

THE SECT OF MAHÁRÁJAS.

HISTORY  
OF THE  
SECT OF MAHÁRÁJAS,  
OR VALLABHÁCHÁRYAS,  
IN  
WESTERN INDIA.

by  
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“HAVE NO FELLOWSHIP WITH THE UNFRUITFUL WORKS OF DARKNESS, BUT RATHER  
REPROVE (OR EXPOSE) THEM.”—EPIHESIANS V. 2.



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## PREFACE.

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It is still a general complaint that comparatively little is known of the religious, moral, and social state of the Hindus. This ignorance of their actual condition results not so much from a want of research and observation, as from the limits imposed on inquiries respecting the people of India, conducted by distinguished scholars on the one hand, and by popular writers on the other. . Their creed and customs are supposed by many to be not only of an immeasurable antiquity, but of a well-nigh unchangeable fixedness. The Orientalist, attracted by the singular philological and mythological curiosities which are discovered in the Vedas, the oldest of Sanskrit works, breathes so much their ancient spirit, and sympathizes so much with the pretensions ages ago urged in their behalf, that he believes they must, to the present day, have no small share of their ancient authority and respect. The popular observer looks merely to

the surface of Hindu society, forgetful that the jealousy and secrecy of caste conceal to a great extent the mainspring and action of Hindu life. Even intelligent natives themselves look little beyond their own immediate sphere, having no care or interest in the affairs of their neighbours. Hinduism is consequently imagined to be very much an abiding and universal system of faith and manners, without reference to the great changes which it has undergone in the course of time, and the great diversity of the forms which it has assumed over the wide extent of this great and diversified country. The fact is that, within a certain range, Hinduism has been ever on the move. The Vedic songs recognized, if not very clearly, the existence of the great Creator and Governor of the Universe. They contained many fresh and beautiful allusions to the phenomena of nature, and many striking personifications of the forces and agencies intermediately regulating these phenomena. The lively spirit of these primitive songs had well-nigh entirely disappeared at the time of the composition of the Bráhmaṇas (or Brahmanical Directories), when reverential worship was to a great extent laid aside for the art of the magician and conjurer, dealing with the gods through *mantras*, charms, and complicated cere-

monial manipulations. The Philosophical Schools, originating in the revolt of the inquiring mind of the country from the puerilities and inanities thus manifested, formed a new era, in which atheistic and pantheistic speculation became predominant. These Schools prepared the way for the Buddhist Revolution, which gave social and religious liberty to all its adherents, in opposition to the Caste system, which had begun to be fostered by the Brahmans shortly after the entrance of the Áryas into India; and which almost completely altered the national creed. The revival of Brahmanism by the craft of its partisans, and the persecution resorted to by its kingly adherents, after a thousand years' depression, was not effected in its pristine form. Its strength lay in its religious orders; and its great champions, such as Śankarácharya, and his associates and successors, assumed an importance never before conceded to mere individuals of the priesthood. They became the oracles and pontiffs of the country; but they did not long maintain an undivided sway among its various tribes. The people of India had their favourite gods in the extensive pantheon of Brahmanism, and, particularly, in its now established triads. The aggregation of legends connected with individual gods, gave

scope to the popular choice; and the spirit of sectarianism became rampant among them. The devotees of the different gods were the leaders in this movement, and everywhere they had a large following. One sect was for the supremacy of Vishnu; another for that of the deified king Krishna, set forth as an avatára of Vishnu; a third for that of Śiva; and a fourth for that of his consort (the *Devī*, or goddess, emphatically so called), or of the female energies in general.

In all these changes—for an elucidation of which in their main features the reader is referred to Professor H. H. Wilson's valuable Sketch of the Religious Sects of the Hindus—the moral restraints of Hinduism, such as they were in its earlier days, have nearly perished. Krishna's conversion into the god of love and lust, and the worship of the *Śaktis*, or female energies, have introduced a moral plague into India, the ravages of which are both appalling and astounding. The readers of this History of the Maháráj or Vallabháchárya Sect, and of the various documents included in its Appendix, will find this assertion but too amply vindicated. It is put forth simply in the interests of truth and purity. Its author does not apologize for its revelations, which have all been

tested by the keen and impartial investigations of a Court presided over by British judges; but he expresses the hope that they will not be lost, either upon the European or Indian public. The lessons which they teach are so obvious, that it is not necessary to draw them in this place.



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HISTORY  
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IN WESTERN INDIA.

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CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS.

WE propose to give in the following chapters a history of a corrupt, degraded, and licentious sect in Western India, usually denominated the sect of Mahárájas, but also known as the sect of the Vallabháchárya, Rudra Sampradáya, or Pushti Marga. To show how widely the tenets and practices of this sect vary from the doctrines which form a fundamental basis of the Hindu religion, it will be desirable to present a succinct view of this religion in its primitive condition.

The primitive elements of the Hindu Religion are found in the Veda. Professor Max Müller observes—"The key-note of all religion, natural as well as revealed, is present in the hymns of the Veda. . . . There is the belief in God, the perception of the difference between good and evil, the conviction that God hates sin, and loves the righteous."\* Mr. H.

\* Müller's *Ancient Sanskrit Literature*, p. 538.

T. Colebrooke remarks—"The real doctrine of the whole Indian scripture is the unity of the deity, in whom the universe is comprehended."\*

The collective title of the Holy Books comprising the entire body of the primitive religion of the Hindus, both doctrinal and ceremonial is—*Vedas*. They consist of several divisions, each branching off into further sub-divisions, comments, and explanations, as follows:—

*The Four Vedas.*

- |                |                  |
|----------------|------------------|
| 1. RIG-VEDA.   | 3. SÁMA-VEDA.    |
| 2. YAJUR-VEDA. | 4. ATHARVA-VEDA. |

*Six Vedángas.*

- |               |              |
|---------------|--------------|
| 1. SIKSHÁ.    | 4. NIRUKTA.  |
| 2. CHHANDA.   | 5. JYOTISHA. |
| 3. VYÁKARAṆA. | 6. KALPA.    |

*Four Vedopángas.*

- |             |                   |
|-------------|-------------------|
| 1. MIMÁNSÁ. | 3. DHARMA-SÁSTRA. |
| 2. NYÁYA.   | 4. PURÁÑAS.       |

*Four Upavedas.*

- |              |                  |
|--------------|------------------|
| 1. AYURVA.   | 3. GANDHARVA.    |
| 2. DHANURVA. | 4. ARTHA-SÁSTRA. |

All of these have other sub-divisions, either explanatory, commentatorial, or in the shape of illustrative indexes. Having given the general view to assist in following out the description of the several divisions, we will now proceed.

The primary books, whence all the rest emanate, are the *Vedas*, which are said "to have been revealed by Bramhá, and to have been preserved by tradition until they were arranged in the present order by a sage who thence obtained the surname of *Vyása* or *Vedavyása*, that is, the compiler of the *Vedas*."† The word *Veda* means knowledge, and its root signifies light or fire. These *Vedas* are written in Sanakrit, the ancient sacred language of the Bráhmans, with

\* Colebrooke on the Hindu Religion, p. 68.

† Ibid, p. 1.



the Devanagari character; and are supposed to have originally consisted of three, namely, the *Rig-veda*, the *Yajur-veda*, and the *Sāma-veda*. To these, the *Atharva-veda*, which is not considered of equal sanctity, and is of less authority than the others, was subsequently added.

Each of these *Vedas* consists of two distinct parts: the *Sanhitá*, or collection of *Mantras*, and *Bráhmaṇa*. The *Sanhitá* is "the aggregate assemblage, in a single collection," of the prayers and hymns; the *Bráhmaṇa* is "a collection of rules for the application of the mantras, directions for the performance of particular rites, citations of the hymns," illustrations, and legendary narrations.\*

The *RIG-VEDA* takes precedence of the rest; for, as Mr. Muir says, "the *Taittiriyas*, or followers of the *Black Yajur-veda*, record that whatever sacrificial act is performed by means of the *Sāma-* and *Yajur-veda* is comparatively slender; whatever is done by means of the *Rig-veda* is strong:"† and the *Kaushítaki Bráhmaṇa*, which does not mention the *Atharva-veda*, calls the *Yajur-* and *Sāma-veda* "the attendants of *Rig-veda*."‡ The first of the four *Vedopāngas* also, the *Mimánsá*, makes mention only of the three first *Vedas*; and what still further establishes the priority of the *Rig-veda* is that some of the hymns of the *Yajur-veda* and all those of the *Sāma-veda* are derived from those of the *Rig-veda*.

