

three nations which still exists, namely, the Indians.

The truth is, that history does not exist at all among them. In the midst of that infinity of books on mystical theology and abstract metaphysics which the Brahmins possess, and many of which have been made known to us by the ingenious perseverance of the English, we find no connected account of the origin of their nation, or of the vicissitudes of their society. They even pretend that their religion prohibits them from recording the events of the present time, their age of misfortune\*.

According to the Vedas, the first revealed works, on which are founded the whole religious opinions of the Hindoos, the literature of this people, like that of the Greeks, had its origin at two great epochs; the Ramaian and the Mahabarata,—a thousand times more monstrous in their wonders than the Iliad and Odyssey, but in which we also perceive some traces of a metaphysical doctrine of that description generally termed sublime. The other poems, which, together with the two mentioned, compose the great body of the Pouranas, are nothing else than metrical legends or romances, written at different

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\* See Polier. *Mythology of the Hindoos*, vol. i. p. 89, 91.