

there believed that, just ere the appearance of Fohi in the mountains, a mighty flood, which first "flowed abundantly, and then subsided, covered for a time the whole earth, and separated the higher from the lower age of mankind." The Hindu tradition, as related by Sir William, though disfigured by strange additions, is still more explicit. An evil demon having purloined the sacred books from Brahma, the whole race of men became corrupt except the seven Nishis, and in especial the holy Satyavrata, the prince of a maritime region, who, when one day bathing in a river, was visited by the God Vishnu in the shape of a fish, and thus addressed by him :—"In seven days all creatures who have offended me shall be destroyed by a deluge ; but thou shalt be secured in a capacious vessel, miraculously formed. Take, therefore, all kinds of medicinal herbs and esculent grain for food, and, together with the seven holy men, your respective wives, and pairs of all animals, enter the ark without fear : then shalt thou know God face to face, and all thy questions shall be answered." The god then disappeared ; and after seven days, during which Satyavrata had conformed in all respects to the instructions given him, the ocean began to overflow the coasts, and the earth to be flooded by constant rains, when a large vessel was seen coming floating shorewards on the rising waters ; into which the Prince and the seven virtuous Nishis entered, with their wives, all laden with plants and grain, and accompanied by the animals. During the deluge Vishnu preserved the ark by again taking the form of a fish, and tying it fast to himself ; and when the waters had subsided, he communicated the contents of the sacred books to the holy Satyavrata, after first slaying the demon who had stolen them. It is added, however, that the good man having, on one occasion long after, by "the act of destiny," drunk mead, he became senseless, and lay asleep naked, and that Charma, one of three sons who had been born to