It is probable that originally there was but one text of the four *Vedas*. Tradition says that "*Vyása* having compiled and arranged the scriptures, theogonies, and mythological poems, taught the several *Vedas* to as many disciples. These disciples instructed their respective pupils, who, becoming teachers in their turn, communicated the knowledge to their own disciples, until at length, in the progress of successive

\* Wilson's *Rig-veda Sanhitá*, i., Introduction, p. ix. and x.

† Muir's *Orig. Sansk. Texts*, i. p. 86. ‡ Müller's *Anc. Sansk. Lit.*, p. 467.

instructions, so great variations crept into the text, or into the manner of reading and reciting it, and into the no less sacred precepts for its use and application, that the eleven hundred different schools of scriptural knowledge arose."\*

The *Charanavyuha*, which treats of these schools, mentions several by name, and states that five, sixty-eight, a thousand, and nine, were the respective numbers of the *Charanas*, of the *Rig*-, *Yájur*-, *Sáma*-, and *Atharva-vedas*. Had these original *Śikhás* been extant in modern times they might, perhaps, have accounted for some of the superstitions of later days, said to be founded on, but not countenanced by, the present text of the *Rig-veda Sanhita*.

"All the verses of the *Yájur-veda* and all the verses of the *Sáma-veda* are used in one sacrificial act or another, but this is not the case with the verses of the *Rig-veda*. Many of the latter, indeed, are likewise indispensable for sacrificial purposes, as we are taught by the ritual books connected with this *Veda*: yet a large number remain, which stand quite aloof from any ceremony. This class bears purely a poetical or mystical character; and it may be fairly inferred that even the strong tendency of later ages to impress an entirely sacrificial stamp on each of these *Vedas*, broke down before the natural and poetical power that had evidently called forth these songs, as it could not incorporate them amongst the liturgic hymns."† One of these we will give as an example of the class: it is from the tenth mandala, and is very interesting, as shewing the Hindu original and mystical notions of the origin of things. It runs thus:—

"Then there was no entity nor nonentity; no world nor sky, nor aught above it; nothing anywhere in the happiness of any one, involving or involved; nor water deep and dangerous. Death was not; nor then was immortality, nor distinction of day or night. But THAT breathed without afflation, single with (*Śradhá*) her who

\* Colebrooke on the Hindu Religion, p. 4.

† Goldstücker's Paper on Veda—Cyclopaedia, p. 577.

is within him. Other than him, nothing existed (which) since (has been). Darkness there was; (for) this universe was enveloped with darkness, and was undistinguishable (like fluids mixed in) waters; but that mass, which was covered by the husk, was (at length) produced by the power of contemplation. First, desire was formed in his mind, and that became the original productive seed; which the wise, recognising it by the intellect in their hearts, distinguish, in nonentity, as the bond of entity. Did the luminous ray of these (creative acts) expand in the middle? or above? or below? That productive seed at once became providence (or sentient souls) and matter (or the elements): she who is sustained within himself was inferior; and he, who heeds, was superior. Who knows exactly, and who shall in this world declare, whence and why the creation took place? The gods are subsequent to the production of this world; then who can know whence it proceeded? or whence this varied world arose? or whether it upholds itself or not? He who in the highest heaven is the ruler of this universe, does indeed know; but not another can possess this knowledge."

This high-toned mysticism of the early Hindu religion became, as we shall see, degraded to a debasing and anthropomorphic superstition which converted this spirituality to a gross personification. "There is further evidence to show that the collection of the Rig-veda cannot have borne originally a ritual stamp. When songs are intended only for liturgic purposes they are sure to be arranged in conformity with the ritual acts to which they apply; when, on the contrary, they flow from the poetical or pious longings of the soul, they may, in the course of time, be used at, and adapted for, religious rites; but they will never submit to that systematic arrangement which is inseparable from the class of liturgic songs. Now, such a systematic arrangement characterises the collection of the Yajur-veda and Sâma-veda hymns: it is foreign to the Rig-veda Sanhitâ."\*

To give a notion of the elaborate subdivision of the Vedas we may cite that of the *Sanhitâ* of the Rig-veda, which itself now exists only in the text of the Sâkhala school. This

\* Goldstücker's Paper on Veda—Cyclopædia, p. 578.

Sanhitá is divided, or arranged, on two methods. "According to the first it is divided into eight *ashtákas*, or eighths, each of which is again subdivided into *adhyáyas*, or lectures, each *adhyáya* consisting of a number of *vargas*, or sections, and a *varga* of a number of *rich*, or verses, usually five. According to the second method, the Sanhitá is divided into ten *mandalas*, or circles, subdivided into eighty-five *annavákas*, or lessons, which consist of one thousand and seventeen (or with eleven additional hymns, of one thousand and twenty-eight) *súktas*, or hymns; these again, containing ten thousand five hundred and eighty and a half *rich*, or verses. The first eight of these *mandalas* begin with hymns addressed to *Agni*, which are followed by hymns addressed to *Indra*. After the latter come generally hymns addressed to the *Vísva Devas*, or the gods collectively, and then those which are devoted to other divinities. The ninth *mandala* is wholly addressed to the *Soma-plant*," so distinguished in the sacrificial rites; "and the tenth *mandala* has chiefly served for the collection of the *Atharva-veda* hymns."\*

The YAJUR-VEDA consists of two different Vedas, which have separately branched out into various *Sákhás*. They are termed *Black* and *White Yajur-veda*, or *Taittiriya* and *Vájasaneyi*. The *Taittiriya*, or *Black Yajur-veda*, is more copious in regard to mantras than the *White Yajur-veda*. "Its Sanhitá, or collection of prayers, is arranged in seven books, containing from five to eight lectures, or chapters. Each chapter, or lecture, is subdivided into sections (*annaváka*), which are equally distributed in the third and sixth books, but unequally in the rest. The whole number exceeds six hundred and fifty."†

"The *Vájasaneyi*, or *White Yajur-veda*, is the shortest of the Vedas; so far as respects the first and principal part,

\* Goldstücker's Paper on Veda—Cyclopædia, pp. 578-9

† Colebrooke on the Hindu Religion, p. 42.

which comprehends the mantras. The Sanhitá, or collection of prayers and invocations belonging to this Veda, is comprised in forty lectures (*adhyáya*), unequally subdivided into numerous short sections (*kándiká*), each of which, in general, constitutes a prayer or mantra. It is also divided, like the Rig-veda, into *annavákas*, or chapters. The number of *annavákas*, as they are stated at the close of the index to this Veda, appears to be two hundred and eighty-six: the number of sections, or verses, nearly two thousand.\*

The Yajur-veda "has largely drawn on the Rig-veda hymns. But the first difference we observe is that its contents are not entirely taken from the principal Veda, and the second is marked by the circumstances that it often combines with verses, passages in prose, which are called Yajus (*lit.* 'that by which the sacrifice is effected,') and have given to Yajur-veda its name. Besides, the ceremonial for which this Veda was made up is much more diversified and elaborate than that of the Sáma-veda; and the mystical and philosophical allusions, which now and then appear in the Rig-veda, probably in its latest portions, assume a more prominent place in the Yajur-veda. In one word, it is the sacrificial Veda, as its name indicates. Hence we understand why it was looked upon in that period of Hindu civilization which was engrossed by superstitions and rites, as the principal Veda, superior, in fact, to the Rig-veda, where there is no system of rites."†

SÁMA-VEDA.—"A peculiar degree of holiness seems to be attached, according to Indian notions, to the Sáma-veda; if reliance may be placed on the inference suggested by the etymology of its name, which indicates the efficacy of this part of the *Vedas* in removing sin. The prayers belonging to it are composed in metre and intended to be chanted, and

\* Colebrooke on the Hindu Religion, p. 81.

