

With all three an hereditary caste was exclusively charged with the care of religion, law, and science; with all three, this caste had its allegorical language and its secret doctrines; to all three was reserved the privilege of reading and explaining the sacred books in which all the doctrines had been revealed by the gods themselves.

We may easily divine what history would become in such hands; but without any great efforts of reason, we may learn it from the fact itself, in examining what has occurred amongst the only one of the three nations now existing, namely, the Indians.

In truth, they have no history remaining. Amidst the voluminous records of mystic theology, or abstract metaphysics, which the Brahmins are possessed of, and which the indefatigable perseverance of English industry has made known to us, there is nothing which throws any light over the origin of the nation or the changes of their society. They even pretend that their religion forbids them to preserve the remembrance of the present age, the age of misfortune.(1)

According to the Vedas, the first revealed works, and the foundation of all the Hindoo religion, the literature of this people, like that of the Greeks, began by two epochs, the 'Ramaian' and the 'Mahabarat,' a thousand times more marvellous than the 'Iliad' and 'Odyssey,' although we perceive in them some outlines of a metaphysical nature, of the kind usually termed sublime. The other poems, which,

cellus, p. 151, positively says that the Ethiopians came from the borders of the Indus in the time of King Amenophis.

(1) See Polier, *Mythology of the Hindoos*, vol. i. pp. 89—91.