspect this sarcastic comment in the form of a prayer to have been contributed by [Thoreau](#):





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Great God, I ask thee for no meaner pelf
Than that I may not disappoint myself,
That in my action I may soar as high
As I can now discern with this clear eye.

And next in value, which thy kindness lends,
That I may greatly disappoint my friends,
Howe'er they think or hope that it may be,
They may not dream how thou'st
distinguished me.

That my weak hand may equal my firm faith,
And my life practice what my tongue saith;
That my low conduct may not show,
Nor my relenting lines,
That I thy purpose did not know,
Or overrated thy designs.

This issue of THE DIAL also contained portions selected by Waldo out of Sir William Jones's and Charles Wilkins's translations of the THE HEETOPADES OF VEESHNOO-SARMA, IN A SERIES OF CONNECTED FABLES, INTERSPERSED WITH MORAL, PRUDENTIAL, AND POLITICAL MAXIMS.¹⁸

A WEEK: It is always singular, but encouraging, to meet with common sense in very old books, as the Heetopades of Veeshnoo Sarma; a playful wisdom which has eyes behind as well as before, and oversees itself.

HITOPADESA

WALDEN: Why do precisely these objects which we behold make a world? Why has man just these species of animals for his neighbors; as if nothing but a mouse could have filled this crevice? I suspect that Pilpay & Co. have put animals to their best use, for they are all beasts of burden, in a sense, made to carry some portion of our thoughts.

HITOPADESA

ÆSOP

XENOPHANES

PEOPLE OF
WALDEN

THE DIAL, JULY 1842

We commence in the present number the printing of a series of selections from the oldest ethical and religious writings of men, exclusive of the Hebrew and Greek Scriptures. Each nation has its bible more or less pure; none has yet been willing or able in a wise and devout spirit to collate its own with those of other nations, and sinking the civil-historical and the ritual portions to bring together the grand expressions of the moral sentiment in different ages and races, the rules for the guidance of life, the bursts of piety and of abandonment to the

18. The HITOPADESA or "Salutary Instructions" is a very ancient collection and is also familiarly known to us as "THE FABLES OF PILPAY." Many of these tales are condensations of material to be found in the PANCHATANTRA, which consists of five apologues recited by a Brahmin teacher name of Vishnu Sarma for the instruction of his class of Indian princes in the principles of their princship. Since this collection emphasizes worldly-wiseness, it has been exceedingly popular, indeed even more popular than Machiavelli's THE PRINCE: we presently know of over 200 different editions in at least 50 languages around the world.



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Invisible and Eternal; – a work inevitable sooner or later, and which we hope is to be done by religion and not by literature. The following sentences are taken from Charles Wilkins's translation of the Heetopades or Amicable Instructions of Veeshnoo Sarma, according to Sir William Jones, the most beautiful, if not the most ancient collection of apologues in the world, and the original source of the book, which passes in the modern languages of Europe and America, under the false name of Pilpay.

EXTRACTS FROM THE HEETOPADES OF VEESHNOO SARMA.

Whatsoever cometh to pass, either good or evil, is the consequence of a man's own actions, and descendeth from the power of the Supreme Ruler.

Our lives are for the purposes of religion, labor, love, and salvation. If these are destroyed, what is not lost? If these are preserved, what is not preserved?

A wise man should relinquish both his wealth and his life for another. All is to be surrendered for a just man when he is reduced to the brink of destruction.

Why dost thou hesitate over this perishable body composed of flesh, bones, and excrements? O my friend, [my body,] support my reputation!

If constancy is to be obtained by inconstancy, purity by impurity, reputation by the body, then what is there which may not be obtained?

The difference between the body and the qualities is infinite; the body is a thing to be destroyed in a moment, whilst the qualities endure to the end of the creation.

Is this one of us, or is he a stranger is the enumeration of the ungenerous; but to those by whom liberality is practised, the whole world is but as one family.

Fortune attendeth that lion amongst men who exerteth himself. They are weak men who declare Fate the sole cause.

It is said, Fate is nothing but the deeds committed in a former state of existence; wherefore it behoveth a man vigilantly to exert the powers he is possessed of.