† Goldstücker's Paper on Veda—Cyclopædia, p. 584.

their supposed efficacy is apparently ascribed to this mode of uttering them."\* "The Sanhitá (of the Sáma-veda) consists of two parts, the Archika and Staubhika. The Archika, as adapted to the special use of the priests, exists in two forms, called Gánas, or Song-books, the Veyagána and Aranya-gána. The Staubhika exists in the same manner as Uha-gána and Uhyagána."† As regards the Bráhmaṇas of the *Sáma-veda*, Sayana enumerates eight: of these the first two are the most important, and treat of the sacrifices which are performed with the juice of the *Soma-plant*. The third is remarkable on account of the incantatory ceremonies it describes."‡

THE ATHARVA-VEDA.—"The Sanhitá, or collection of prayers and invocations belonging to this *Veda*, is composed of twenty books (kandas), subdivided into sections, hymns, and verses."§ "The Atharva-veda," says Madhusúdana, "is not used for the sacrifice; it only teaches how to appease, to bless, to curse," etc. Its songs, as Professor Müller observes, "formed probably an additional part of the sacrifice from a very early time. They were chiefly intended to counteract the influence of any untoward event that might happen during the sacrifice. They also contained imprecations and blessings, and various formulas, such as popular superstition would be sure to sanction at all times and in all countries."||

There are in the Vedic age, as Professor Max Müller remarks, "four distinct periods which can be established with sufficient evidence. They may be called the *Chhandas period*, *Mantra period*, *Bráhmaṇa period*, and *Sútra period*, according to the general form of the literary productions which give to each of them its peculiar historical character."¶ According to this, the Bráhmaṇas which form the sacrificial and

\* Colebrooke on the Hindu Religion, p. 47. † Müller's Anc. Sansk. Lit., note to p. 473.

‡ Goldstucker's Paper on Veda—Cyclopædia, p. 560.

§ Colebrooke on the Hindu Religion, p. 53.

¶ Müller's Anc. Sansk. Lit., p. 447.

¶ Ibid., p. 70.

ceremonial portions of the Vedas were written in the third period of the Vedic age. With regard to the Sanhitás-collection of hymns and prayers, those of the Rig-veda only belong to the first period. The Sanhitás of other Vedas "were more likely the production of the Bráhmaṇa period."\*

The hymn we have extracted in a former passage from the tenth mandala of the Rig-veda points to the fact that the Vaidik creed established but one God, or principle of creation, and that the many gods which occur in the Vaidik hymns are but poetical allegories of the One Great Soul. "The deities invoked," as observed by Mr. H. T. Colebrooke, "appear on a cursory inspection of the Veda to be as various as the authors of the prayers addressed to them; but, according to the most ancient annotations on the Indian scripture, those numerous names of persons and things are all resolvable into different titles of three deities, and, ultimately, of one God. The *Nighánti*, or glossary of the Vedas, concludes with three lists of names of deities,—the first comprising such as are deemed synonymous with fire; the second, with air; and the third, with the sun. In the last part of the *Nirukta*, which entirely relates to deities, it is twice asserted that there are but three gods: '*Tisra iva devatáh.*' The further inference, that these intend but one deity, is supported by many passages in the *Veda*; and is very clearly and concisely stated in the beginning of the index to the *Rig-veda*, on the authority of the *Nirukta* and of the *Veda* itself."†

The chief deities addressed in many of the hymns of the Rig-veda are *Agni* and *Indra*; and there are besides *Súrya*, *Vishnu*, and *Varuna*, and *Mitra* of inferior distinction. *Agni* is the God of Fire as it exists on earth, in the fire of lightning and in the fire of the sun. Deities subordinate to him are the *Marutas*, or winds. *Indra* is the God of the Firmament. It is he who fixed the stars in their position, and raised the

\* Müller's *Ann. Sansk. Lit.*, p. 457. † Colebrooke on the Hindu Religion, p. 12.

sun aloft; but he is peculiarly the conqueror of *Vritra* (the enveloper), the demon who hides the sun; and he pierces the clouds which threaten to withhold their waters from the earth with his thunderbolt, and the waters are let down. *Vishnu* is identified with the sun in its three stages of rising, culmination, and setting; and *Varuna* is the all-embracing heaven, the orderer and ruler of the universe, who established the eternal laws which govern the movements of the world, and which neither immortal nor mortal may break: he regulates the seasons; appoints sun, moon, stars, and their courses; and gives to each creature that which is peculiarly characteristic. From his station in heaven he sees and hears everything; nothing can remain hidden from him: he grants wealth, averts evil, and protects cattle. *Mitra* is the divinity that presides over the day, and is "a dispenser of water."\*

"We must not," says Professor Max Müller, "compare the Aryan and the Semitic races. Whereas, the Semitic nations relapsed from time to time into polytheism, the Aryans of India seem to have relapsed into monotheism. . . . There is a monotheism that precedes the polytheism of the Veda; and, even in the invocations of their innumerable gods, the remembrance of a God, one and infinite, breaks through the mist of an idolatrous phraseology, like the blue sky that is hidden by passing clouds."†

"Thus we read, 'I know not what this is that I am like; turned inward I walk, chained in my mind. When the firstborn of time comes near me, then I obtain the portion of this speech.'

"In the 30th verse of the same hymn we read: 'Breathing lies the quick-moving life, heaving, yet firm, in the midst of its abodea. The living one walks through the powers of the dead: the immortal is the brother of the mortal.' Sometimes when these oracular sayings have been pronounced, the poet

\* Wilson's *Rig-veda*, I, p. xxxiv. † Müller's *Anc. Sansk. Lit.*, p. 558-9.



claims his due. 'One who had eyes,' he says, 'saw it; the blind will not understand it. A poet, who is a boy, he has perceived it; he who understands it will be the father of his father.'

"In the same hymn one verse occurs which boldly declares the existence of but one Divine Being though invoked under different names (R. V. i. 164, 46).

"'They call (him) Indra, Mitra, Varuna, Agni; then he is the well-winged heavenly Garutmat; that which is One the wise call it many ways; they call it Agni, Yama, Mátariśvan.'\*

"I add only one more hymn, in which the idea of one God is expressed with such power and decision, that it will make us hesitate before we deny to the Aryan nations an instinctive monotheism (R. V. x. 121).

"'In the beginning there arose the Source of golden light. He was the only born Lord of all that is. He established the earth, and this sky;—Who is the God to whom we shall offer our sacrifice?

"'He who gives life, He who gives strength; whose blessing all the bright gods desire; whose shadow is immortality; whose shadow is death;—Who is the God to whom we shall offer our sacrifice?

"'He who through His power is the only king of the breathing and awakening world; He who governs all, man and beast;—Who is the God to whom we shall offer our sacrifice?

"'He whose power these snowy mountains, whose power the sea proclaims, with the distant river; He whose these regions are, as it were, his two arms;—Who is the God to whom we shall offer our sacrifice?

"'He through whom the sky is bright, and the earth firm; He through whom the heaven was established—nay, the highest heaven; He who measured out the light in the air;—Who is the God to whom we shall offer our sacrifice?

"'He to whom heaven and earth, standing firm by His will, look up, trembling inwardly; He over whom the rising sun shines forth;—Who is the God to whom we shall offer our sacrifice?

"'Wherever the mighty water-clouds went, where they placed

\* Müller's *Ana. Sansk. Lit.*, p. 667.

the seed and lit the fire, thence arose He who is the only life of the bright gods;—Who is the God to whom we shall offer our sacrifice?