The stranger, who turneth away from a house with disappointed hopes, leaveth there his own offences and departeth, taking with him all the good actions of the owner.

Hospitality is to be exercised even towards an enemy when he cometh to thine house. The tree does not withdraw its shade even from the wood-cutter.

Of all men thy guest is the superior.

The mind of a good man does not alter when he is in distress; the waters of the ocean are not to be heated by a torch of straw. Nor bathing with cool water, nor a necklace of pearls, nor anointing with sanders, yieldeth such comfort to the body oppressed with heat, as the language of a good man cheerfully uttered doth to the mind.

Good men extend their pity even unto the most despicable animals. The moon doth not withhold the light, even from the cottage of a Chandala.



THE PEOPLE OF A WEEK:

SIR WILLIAM JONES

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN A WEEK

Those who have forsaken the killing of all; those who are helpmates to all; those who are a sanctuary to all; those men are in the way of heaven.

Behold the difference between the one who eateth flesh, and him to whom it belonged. The first hath a momentary enjoyment, whilst the latter is deprived of existence.

Who would commit so great a crime against a poor animal, who is fed only by the herbs which grow wild in the woods, and whose belly is burnt up with hunger?

Every book of knowledge, which is known to Oosana or to Vreehaspatee, is by nature planted in the understanding of women.

The beauty of the Kokeela is his voice; the beauty of a wife is constancy to her husband; the beauty of the ill-favored is science; the beauty of the penitent is patience.

What is too great a load for those who have strength? What is distance to the indefatigable? What is a foreign country to those who have science? Who is a stranger to those who have the habit of speaking kindly?

Time drinketh up the essence of every great and noble action, which ought to be performed and is delayed in the execution.

When Nature is forsaken by her lord, be she ever so great, she doth not survive.

Suppose thyself a river, and a holy pilgrimage in the land of Bharata, of which truth is the water, good actions the banks, and compassion the current; and then, O son of Pandoo, wash thyself therein, for the inward soul is not to be purified by common water.

As frogs to the pool, as birds to a lake full of water, so doth every species of wealth flow to the hands of him who exerteth himself.

If we are rich with the riches which we neither give nor enjoy, we are rich with the riches which are buried in the caverns of the earth.

He whose mind is at ease is possessed of all riches. is it not the same to one whose foot is enclosed in a shoe, as if the whole surface of the earth were covered with leather?

Where have they, who are running here and there in search of riches, such happiness as those placid spirits enjoy who are gratified at the immortal fountain of happiness?

All hath been read, all hath been heard, and all hath been followed by him who, having put hope behind him, dependeth not upon expectation.

What is religion? Compassion for all things which have life. What is happiness? To animals in this world, health. What is kindness? A principle in the goode. What is philosophy? An entire separation from the world.

To a hero of sound mind, what is his own, and what a foreign country? Wherever he halteth, that place is acquired by the splendor of his arms.

When pleasure is arrived, it is worthy of attention; when trouble presenteth itself, the same; pains and pleasures have their revolutions like a wheel.

One, although not possessed of a mine of gold, may find the



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offspring of his own nature, that noble ardor which hath for its object the accomplishment of the whole assemblage of virtues. Man should not be over-anxious for a subsistence, for it is provided by the Creator. The infant no sooner droppeth from the womb, than the breasts of the mother begin to stream. He, by whom geese were made white, parrots are stained green, and peacocks painted of various hues, – even he will provide for their support. He, whose inclination turneth away from an object, may be said to have obtained it.

[Wilkins, Sir Charles.

THE BHAGVAT-GETA, transl. 1785.

THE HEETOPADES, transl. Bath, 1787.

THE STORY OF ... SAKOONTALA, TRANSL. FROM THE MAHĀBHĀRATA. 1795.

GRAMMAR OF THE SANSKRITA LANGUAGE. 1808.

[Horace Hayman Wilson.](#)

THE MÉGHA DUTA: OR, CLOUD MESSENGER: A POEM IN THE SANSKRIT LANGUAGE BY KALIDASA, WITH TRANSL. IN ENGLISH VERSE. Calcutta, 1814, etc.