“‘He who by His might looked even over the water-clouds, the clouds which gave strength and lit the sacrifice; He *who is God above all gods*;—Who is the God to whom we shall offer our sacrifice?’”\*

“‘May He not destroy us, He the creator of the earth; or He, the righteous, who created the heaven; He who also created the bright and mighty waters.—Who is the God to whom we shall offer our sacrifice?’”\*

We have shown the tendency of this Vaidik creed, that we may shortly display its application to the existing worship; and we now proceed to the further elucidation of the several divisions of the Śástras. In speaking of the Vedas, we should not feel justified in leaving unnoticed that class of works known by the name “*Upanishads*,” which are so intimately connected with them, and which were held by later generations in the same awe as the Vedas. They contain the theological or theosophical writings which have sprung from the *Bráhmaṇa*. The word *Upanishad* signifies the science which destroys erroneous ideas or ignorance, or the entering into that which is hidden. The knowledge which the *Upanishads* intend to convey is chiefly that of the production and nature of the world, of the properties of a Supreme Divinity, and of the human soul, which they conceive to be part of it. They contain the highest authority on which the various systems of philosophy in India rest. “The old *Upanishads* did not pretend to give more than ‘guesses at truth,’ and when, in course of time, they became invested with an inspired character, they allowed great latitude to those who professed to believe in them as revelation. Yet this was not sufficient for the rank growth of philosophical doctrines during the latter ages of Indian history; and when none of the ancient *Upanishads* could be found to suit the

\* Müller's *Anc. Sansk. Lit.*, p. 566-70.

purpose, the founders of new sects had no scruple and no difficulty in composing new Upanishads of their own.”\*

The *Vedāngas* are called the Limbs of the Vedas, and display the mode in which scientific research sprung from the sacred texts. The first Vedānga is *Śikshá*, which treats of the science of orthoepy, or proper pronunciation; the second, called *Chhandas*, treats of prosody; the third, named *Vyākharana*, treats of grammar. Upon this the celebrated *Pánini* wrote a treatise which is considered as equal to the best grammatical works of any nation or age: it is in eight chapters, consisting of thirty-two sections and three thousand nine hundred and ninety-six rules. So great was the renown of this wonderful labour (of which we have an admirable edition edited by Dr. Goldstücker), that it was supposed to have been inspired by the god *Śiva* himself, and it is still to the present day the standard of Sanskrit speech. The fourth Vedānga is *Nirukta*, which treats of etymology; the fifth is *Jyotisha*, which treats of astronomy; and the sixth Vedānga is the *Kalpa*, or ceremonial, and constitutes the code of the Brahmanic rites. Two other classes of *Śástras* complete the code of these Kalpa works, and are the *Grihya* and the *Sámayáchárika* *Sútras*; the former describes the domestic ceremonies as distinct from the great sacrificial acts, and consists of the marriage ceremonies, those performed on conception, at various periods before birth, at birth, on naming the child, of carrying him out to see the sun, of feeding him, of cutting his hair, and “of investing him as a student and handing him to a *guru*, under whose care he is to study the sacred writings. . . . It is only after he has served his apprenticeship and grown up to manhood that he is allowed to marry, to light the sacrificial fire for himself, to choose his priests, and to perform year after year the solemn sacrifices prescribed by *Śruti* and *Smriti*. The latter

\* Müller's Ann. Sansk. Lit., p. 317.

are described in later books of the *Grihya-sūtras*, and the last book contains a full account of the funeral ceremonies and of the sacrifices offered to the spirits of the departed."\* The *Sāmāyāchārika Sūtras* regulate the relations of every day life, and in them we have to look for the originals of the metrical law books, such as *Manu*, *Yājñavalkya*, and the rest.†

The next class are the *Vedopāngas*, which are divided into four, viz. : first, the *Mīmāṃsā*, which explains portions of the Veda, both doctrinal and ceremonial; the second *Nyāya*, which contains a refutation of atheism, by way of reasoning; the third, *Dharma Śāstra*, containing the ordinations of *Manu*, a complete code of morality, and a poetical account of God, spirits, and the origin of the world and man; and the fourth class are the *Purānas*, which consist of eighteen, to which are appended as many *Upapurānas*, or compilations and explanations. Taken collectively they are of mystical and philosophical contexture, cosmogonical, theogonical, and chronological; and contain extensive legendary narratives. We will briefly enumerate them, with their contents:—

1. *Vishnu Purāna*, the history of Vishṇu and his incarnations, in 23000 *Ślokas*.
2. *Nāradya Purāna*, the history of Nārād, as god of music, in 25000 *Ślokas*.
3. *Bhāgavata Purāna*, the history of Krishṇa or Vishṇu, in twelve books, 11000 *Ślokas*.
4. *Garuda Purāna*, in 19000 *Ślokas*.
5. *Padma Purāna*, the history of Lakshmi, the Consort of Vishṇu, in 55000 *Ślokas*.
6. *Varāha Purāna*, the history of the third incarnation of Vishṇu, in 24000 *Ślokas*.
7. *Matsya Purāna*, the history of the first incarnation of Vishṇu, in 14000 *Ślokas*.
8. *Linga Purāna*, the history of Śiva, in 11000 *Ślokas*.
9. *Śiva Purāna*, in 24000 *Ślokas*.
10. *Skanda Purāna*, the history of Skanda, the son of Śiva, in 81000 *Ślokas*.
11. *Agneya Purāna*, the abstract of all know-

\* Müller's *Anc. Sansk. Lit.*, p. 204.

† *Ibid.*, p. 209.

ledge, in 15500 *Ślokas*. 12. *Kurma Purāna*, in 17000 *Ślokas*. 13. *Brahmānda Purāna*, the history of Rāmachandra, in 12000 *Ślokas*. 14. *Brahma Vairatī Purāna*, which is especially dedicated to Krishna as Govinda, and is principally occupied by him and his mistress Rādhā: it is also full on the subject of Prakriti, or personified nature, in 18000 *Ślokas*. 15. *Mārkaṇḍeya Purāna*, the history of Durgā, which contains the famous *Chandī Pātha*, in 9000 *Ślokas*. 16. *Bhavishya Purāna*, in 14500 *Ślokas*. 17. *Vāmana Purāna*, in 10000 *Ślokas*. 18. *Brahma Purāna*, in 10000 *Ślokas*.

The four *Upavedas* comprise—1. *Ayurva*, which treats of surgery and physic. 2. *Dhanarva*, which treats of the art of war. 3. *Gandharva*, which treats of music and dancing. And 4. *Artha-Śāstra*, which treats of political economy.

Together with these canonical books may be classed the two ancient and excellent Epics—namely, the *Rāmāyana*, the work of *Vālmīka*, containing the history of Rāma, king of Ayodhyā, the seventh *avatār* of Vishṇu; and the *Mahābhārata*, containing the war between *Pāndavas* and *Kauravas*, the descendants of the ancient Indian king *Bhārata*, in eighteen books and more than 100,000 *Ślokas*, the celebrated episode of which, the *Bhagavad Gītā*, is well known.

## CHAPTER II.

### RELIGIOUS SECTS OF THE HINDUS.

IN the last chapter we took a brief and rapid review of the sacred writings of the Hindus. It was to be expected that many conflicting opinions would originate in such a mass of doctrine, commentary, and interpretation, the heterogeneous subjects introduced, and the errors and misconceptions interpolated by transcribers in the lapse of centuries. These opinions led progressively to divergent views, strained sometimes to excess by the subtle artifices of a crafty priesthood, prompted by the instigations of a paramount self-interest; and sometimes by the enthusiasm of the devotee, who, conscientiously conceiving that he had, in his meditations, detected the true path, was anxious that his contemporaries and posterity should not be lost in intricate by-ways, and so promulgated his peculiar views, which ensured advocates and followers. Thus, in the thousand and one modes by which new opinions are disseminated and adherents found, the Hindu religion, like the other religions of the world, has generated sects and sectaries, and the number of those who are dissentient in their tenets and their ceremonies is multitudinous.

“The worship of the populace, being addressed to different divinities, the followers of the several gods naturally separated into different associations, and the adorers of *Brahmá*, *Vishnu*, and *Śiva*, or other phantoms of their faith, become distinct and insulated bodies in the general aggregate. The conflict of opinion on subjects on which human reason has never yet

agreed, led to similar differences in the philosophical class, and resolved itself into the several *Darśanas*, or schools of philosophy.”\*

“To the internal incongruities of the system, which did not affect its integral existence, others were, in time, superadded that threatened to dissolve or destroy the whole. Of this nature was the exclusive adoration of the old deities, or of new forms of them; and even, it may be presumed, the introduction of new divinities. In all these respects, the *Purānas* and *Tantras* were especially instrumental; and they not only taught their followers to assert the unapproachable superiority of the gods they worshipped, but inspired them with feelings of animosity towards those who presumed to dispute that supremacy. In this conflict the worship of *Brahmá* has disappeared, as well as, indeed, that of the whole pantheon, except *Vishnu*, *Śiva*, and *Śakti*, or their modifications. With respect to the two former, in fact, the representatives have borne away the palm from the prototypes, and *Krishna*, *Rāma*, or the *Linga*, are almost the only forms under which *Vishnu* and *Śiva* are now adored in most parts of India.