SANSKRIT-ENGLISH DICTIONARY. Calcutta, 1819; 2nd edn., 1832.

HINDU THEATRE. 3 vols. Calcutta, 1827, etc.

THE VISHNU PURANA, transl. 1840; new edn., 1867-1870.

ARIANA ANTIQUA, A DESCRIPTIVE ACCOUNT OF THE ANTIQUITIES AND COINS OF [AFGHANISTAN](#). 1841.

INTRODUCTION TO SANSKRIT GRAMMAR. 1841.

RIG-VEDA SANHITA, translated: Volume 1, 1850; New Edition, 1868, II, 1854, III, 1857; completed by E.B. Cowell; IV, 1866, V-VI, 1870.

Collective edn. of WORKS. 12 vols. 1862-1871]



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PEOPLE MENTIONED IN A WEEK

1843

January: The current quarterly issue of THE EDINBURGH REVIEW, OR CRITICAL JOURNAL:

THE EDINBURGH REVIEW

This issue of [THE DIAL](#) contained ten pages of [Henry Thoreau](#)'s selections from the [Sir William Jones](#) translation from Sanskrit of INSTITUTES OF HINDU LAW; OR, THE ORDINANCES OF MENU, ACCORDING TO THE GLOSS OF CULUCCA, COMPRISING THE [INDIAN](#) SYSTEM OF DUTIES, RELIGIOUS AND CIVIL.



THE DIAL, JANUARY 1843



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PEOPLE MENTIONED IN A WEEK

1844

 35-year-old [Edward J. Fitzgerald](#) met [Edward Byles Cowell](#), an 18-year-old who had at the age of 15 in a public library come across a volume by [Sir William Jones](#) and who had taught himself Persian grammar — young Cowell would introduce Fitzgerald as well to Persian studies.



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1850

January 28, Monday: [Henry Thoreau](#) checked out, from [Harvard Library](#), [Horace Hayman Wilson](#)'s translation from Sanskrit into English of THE LAWS OF *MENU*, OR THE *VISHNU PURĀNA* (London, 1840), and his translation of Iswara Krsna's THE *SĀNKHYA KĀRIKĀ*; OR, MEMORIAL VERSES ON THE *SĀNKHYA* PHILOSOPHY, as published with commentary by [Henry Thomas Colebrooke](#), the 9th volume of THE WORKS OF [SIR WILLIAM JONES](#). WITH THE LIFE OF THE AUTHOR, BY LORD TEIGNMOUTH. IN THIRTEEN VOLUMES (London: Printed for J. Stockdale, Piccadiley; and John Walker, Paternoster-Row, 1807),

SACONTALĀ; OR ...

from which he would copy into his 1st Commonplace Book, and the *BHĀSHYA* OR COMMENTARY OF *GAURAPĀDA*, as translated from the Sanskrit and commented upon by [Horace Hayman Wilson](#).



COMMENTARY OF *GAURAPĀDA*

This volume had been prepared by the Oriental Translation Fund at Oxford in 1837, and here is what Thoreau abstracted:

I

"The inquiry is into the means of precluding the three sorts of pain; [for pain is embarrassment: nor is the inquiry superfluous because obvious means of alleviation exist, for absolute and final relief is not thereby accomplished.]" which constitute the pain of life. For life is on the whole according to all philosophers an evil— The inquiry then is after a righteous mode of suicide

II

"The revealed mode is like the temporal one, ineffectual," — because it prescribes only acts — but "recurrence is the result



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PEOPLE MENTIONED IN A WEEK

of that immunity which is attainable by acts" "The consequences of acts are not eternal." The true mode consists in a certain "discriminative knowledge" – not a doing but a knowing – doing is partial and one sided knowing as universal & central. What you see you are, but what you do without seeing helps you not Gaurapada says "as that which is irrational appears as if it was rational, it must have a guide and superintendent, which is soul." There is an interval between my brain and heart & me. How inconsiderate for a man to keep a dog who already keeps a body– Yet some men will have a horse & car also to look after – and their bodies are neglected.

Now, here is the source material from which Thoreau had abstracted the above, on pages 13-26 passim:

"The revealed mode is like the temporal one, ineffectual, for it is impure; and it is defective in some respects, as well as excessive in others. A method different from both is preferable, consisting in a discriminative knowledge of perceptible principles, and of the imperceptible one, and of the thinking soul.... What is that revealed mode, and whence is it (ineffectual)? It is impure, defective in some respects, and excessive in others.... It is impure from (enjoining) animal sacrifices.... Excess is also one of its properties, and pain is produced by observing the superior advantages of others.... ...the original aphorism of KAPILA affirms of these two modes, the temporal and revealed, that there 'is no difference between them,' and that 'escape from pain is not the consequence of the latter,' because recurrence is nevertheless the result of that immunity which is attainable by arts (of devotion),' as 'the consequences of acts are not eternal.' This discriminative wisdom is the accurate discrimination of those principles into which all that exists is distributed by the Sánkhya philosophy.... The object of the S. Káriká is to define and explain these three things, the correct knowledge of which is of itself release from worldly bondage, and exemption from exposure to human ills, by the final separation of soul from body. Nature and soul are not objects of sense, and are to be known only by reasoning from analogy. For as the predicates Mahat and the rest have the three qualities; and as that which is irrational appears as if it was rational, it must have a guide and superintendent, which is soul. That which is perceptible is known by perception; but that which is imperceptible, and which is not to be inferred from analogy, must be learnt from revelation, as, INDRA, the king of the gods; the northern Kurus; the nymphs of heaven: these depend upon sacred authority."

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN A WEEK

This was what [Harvard College](#) looked like during the 1850s:





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PEOPLE MENTIONED IN A WEEK

1853

[Monier Williams](#) translated [Kalidasa](#)'s [SAKOONTALA, OR THE LOST RING](#).¹⁹

INDIA



The initial academic account of [Theravada Buddhism](#), written with hostility to discount it as not a major religion but a mere error of materialism and agnosticism, the Reverend [Robert Spence Hardy](#)'s A MANUAL OF [BUDHISM](#), IN ITS MODERN DEVELOPMENT; TRANSLATED FROM SINGHALESE MSS. BY R. SPENCE HARDY, AUTHOR OF "EASTERN MONACHISM," "DÉWA-DHARMA-DARPANAYA," ETC. (London: Partridge and Oakey, 34, Paternoster Row; and 70, Edgware Road. Sold by J. Mason, Paternoster Row and City Road).

Copies of this would be found in the personal libraries of [Bronson Alcott](#) and of [Henry Thoreau](#) (although it would seem clear that these would be two of the last persons in the world to be tainted by its invidious missionary-position propaganda).

A MANUAL OF BUDHISM

A WEEK: It is necessary not to be Christian to appreciate the beauty and significance of the life of Christ. I know that some will have hard thoughts of me, when they hear their Christ named beside my Buddha, yet I am sure that I am willing they should love their Christ more than my Buddha, for the love is the main thing, and I like him too. "God is the letter Ku, as well as Khu." Why need Christians be still intolerant and superstitious?

PEOPLE OF A WEEK

GAUTAMA BUDDHA

19. [Thoreau](#) had already been studying this play in 1850, in the 1789 [Sir William Jones](#) translation available from the [Harvard Library](#).

[HDT](#)[WHAT?](#)[INDEX](#)**THE PEOPLE OF A WEEK:****SIR WILLIAM JONES****PEOPLE MENTIONED IN A WEEK****1855**

Publication, in an exceedingly elaborate and over-the-top edition, of [Monier Williams](#)'s re-translation of [Kalidasa](#)'s *SAKOONTALA*, OR THE LOST RING: AN [INDIAN](#) DRAMA, TRANSLATED INTO ENGLISH PROSE AND VERSE, FROM THE SANSKRIT OF KALIDASA, BY M. WILLIAMS (Hertford: S. Austin):

**MONIER-WILLIAMS**

(This happens to be one of the volumes which Thomas Cholmondeley would send to [Henry Thoreau](#) from England in his magnificent gift box of books. Thoreau had been studying the play in 1850 in the 1789 [Sir William Jones](#) translation available from the [Harvard Library](#), when Cholmondeley had visited him in Concord.)