“The varieties of opinion kept pace with those of practice; and six heretical schools of philosophy disputed the pre-eminence with their orthodox brethren. We have little or no knowledge of these systems, and even their names are not satisfactorily stated: they seem, however, to be the *Saugata*, or *Bauddha*; *Ārhata*, or *Jaina*; and *Vārhaspatya*, or atheistical, with their several subdivisions.

“Had the difference of doctrine taught in the heretical schools been confined to tenets of a merely speculative nature, they would, probably, have encountered little opposition, and excited little enmity among the Brahmanical class, of which latitude of opinion is a very common characteristic. *Vrihaspati*, the founder of the atheistical school, however,

\* H. H. Wilson's Works, vol. i. p. 2.

attacks both the *Vedas* and the *Brahmans*, and asserts that the whole of the Hindu system is a contrivance of the priesthood, to secure a means of livelihood for themselves; whilst the *Bauddhas* and *Jainas*, equally disregarding the *Vedas* and the *Brahmans*, the practice and opinions of the Hindus, invented a set of gods for themselves, and deposed the ancient pantheon. These aggressions provoked resentment: the writings of these sects are alluded to with every epithet of anger and contempt, and they are all anathematised as heretical and atheistical. More active measures than anathemas, it may be presumed, were had recourse to. The followers of *Vrihaspati*, having no worship at all, easily eluded the storm; but the *Bauddhas* of Hindustan were annihilated by its fury, and the *Jainas* apparently evaded it with difficulty, although they have undoubtedly survived its terrors, and may now defy its force.

“The varieties thus arising from innovations in practice and belief, have differed, it may be concluded, at different eras of the Hindu worship. To trace the character of those which have latterly disappeared, or to investigate the remote history of some which still remain and are apparently of ancient date, are tasks for which we are far from being yet prepared: the enquiry is in itself so vast, and so little progress has been made in the studies necessary to its elucidation, that it must remain in the obscurity in which it has hitherto been enveloped.”\*

The adorers of these divinities, as *Vishnu*, *Śiva*, and *Śakti*, about nine centuries ago spread into a multitude of sects, a mere catalogue of the names of which, without the discrimination of their creeds, would be an almost profitless labour; for it would want the muscular flesh to give the skeleton form. The learned Brahman *Śankara*, did, indeed, about this

\* H. H. Wilson's Works, vol. i. p. 3 to 6.



period endeavour, by great exertions, to suppress these different sects, and to re-introduce the sole recognition and worship of Brahmá, Para Brahmá, the Supreme and sole ruler of the universe; but he saw no reason to distrust the faith of those who worshipped the personifications of Brahmá, Vishnu, and Śiva, they not being competent to the abstraction and elevation of mind requisite for the comprehension of the one Great First Cause and animating principle. For he observed: "In the present impure age, the bud of wisdom being blighted by iniquity, men are inadequate to the apprehension of pure unity; they will be apt therefore again to follow the dictates of their own fancies, and it is necessary for the preservation of the world, and the maintenance of civil and religious distinctions, to acknowledge those modifications of the Divine Spirit which are the works of the Supreme."

His success was not of permanent duration; for, in the course of time, other teachings were introduced, and ultimately and gradually resolved themselves into the present condition of the Hindu religion. The worshippers of this faith consist now of the *Vaishnavas*, *Śaivas* and *Śáktas*; or the adorers of *Vishnu*, *Śiva*, and *Śakti*.

Amongst these must not be enumerated the few learned Brahmans who may be found, and who consider themselves as the sole orthodox adorers, admitting the Vedas, the Law Books, the Puráṇas, and the Tantras as the only ritual they recognise; although they even select some particular deity as their *Ishta Devatá*, or chosen god. A very remarkable feature of sectarianism in the present day is that the distinction of caste almost merges in the identity of schism. The following list\* enumerates, if not all, at least the chief of the sects into which the Hindu religion is now divided:

\* H. H. Wilson's Works, vol. i. p. 31.

The *Vaishnavas* comprise the—

1. "Rámánujas, or Śri Sampradáyis, or Śri Vaishnavas.
2. Rámánandís, or Rámávats.
3. Kabír Panthís.
4. Khákis.
5. Malúk Dásís.
6. Dádú Panthís.
7. Ráya Dásís.
8. Senásís.
9. Vallabhácháris, or Rudra Sampradáyis.
10. Mírá Báis.
11. Madhwácháris, or Brahmá Sampradáyis.
12. Nímávats, or Sanakádi Sampradáyis.
13. Vaishnavas of Bengal.
14. Rádhá Vallabhís.
15. Sákhi Bhávas.
16. Charaṇ Dásís.
17. Hariśchandís.
18. Sadhná Panthís.
19. Mádhavís.
20. Sannyásís, Vairágís, and Nágás.

The *Śaivas* comprise the—

1. Dandís and Daśnámís.
2. Jogís.
3. Jangama.
4. Paramahansas.
5. Urddhabáhus, Akás Mukhís, and Nákhís.
6. Gúdharas.
7. Rúkharas, Súkharas, and Ukharas.
8. Kará Lingís.
9. Sannyásís, etc.

The *Sáktas* comprise the—

1. Dakshinís.
2. Vámís.
3. Káncalyás.
4. Karáris.

There is a further miscellaneous class which cannot be arranged with the above, whose tenets again differ, and some of which, even amongst themselves, admit of further subdivision, as they deviate in their belief from their own branch.

These *Miscellaneous Sects* are the—

1. Gánapatyás.
2. Saurapatas, Súra-*Upashakas*.
3. Nának Sháhís, of which there are seven classes, viz.
  - a. Udásís.
  - b. Ganjbakhshís.
  - c. Rámráyís.
  - d. Suthrá Sháhís.
  - e. Govind Sinhís.
  - f. Nirmalas.
  - g. Nágás.
4. Jainas, of two principal orders :
  - a. Digambaras.
  - b. Śwetámbaras.
5. Bábá Lális.
6. Práṇ Náthís.
7. Sádhs.
8. Śatnámís.
9. Śiva Náráyánís.
10. Śúnyavádís.

This long enumeration might be still further lengthened did we introduce the many sub-sects and affiliated commu-

nities which adopt modifications of the doctrine and ceremonial of the sects from which they have seceded; and it may be well considered that the multitude of these heresies make the Hindu religion a maze of confusion, the interminable intricacies of which cannot be threaded for want of a clue.

We shall now briefly notice a few of the sects given in the preceding list, in order to shew the leading features of their doctrines.

#### VAISHŅAVAS.

The *Vaishnavas* are usually distinguished into four principal *Sampradāyas*, or sects, viz. : Rāmānuja, Vishṇu Svāmi, Mādhavāchārya, and Nimbārka; of these, the most ancient and respectable is the first, called also the *Śrī Sampradāya*, founded by the Vaishṇava reformer *Rāmānuja*, about the middle of the twelfth century.

#### RAMĀNUJAS.

“The worship of the followers of *Rāmānuja* is addressed to *Vishṇu* and to *Lakshmi*, and their respective incarnations, either singly or conjointly; and the *Śrī Vaishnavas*, which by general name the sect is known, consist of corresponding subdivisions, as *Nārāyaṇa* or *Lakshmi*, or *Lakshmi Nārāyaṇa*, or *Rāma* or *Sitā*, or *Sitā Rāma* or *Krishṇa*, or *Rukmini*, or any other modifications of *Vishṇu*, or his consort, is the preferential object of the veneration of the votary.”\*

“The most striking peculiarities in the practices of this sect are the individual preparation and scrupulous privacy of their meals: they must not eat in cotton garments, but having bathed, must put on woollen or silk: the teachers allow their select pupils to assist them, but, in general, all the *Rāmānujas* cook for themselves; and should the meal during this process, or whilst they are eating, attract even

\* H. H. Wilson's Works, vol. i. p. 28.

the looks of a stranger, the operation is instantly stopped, and the viands buried in the ground. A similar delicacy, in this respect, prevails amongst some other classes of Hindus, especially the *Rájaput* families; but it is not carried to so preposterous an extent.