The [Reverend Charles Henry Appleton Dall](#) applied to the American Unitarian Association to create a [Unitarian](#) mission in Calcutta, and despite his physical condition he was hired. He was tasked to investigate



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the Hindu Brahmo Samaj or “Society of Vedantists,” and to visit a Unitarian congregation Charles T. Brooks had discovered in Madras. He was instructed to provide religious education but avoid controversy or polemic. His wife [Caroline Wells Healey Dall](#), 10-year-old son William Healey Dall, and 6-year-old daughter Sarah Keene Healey Dall remained in America. In the port of arrival after this exhaustingly long voyage, the reverend needed to be carried ashore in a litter, but in Calcutta he would quickly recover his strength. Within the month he would be founding among a congregation made up of British and American residents of Calcutta a “Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in [India](#).” He would report that “Some Hindoos of education, and a few of the Society of Rammohun Roy, attend, and also meet me during the week for conversation.” To the Hindus who visited he gave books by the Reverends [William Ellery Channing](#), [William Greenleaf Eliot](#), James Freeman Clarke, and other [Unitarian](#) luminaries.



November 30, Friday: By this point [Henry Thoreau](#) had installed wheels on his boat, as his and his brother’s boat *Musketaquid* had likewise had wheels. Therefore he would not have to borrow a wheelbarrow in order to get his boat up out of the river ice that winter. Thoreau received Thomas Cholmondeley’s²⁰ gift of treatises on [India](#). This shipment included works in Sanskrit which Thoreau could not read but also included the following works in accessible English, French, German, and Latin:

- [John Cockburn Thomson](#)’s very recently published new translation of *THE BHAGAVAD-GĪTĀ; OR, A DISCOURSE BETWEEN KRĪṢHṆA AND ARJUNA ON DIVINE MATTERS. A SANSKRIT PHILOSOPHICAL POEM: TRANSLATED, WITH COPIOUS NOTES, AN INTRODUCTION ON SANSKRIT PHILOSOPHY, AND OTHER MATTER: BY J. COCKBURN THOMSON, MEMBER OF THE ASIATIC SOCIETY OF FRANCE; AND OF THE ANTIQUARIAN SOCIETY OF NORMANDY. HERTFORD: PRINTED AND PUBLISHED BY STEPHEN AUSTIN, FORE STREET, BOOKSELLER TO THE EAST INDIA COLLEGE. MDCCCLV* (this is one of the volumes that Thoreau would bequeath to Bronson Alcott that he would bequeath to [Franklin Benjamin Sanborn](#))

J. COCKBURN THOMSON

- [Horace Hayman Wilson](#)’s translation of the *RIG-VEDA SAMHITA*
- [Wilson](#)’s SELECT SPECIMENS OF THE THEATRE OF THE *HINDOOS*
- Īśvara Kṛṣṇa’s THE [SĀṆKHYA KĀRIKĀ](#), OR, MEMORIAL VERSES ON THE *SĀṆKHYA* PHILOSOPHY, BY ISWARA KRISHNA in a commented translation by [Wilson](#)’s published by [Henry Thomas Colebrooke](#) (or would Thoreau have accessed the Colebrook translation of 1837?)

THE SĀṆKHYA KĀRIKĀ

- [Colebrook](#)’s edition of [Wilson](#)’s translation of the THE LAWS OF *MENU*, OR THE *VISHNU PURĀNA*: A SYSTEM OF HINDU MYTHOLOGY AND TRADITION. (He had quoted the “All intelligences awake with the morning” of this edition of the *VISHNU PURĀNA* in [WALDEN](#) as “The Vedas say”  and from this he had obtained his own “Morning is when I am awake and there is dawn in me” .)
- Houghton’s INSTITUTES OF *MENU*

20. Did he spell the name “Chomondeley” in his journal?



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- [Colebrooke](#)'s TREATISE ON THE HINDU LAW OF INHERITANCE
- a translation of the *MANDUKYA UPANISHAD*
- [James Robert Ballantyne](#)'s translation of THE APHORISMS OF THE *MÍMÁNSÁ* PHILOSOPHY BY [JAIMINI](#). WITH EXTRACTS FROM THE COMMENTARIES. IN *SANSKRIT* AND ENGLISH. PRINTED FOR THE USE OF THE BENARES COLLEGE, BY ORDER OF GOVT., N.W.P. (Allahabad: Printed at the Presbyterian Mission Press. Rev. Jos. Warren, *Supt.* 1851)

APHORISMS OF *MÍMÁNSÁ*

- Gautama, called Aksapáda. THE APHORISMS OF THE *NYÁNA* PHILOSOPHY, BY [GAUTAMA](#), WITH ILLUSTRATIVE EXTRACTS FROM THE COMMENTARY BY [VIŚWANÁTHA](#). IN *SANSKRIT* AND ENGLISH. PRINTED, FOR THE USE OF THE BENARES COLLEGE, BY ORDER OF GOVT. N.W.P. (ALLAHABAD: Printed at the Presbyterian Mission Press. Rev. Jos. Warren, *Superintendent.* 1850)

APHORISMS IN *SANSKRIT*

- the Reverend Professor [Henry Hart Milman](#)'s translation of *NALA AND DAMYANTI*

NALA AND DAMAYANTI

- John Stuart Mill's HISTORY OF BRITISH INDIA
- Monier Williams's retranslation of [Kalidasa](#)'s *SAKUNTALA*, OR THE FATAL RING
- a number of volumes of history and criticism of Indian literature



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1862

The Reverend [Robert Spence Hardy](#) sailed for [Ceylon](#) a 3d time, as a Wesleyan missionary.

The [Reverend Charles Henry Appleton Dall](#) returned from Calcutta to America and visited his wife [Caroline Wells Healey Dall](#), 17-year-old son William Healey Dall, and 13-year-old daughter Sarah Keene Healey Dall (during his 31-year ministry in [India](#) he would be visiting them but 5 times, which is to say, approximately every 5th or 6th year).

[James Robert Ballantyne](#)'s FIRST LESSONS IN SANSKRIT GRAMMAR, TOGETHER WITH AN INTRODUCTION TO THE HITOPADĒSA, 2d edition.

At the end of the journal entries for this year, [Waldo Emerson](#) listed his recent readings in Oriental materials: "Iamblichus; Sakoontala, or The Lost Ring, (by [Kalidasa](#)); Hafiz." "Nala and Damayanti; 'Books bequeathed to me by [H.D. Thoreau](#)'; Abd el Kader."

Here is a more elaborate record of the books out of [Thoreau](#)'s personal library that [Emerson](#) mentions (above) as having been bequeathed to him:

- THE LAWS OF *MENU*, OR THE *VISHNU PURĀNA*: A SYSTEM OF HINDU MYTHOLOGY AND TRADITION, translated by [Horace Hayman Wilson](#)
- SELECT SPECIMENS OF THE THEATRE OF THE *HINDOOS*, translated by [Wilson](#)
- *RIG-VĒDA SANHITA*; First *ASHTAKA*; Second *ASHTAKA*; translated by [Wilson](#)
- Īśvara Kṛṣṇa's THE *SĀṂKHYA KĀRIKĀ*; OR, MEMORIAL VERSES ON THE *SĀṂKHYA* PHILOSOPHY, translated by [Henry Thomas Colebrooke](#)

THE SANKHYA KARIKA

and the *BHĀSHYA* OR COMMENTARY OF *GAURAPĀDA*, translated by [Wilson](#)

COMMENTARY OF GAURAPADA

- *LE LOTUS DE LA BONNE LOI*, TRADUIT DU SANSKRIT, ACCOMPAGNÉ D'UN COMMENTAIRE ET DE VINGT ET UN MÉMOIRES RELATIFS AU BUDDHISME, PAR [M. E. BURNOUF](#) (Paris: Imprimerie nationale, 1852)

LE LOTUS DE LA BONNE LOI

- *LA BHĀGAVATA PURĀNA*, OU *HISTOIRE POÉTIQUE DE KRICHNA*, translated by [Eugène Burnouf](#) and published in three volumes at Paris between 1840 and 1844