“The chief ceremony of initiation in all Hindu sects is the communication, by the teacher to the disciple, of the *Mantra*, which generally consists of the name of some deity, or a short address to him: it is communicated in a whisper, and never lightly made known by the adept to profane ears. The *Mantra* of the *Rámánuja* sect is said to be the six syllable *Mantra*, or *Om Rámáya namah*; or *Om*, salutation to *Rámu*.

“Another distinction amongst sects, but merely of a civil character, is the term or terms with which the religious members salute each other when they meet, or in which they are addressed by the lay members. This amongst the *Rámánujas* is the phrase *Dáso'smi*, or *Dáso'ham*, I am (your) slave; accompanied with the *Praṇám*, or slight inclination of the head, and the application of the joined hands to the forehead. To the *Ácháryas*, or supreme teachers of this sect, the rest perform the *Ashtánga Dandawat*, or prostration of the body, with the application of eight parts—the forehead, breast, hands, knees, and insteps of the feet, to the ground.”\*

“The chief religious tenet of the *Rámánujas* is the assertion that *Vishnu* is *Brahmá*; that he was before all worlds, and was the cause and the creator of all. Although they maintain that *Vishnu* and the *Universe* are one, yet, in opposition to the *Vedánta* doctrines, they deny that the deity is void of form or quality, and regard him as endowed with all good qualities, and with a two-fold form: the supreme spirit, *Paramátmá*, or cause, and the gross one, the effect, the universe or matter. The doctrine is hence called the *Viśiṣṭhádwaita*, or doctrine of unity with attributes. In

\* H. H. Wilson's Works, vol. i. p. 39 and 40.

these assertions they are followed by most of the *Vaishnava* sects."\* The *Rámánujas* are decidedly hostile to the *Śaiva* sect, and are not on very friendly terms with the modern votaries of *Krishna*, although they recognise that deity as an incarnation of *Vishṇu*.

#### RÁMANANDIS.

"The followers of *Rámánand* are much better known than those of *Rámánuja* in Upper Hindustan: they are usually considered as a branch of the *Rámánuja* sect, and address their devotions peculiarly to *Rámachandra*, and the divine manifestations connected with *Vishṇu* in that incarnation, as *Sítá*, *Lakshmana*, and *Hanumán*." †

"The especial object of the worship of *Rámánanda's* followers is *Vishṇu*, as *Rámachandra*: they, of course, reverence all the other incarnations of *Vishṇu*, but they maintain the superiority of *Ráma*, in the present or *Kali Yug*: hence they are known collectively as *Rámávats*, although the same variety prevails amongst them as amongst the *Rámánujas* as to the exclusive or collective worship of the male and female members of this incarnation, or of *Ráma* and *Sítá* singly or jointly, or *Sítá Ráma*. Individuals of them also pay particular veneration to some of the other forms of *Vishṇu*; and they hold in like estimation, as the *Rámánujas* and every *Vaishnava* sect, the *Sálagrám* stone and *Tulasi* plant. Their forms of worship correspond with those of the Hindus generally; but some of the mendicant members of the sect, who are very numerous, and are usually known as *Vairágis*, or *Víraktas*, consider all forms of adoration superfluous, beyond the incessant invocation of the name of *Krishna* and *Ráma*." ‡

#### KABIR PANTHIS.

"Amongst the twelve disciples of *Rámánand*, the most celebrated of all, and one who seems to have produced

\* H. H. Wilson's Works, vol. i. p. 42. † Ibid, p. 46. ‡ Ibid, p. 54.

directly or indirectly a greater effect on the state of popular belief than any other, was *Kabir*. With an unprecedented boldness he assailed the whole system of idolatrous worship, and ridiculed the learning of the *Pandits* and doctrines of the *Śāstras*, in a style peculiarly well suited to the genius of his countrymen to whom he addressed himself; whilst he also directed his compositions to the Musalmán, as well as to the Hindu faith, and with equal severity attacked the *Mullá* and *Korán*. The effect of his lessons, as confined to his own immediate followers, will be shown to have been considerable, but their indirect effect has been still greater; several of the popular sects being little more than ramifications from his stock, whilst Nának Sháh, the only Hindu reformer who has established a national faith, appears to have been chiefly indebted for his religious notions to his predecessor *Kabir*.\*

“The moral code of the *Kabir Panthis* is short, but, if observed faithfully, is of a rather favourable tendency. Life is the gift of God, and must not therefore be violated by his creatures. *Humanity* is consequently a cardinal virtue, and the shedding of blood, whether of man or animal, a heinous crime. *Truth* is the other great principle of their code, as all the ills of the world, and ignorance of God, are attributable to original falsehood. *Retirement* from the world is desirable, because the passions and desires, the hopes and fears, which the social state engenders, are all hostile to tranquillity and purity of spirit, and prevent that undisturbed meditation on man and God which is necessary to their comprehension.”†

#### DADU PANTHIS.

“This class is one of the indirect ramifications of the *Rámánandí* stock, and is always included amongst the *Vaishnava* schisms: its founder is said to have been a pupil of one

\* H. H. Wilson's Works, vol. i. p. 68-9.

† *Ibid*, p. 94.

of the *Kabir Panthi* teachers and to be the fifth in descent from *Rámánand*, according to the following geneology :

- |                  |                    |
|------------------|--------------------|
| 1. <i>Kabir.</i> | 4. <i>Vimál.</i>   |
| 2. <i>Kamál.</i> | 5. <i>Buddhan.</i> |
| 3. <i>Jamál.</i> | 6. <i>Dádú.</i>    |

The worship is addressed to *Ráma*, but it is restricted to the *Japa*, or repetition of his name, and the *Ikáma* intended is the deity, as negatively described in the *Vedánta* theology: temples and images are prohibited.\*

#### MAKDHWACHARIS.

“The institution of this sect is posterior to that of the *Śrī Vaishṇavas*, or *Rámánujas*.”† “The essential dogma of this sect, like that of the *Vaishṇavas* in general, is the identification of *Vishṇu* with the Supreme Spirit as the pre-existent cause of the universe, from whose substance the world was made. This primeval *Vishṇu* they also affirm to be endowed with real attributes, most excellent, although indefinable and independent. As there is one independent, however, there is also one dependent, and this doctrine is the characteristic dogma of the sect, distinguishing its professors from the followers of *Rámánuja*, as well as *Śankara*, or those who maintain the qualified or absolute unity of the deity. The creed of the *Mádhwais* is *Dwáita*, or duality. It is not, however, that they discriminate between the principles of good and evil, or even the difference between spirit and matter, which is the duality known to other sects of the *Hindus*. Their distinction is of a more subtle character, and separates the *Jivatma* from the *Paramatma*, or the principle of life from the Supreme Being. Life, they say, is one and eternal, dependent upon the Supreme, and indissolubly connected with, but not the same with him. An important consequence of this doctrine is the denial of *Moksha*, in its

\* H. H. Wilson's Works, vol. i. p. 103.

† *Ibid.*, p. 129.



more generally received sense, or that of absorption into the universal spirit, and loss of independent existence after death."\*

## NIMBARKA, OR NIMAVATS.

"This division of the Vaishnava faith is one of the four primary ones, and appears to be of considerable antiquity: it is one also of some popularity and extent, although it seems to possess but few characteristic peculiarities beyond the name of the founder, and the sectarial mark. *Nimbāditya* is said to have been a *Vaishnava* ascetic, originally named *Bhāskar Achārya*, and to have been, in fact, an incarnation of the sun, for the suppression of the heretical doctrines then prevalent."†

"The *Nimāvats* are distinguished by a circular black mark in the centre of the ordinary double streak of white earth, or *Gopichandan*: they use the necklace and rosary of the stem of the *Tulast*: the objects of their worship are *Krishna* and *Rādhā* conjointly: their chief authority is the *Bhāgavat*, and there is said to be a *Bhāshya* on the *Vedas* by *Nimbārka*: the sect, however, is not possessed of any books peculiar to the members, which want they attribute to the destruction of their works at *Mathurā*, in the time of *Aurengzeb*."‡

## SAIVAS.

The worship of *Śiva* "appears to be the most prevalent and popular of all the modes of adoration, to judge by the number of shrines dedicated to the only form under which *Śiva* is revered, that of the *Linga*."§ "*Śambhu* is declared by *Manu* to be the presiding deity of the Brahmanical order, and the greater number of them, particularly those who practice the rites of the *Vedas*, or who profess the study of the *Śāstras*, receive *Śiva* as their tutelary deity, wear his insignia, and worship the *Linga*, either in temples, in their

\* H. H. Wilson's Works, vol. i. p. 143-45.