LA BHĀGAVATA PURĀNA, I

LA BHĀGAVATA PURĀNA, II

LA BHĀGAVATA PURĀNA, III

- *INSTITUTES OF MENU*, translated by [Sir William Jones](#)



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- TWO TREATISES ON THE HINDU LAW OF INHERITANCE [Comprising the Translation of the Dáyabhága of Jímútavāhana and that of the section of the Mitáksharáj by Vijñāneśvara on Inheritance]. TRANSLATED BY [H.T. COLEBROOKE](#), ESQUIRE

HINDU INHERITANCE

- Volume XV of the *BIBLIOTHECA INDICA*, translated by E. Roer; Upanishad
- [Colebrooke](#). MISCELLANEOUS ESSAYS (two volumes). London, 1837

COLEBROOK'S ESSAYS, I

COLEBROOK'S ESSAYS, I

- *NALA AND DAMAYANTI*, translated by the Reverend Professor [Henry Hart Milman](#)

NALA AND DAMAYANTI

- [Ballantyne](#)'s translation of THE APHORISMS OF THE *MÍMÁNSÁ* PHILOSOPHY BY [JAIMINI](#). WITH EXTRACTS FROM THE COMMENTARIES. IN *SANSKRIT* AND ENGLISH. PRINTED FOR THE USE OF THE BENARES COLLEGE, BY ORDER OF GOVT., N.W.P. (Allahabad: Printed at the Presbyterian Mission Press. Rev. Jos. Warren, *Supt.* 1851)

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APHORISMS IN SANSKRIT

- [Ballantyne](#)'s A LECTURE ON THE *VEDANTA*, EMBRACING THE TEXT OF THE VEDANTA-SARA (Allahabad: Presbyterian Mission Press, 1851, an 84-page pamphlet)
- [Ballantyne](#)'s translation of Viśwanátha Panchánana Bhatta's THE *BHÁSHÁ-PARICHCHHEDA*



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1886

Georg Bühler's translation and study of the *MANAVA DHARMASATRA* (THE ORDINANCES OF MENU) appeared in the Oxford University Press series, SACRED BOOKS OF THE EAST, edited by Max Müller. This would replace the 1794 translation by [Sir William Jones](#) and would remain the standard edition for more than a century.



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2001

November: A significant new edition:

THE EUROPEAN DISCOVERY OF INDIA: KEY INDOLOGICAL SOURCES OF ROMANTICISM (New introductions by Michael Franklin, University of Wales at Aberystwyth)

This set assembles the key literary and devotional texts that accomplished an "Oriental Renaissance" in the West and cultural revolution in India. The powerful combination of Governor-General Hastings' Orientalist government policies and Sir William Jones's long-held ambition to initiate Europe into the vast literary treasures of the East inaugurated a series of translations from the Sanskrit, which had a profound influence on European culture, particularly on the Romantics. The decisive period in Indic studies began with the arrival of English civil servants in Calcutta around 1780. When British authority was installed in Bengal under Hastings, its first priority was to unravel the labyrinth of local custom and legislation, and its representatives realized that knowledge of the languages of their subjects would be the key to dominion. For this purpose several institutions were established: an oriental college at Fort William for the training of civil servants, a printing press at Calcutta, a Sanskrit college at Benares, and the famous Asiatic Society of Bengal, which held its first meeting on 15 January 1784. This set contains the first works that were translated directly from the Sanskrit into any European language and were published under the auspices of the Asiatic Society: Charles Wilkins' translations of the Bhagavad Gita- and Hitopadesa, William Jones' versions of Kalidasa's Sakuntala and Jayadeva's Gitagovinda, and translations of the Meghaduta and Visnupurana by Horace Wilson, who was to become the first professor of Sanskrit at Oxford in 1832. The collection also includes H.T. Colebrooke's very influential Essays on Indian religion and philosophy, an English translation of Friedrich Schlegels' *ÜBER DIE SPRACHE UND WEISHEIT DER INDIER*, a digest of Francis Gladwin's ASIATICK MISCELLANY, and the English artist William Hodges' interesting account of Indian antiquities in his TRAVELS IN INDIA DURING THE YEARS 1780-3. Although many of these Indian classics have been repeatedly translated since, it were these versions that were widely read in Europe towards the end of the eighteenth century and were to exert such a profound influence on western thought and culture, especially on the comparative and historical study of language, religion and mythology ("Indo-Aryan," "Indo-Germanic"; Bopp, Grimm, Creuzer), philosophy (Friedrich von Schelling, Schopenhauer), and literature (Goethe, Herder, the Schlegels, Schiller, Novalis, Rückert, Emerson, Southey, Coleridge, etc.). Important sources for European Romanticism Key works in the emergence of modern Indology Scarce editions, rarely found even in major libraries Scholarly introductions to each volume situate the