† Ibid, p. 150.

‡ Ibid, p. 151.

§ Ibid, p. 153.

houses, or on the side of a sacred stream, providing, in the latter case, extempore emblems kneaded out of the mud or clay of the river's bed."\*

"There are no teachers of ancient repute except *Śankarāchārya*, and his doctrines are too philosophical and speculative to have made him popular."†

#### DANDIS.

"The *Dandī* is distinguished by carrying a small *Dand*, or wand, with several processes or projections from it, and a piece of cloth dyed with red ochre, in which the Brahmanical cord is supposed to be enshrined, attached to it: he shaves his hair and beard, wears only a cloth round his loins, and subsists upon food obtained ready-dressed from the houses of the Brahmans once a day only, which he deposits in the small clay pot that he carries always with him. The *Dandī* has no particular time or mode of worship, but spends his time in meditation, or in practices corresponding with those of the *Yoga*, and in the study of the *Vedānta* works, especially according to the comments of *Śankarāchārya*."‡

#### YOGIS, OR JOGIS.

"The term *Jogī*, or *Yogī*, is properly applicable to the followers of the *Yoga* or *Pātanjala* school of philosophy, which, amongst other tenets, maintained the practicability of acquiring, even in life, entire command over elementary matter by means of certain ascetic practices."§

"According to standard authorities, the perfect fulfilment of the rites which the *Yogī* has to accomplish requires a protracted existence and repeated births, and it is declared to be unattainable in the present, or *Kalī*, age. The attempt is therefore prohibited, and the *Yoga* is proscribed in modern times. This inhibition is, however, disregarded, and the

\* H. H. Wilson's Works, vol. i. p. 191.  
 ‡ Ibid, p. 192-4.

† Ibid, p. 190.  
 § Ibid, p. 206.

individuals who are the subjects of our enquiry, endeavour to attain the superhuman powers which the performance of the *Yoga* is supposed to confer. They especially practise the various gesticulations and postures of which it consists, and labour assiduously to suppress their breath and fix their thoughts until the effect does somewhat realise expectation, and the brain, in a state of over-wrought excitement, bodies forth a host of crude and wild conceptions, and 'gives to airy nothings a local habitation and a name.'" "Some who have commenced their career in this line have carried the practice to several hours' duration, at which time they have described themselves as becoming perfectly exhausted, with strange objects passing before them, and sparks of fire flashing in their eyes."\*

#### JANGAMS.

"One of the forms in which the *Linga* worship appears is that of the *Lingáyats*, *Lingavants*, or *Jangamas*, the essential characteristic of which is wearing the emblem on some part of the dress or person. The type is of a small size, made of copper or silver, and is commonly worn suspended in a case round the neck, or sometimes tied in the turban. In common with the *Śaivas* generally, the *Jangamas* smear their foreheads with *vibhūti* or ashes, and wear necklaces, and carry rosaries, made of the *Rudrāksha* seed. The clerical members of the sect usually stain their garments with red ochre."†

#### PARAMAHANSA.

"The *Paramahansa* is the ascetic who is solely occupied with the investigation of *Brahmā*, or spirit, and who is equally indifferent to pleasure or pain, insensible of heat or cold, and incapable of satiety or want. Agreeably to this definition, individuals are sometimes met with who pretend to have

\* H. H. Wilson's Works, vol. i. p. 207-8.

† Ibid, p. 224-25.

attained such a degree of perfection ; in proof of which they go naked in all weathers, never speak, and never indicate any natural want : what is brought to them as alms or food, by any person, is received by the attendants, whom their supposed sanctity, or a confederation of interest, attaches to them ; and by these attendants they are fed and served on all occasions, as if they were as helpless as infants."\*

#### ŚĀKTAS.

"The worshippers of the *Śakti*, the power or energy of the divine nature in action, are exceedingly numerous amongst all classes of Hindus. This active energy is, agreeably to the spirit of the mythological system, personified, and the form with which it is invested, considered as the especial object of veneration, depends upon the bias entertained by the individuals towards the adoration of *Vishnu* or *Śiva*. In the former case the personified *Śakti* is termed *Lakshmi* or *Mūhā Lakshmi*, and in the latter, *Pārvati*, *Bharāni*, or *Durgā*. Even *Sarasvati* enjoys some portion of homage, much more than her lord, *Brahmā* ; whilst a vast variety of inferior beings of malevolent character and formidable aspect receive the worship of the multitude."† "The worship of the female principle, as distinct from the divinity, appears to have originated in the literal interpretation of the metaphorical language of the *Vedas*, in which the *will or purpose to create* the universe is represented as originating from the creator, and co-existent with him as his bride, and part of himself."‡

"Another set of notions of some antiquity which contributed to form the character of the *Śakti*, whether general or particular, were derived from the *Sāṅkhya* philosophy. In this system, nature, *Prakriti*, or *Mūla Prakriti*, is defined to be of eternal existence and independent origin, distinct from the supreme spirit, productive though no production,

\* H. H. Wilson's Works, vol. i. p. 231-32. † Ibid, p. 240-41. ‡ Ibid, p. 241.

and the plastic origin of all things, including even the gods. Hence *Prakriti* has come to be regarded as the mother of gods and men, whilst, as one with matter, the source of error, it is again identified with *Máyá*, or delusion; and as co-existent with the supreme as his *Śakti*, his personified energy, or his bride.\* “These mythological fancies have been principally disseminated by the *Puránas*, in all which *Prakriti*, or *Máyá*, bears a prominent part. The aggregate of the whole is given in the *Brahma Vaivartta Purána*.” †

#### DAKSHINIS.

“When the worship of any goddess is performed in a public manner, and agreeably to the *Vaidik* or *Puránic* ritual, it does not comprehend the impure practices which are attributed to a different division of the adorers of *Śakti*, and which are particularly prescribed to the followers of this system. In this form it is termed the *Dakshina*, or right-hand form of worship. The only observance that can be supposed to form an exception to the general character of this mode is the *Bali*, an offering of blood, in which rite a number of helpless animals, usually kids, are annually decapitated. In some cases life is offered without shedding blood, when the more barbarous practice is adopted of pummelling with the fists the poor animal to death: at other times blood only is offered without injury to life.” ‡

#### VAMIS.

“The *Vámis* mean the left-hand worshippers, or those who adopt a ritual contrary to that which is usual, and to what indeed they dare publicly avow.” “The worship of the *Vámá-cháris* is derived from a portion of the *Tantras*.” “The object of the worship is, by the reverence of *Devi* or *Śakti*, who is one with *Śiva*, to obtain supernatural powers in this

\* H. H. Wilson's Works, vol. i. p. 243. † Ibid, p. 244. ‡ Ibid, p. 250-1.

life, and to be identified after death with *Śiva* and *Śakti*. According to the immediate object of the worshipper is the particular form of worship; but all the forms require the use of some or all of the five *Makāras*, *Mūnsa*, *Matsya*, *Madya*, *Maithuna*, and *Mudrá*, flesh, fish, wine, women, and certain mystical gesticulations.\* “In this, and many of the observances practised, solitude is enjoined; but all the principal ceremonies comprehend the worship of *Śakti*, and require for that purpose the presence of a female as the living representative and the type of the goddess. This worship is mostly celebrated in a mixed society, the men of which represent *Bhairavas* or *Viras*, and the women *Bhairavis* and *Nāyikas*. The *Śakti* is personated by a naked female, to whom meat and wine are offered, and then distributed amongst the assistants, the recitation of various *Mantras* and texts, and the performance of the *Mudrá*, or gesticulations with the fingers, accompanying the different stages of the ceremony; and it is terminated with the most scandalous orgies amongst the votaries. The ceremony is entitled the *Śrī Chakra*, or *Pūrnūbbhisheka*, the Ring, or Full Initiation.”† “The occurrence of these impurities is certainly countenanced by the texts, which the sects regard as authorities, and by a very general belief of their occurrence. The members of the sect are enjoined secrecy, which, indeed, it might be supposed they would observe on their own account; and consequently, will not acknowledge their participation in such scenes.”‡

#### KANCHALYAS.

“The worship is that of *Śakti*, and the practices are similar to those of the *Kaulas* or *Vāmāchāris*. It is said to be distinguished by one peculiar rite, the object of which is to confound all the ties of female alliance, and to enforce not

\* H. H. Wilson's Works, vol. i. p. 254-56.