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works in the light of recent research Important primary source material for researchers in a range of traditional disciplines and newly-hybridized area studies.

- Volume 1 [Charles Wilkins](#)
THE *BHAGAVAD GITA* OR DIALOGUES OF *KREESHNA* AND *ARJOON* (1785)
THE *HEETOPADES* OF *VEESHNOO-SARMA*, IN A SERIES OF CONNECTED FABLES, INTERSPERSED WITH MORAL, PRUDENTIAL, AND POLITICAL MAXIMS (1787)
- Volume 2 Francis Gladwin (ed.) THE ASIATIC MISCELLANY (1787)
- Volume 3 [Sir William Jones](#)
SACONTALÁ; OR, THE FATAL RING (1807)
ON THE MYSTICAL POETRY OF THE PERSIANS AND HINDUS (1807)
GÍTAGÓVINDA; OR, THE SONGS OF JAYADÉVA (1807)
William Hodges TRAVELS IN INDIA, DURING THE YEARS 1780-3 (1793)
- Volume 4 Carl W.F. von Schlegel ON THE LANGUAGE AND WISDOM OF THE INDIANS (1849)
[Horace Hayman Wilson](#) THE MÉGHA DÚTA; OR CLOUD MESSENGER (1814)
- Volume 5 [Horace Hayman Wilson](#)
THE LAWS OF *MENU*, OR THE *VISHNU PURÁNA*, A SYSTEM OF HINDU MYTHOLOGY AND TRADITION (1840)
- Volume 6 [Henry Thomas Colebrooke](#)
ESSAYS ON THE RELIGION AND PHILOSOPHY OF THE HINDUS (1858)

“MAGISTERIAL HISTORY” IS FABULATION: HISTORY IS CHRONOLOGY



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"It's all now you see. Yesterday won't be over until tomorrow and tomorrow began ten thousand years ago."

- Remark by character "Garin Stevens"
in William Faulkner's INTRUDER IN THE DUST



Prepared: March 3, 2015



THE PEOPLE OF A WEEK:

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PEOPLE MENTIONED IN A WEEK

ARRGH AUTOMATED RESEARCH REPORT
GENERATION HOTLINE



This stuff presumably looks to you as if it were generated by a human. Such is not the case. Instead, someone has requested that we pull it out of the hat of a pirate who has grown out of the shoulder of our pet parrot "Laura" (as above). What these chronological lists are: they are research reports compiled by ARRGH algorithms out of a database of modules which we term the Kouroo Contexture (this is data mining). To respond to such a request for information we merely push a button.



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SIR WILLIAM JONES

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN A WEEK

Commonly, the first output of the algorithm has obvious deficiencies and we need to go back into the modules stored in the contexture and do a minor amount of tweaking, and then we need to punch that button again and recompile the chronology – but there is nothing here that remotely resembles the ordinary “writerly” process you know and love. As the contents of this originating contexture improve, and as the programming improves, and as funding becomes available (to date no funding whatever has been needed in the creation of this facility, the entire operation being run out of pocket change) we expect a diminished need to do such tweaking and recompiling, and we fully expect to achieve a simulation of a generous and untiring robotic research librarian. Onward and upward in this brave new world.

First come first serve. There is no charge.

Place requests with <kouroo@kouroo.info>. Arrgh.