† Ibid, p. 257-8.

‡ Ibid, p. 259-60.

only a community of women amongst the votaries, but disregard even to natural restraints. On occasions of worship, the female votaries are said to deposit their upper vests in a box in charge of the *Guru*. At the close of the usual rites, the male worshippers take each a vest from the box, and the female to whom the garment appertains, be she ever so nearly of kin to him, is the partner for the time of his licentious pleasures."\*

\* H. H. Wilson's Works, p. 263.

## CHAPTER III.

## ORIGIN OF THE SECT OF MAHARAJAS.

THE Vaishnavas, or worshippers of Vishnu, are, as we have seen, sub-divided into a multiplicity of sects, some of which are absolute ascetics, and others of a bold and inquiring spirit; but the opulent, the luxurious, and the indolent, in the large mass of society, and especially females, attach themselves to the worship of Krishna, adored under this name, and his mistress Rádha, either conjointly or singly, by the names of Vishnu and Lakshmi. But there is a still more popular form of the worship of the divinity than this, although its legends are much interwoven with those of the



Bála Krishna.

others. This is the worship of the Bála Gopála, or Bála Krishna, the infant Krishna, a worship widely diffused throughout all ranks of Indian society, and which was first promulgated by the founder of the sect under the name of Rudra Sampradáya. The name of the instituter of this sect was Vallabhá-

chárya, whose history we shall proceed to relate, remarking merely that the heresy itself is possibly better known from the title of its teachers, as the religion of the Gokulastha Gosáina.



In tracing it, however, to its spring-head and source, we shall find that the first teacher of the philosophical tenets upon which the present doctrines of the sect are founded was Vishṇu Svámi, who was a commentator on the texts of the Vedas. He was followed in his teaching by Dnána Deva, who was succeeded by Keśáváchárya, and he by Hirálál, who had six sons, the most distinguished of whom was Śrídhar, who, after a time, was succeeded by Bilava Mangala, who strengthened the sect. Bilava Mangala was succeeded, but how soon is not known, by Vallabháchárya, who was the second son of Lakshman Bhatt, a Talingá Brahman. This Lakshman Bhatt was descended from a Brahman named Náráyaṇ Bhatt, dwelling in a village called Kánkra, and was the fourth in direct descent from him. He lived somewhere about the commencement of the sixteenth century, but the particulars of the exact period are not preserved. He promulgated the idea, which the people in their monstrous credulity and ignorance put entire faith in, that he had been promised by Krishna that he should have three sons, and that his second son should succeed him as the incarnation of himself, the god. His wife's name was Elmágár, and the first son of the marriage was Ráma Krishna.

After the birth of this child, Lakshman Bhatt, taking his family with him, went on a pilgrimage by the route of Alláhabád to Benares, where, after dwelling some time, a violent dispute took place between the Mussulmáns and the Sannyásis, which resulted in a bloody conflict. Lakshman Bhatt, apprehensive for the safety of his family, fled away with them. In the course of their flight through the country they eventually arrived at a wild spot called Champáranya. The terror of the flight, combined with the wild savageness of the country through which they were fleeing, had the effect upon the intimidated Elmágár of accelerating labour, she being at the time pregnant with her second child; and in

the wilderness of this entangled forest she gave birth to an eight-months' child, on Sunday, the 11th of Vaiśákh Vddya, Samvat 1535 (A.D. 1479).

In a work called Nijvártá, it is stated that when Vallabha was born in Champáranya, a palace of gold sprung up on the spot, and the gods from the heavens showered down flowers, the houries danced around, and the Gandharvas (heavenly songsters) sang: divine music filled the air, and gods descended in vimán (celestial cars) to see the prodigy. Whether, embarrassed by the encumbrance of this offspring, or prompted by confidence in the promise of Krishna that this infant should be his incarnation, and so trusting to his providential intervention to protect it, they forthwith abandoned it, placing it gently upon leaves in the shade of a wide-branched tree. Still pursuing their flight, they at length arrived at a place called Chowdá-nagar, where, after residing some time, intelligence at length reached them that quiet was completely restored at Benares, upon which they set out, to return to that place, and taking purposely the route by which they had come, they speedily reached the spot where they had deserted their helpless infant.

Here they found their faith in the promise of Krishna verified, for they beheld the little creature alive and well, and playing in the midst of a flame of sacrificial fire, in a pit sunk on the spot. This miracle exalted their hopes, and, after some short repose and refreshment they resumed their journey, taking it with them to Benares which they eventually reached. The name they gave the child was Vadtrabha, but who was afterwards called Vallabha, and acquired celebrity as the founder of a widely prevailing sect in Western India, but whose divergent corruptions which derogate from the doctrines on which he founded his teaching, he had not the prophetic inspiration to foresee. In the course of time, prompted by their zeal and love, his followers erected a

temple upon the spot of his birth, which is still in existence. His younger brother's name was Keśava.

When Vallabha had reached the age of six or seven years he was placed for instruction under the tuition of Náráyaṇ Bhatt; and the legend of his life, written in Brijabháshá, asserts that the rapidity of his apprehension was so great and miraculous, that in the short space of four months he succeeded in learning the whole of the four Vedas, the six Śástras (schools of philosophy), and the eighteen Puránas—an accomplishment which a mature scholar cannot hope thoroughly to acquire by the prolonged labour of a whole life. But, of course, the supernatural attended him throughout, and the incarnation of Krishna would receive by intuition, and momentarily, what would be hopeless to the laborious application of the uncanonized throughout any time. Vallabha on attaining his eleventh year lost his father. The following year he took leave of his mother, and bidding farewell to Gokul, the village of his residence, on the left bank of the Jamuná, a short distance from Mathurá, he started on his pilgrimage through India.

On arriving at a certain town in the South of India, he became acquainted with the son of a rich and important man of the place, whose name was Dámodardás, and who by the force of his arguments, or the plausibility of his reasoning, was made a proselyte to his doctrines. For it is to be understood that Vallabha had already framed his tenets and scheme of tuition, and, with a view to their promulgation, had undertaken his pilgrimage. They then both proceeded together onward and arrived at the city of Vijayanagar, where the maternal parents of Vallabha resided. Krishna Deva was the king of this place, to whose court he was introduced. Here he was invited to a religious disputation with the Śaivists, the followers of Śiva, at the court of this king, who was so pleased with Vallabha for the ability he

displayed, that he bestowed upon him rich presents of gold and silver. A portion of these he devoted to the manufacture of a handsome golden waist-ornament with which to decorate the image of the deity in a temple of that city, and another portion he appropriated to the discharge of debts incurred by his father and left unpaid at his death. The fourth only of the presents did he reserve to himself to meet the possibility of his needs.

It was his success in this disputation with the Smártá Bráhmans which caused him to be elected by the Vaishnavas as their chief, with the title of *Áchárya*, and thence dates the rise of his great influence. "He travelled to Ujain, and took up his abode under a *pipal* tree, on the banks of the Sitrá, which is said still to exist and is designated as his baithak, or station. Besides this we find traces of him in other places. There is a baithak of his amongst the gháts of Muttrá; and about two miles from the fort of Chanár is a place called his well, *Ácháry Kúán*, comprising a temple and *math*, in the court-yard of which is the well in question. The saint is said to have resided here sometime."\* He then proceeded onwards to Alláhabád, and thence to Benares, where he remained to complete his studies, preparatory to inculcating the doctrines he had been always meditating. His pilgrimage still continued, and he went to Badri-kedár and thence to Haridwár.

He travelled for nine years throughout different parts of India, considered by the Hindus as exclusively comprising the world, twice circling this world, and in his peregrination passing over a space of twelve thousand miles. On his return to Brindávan, as a reward for his fatigues and for his faith, he was honoured by a visit from the god Krishna in person, who then enjoined him to introduce the worship of Bála Gopála or Bála Krishna, the infant Krishna, and found his faith, which became widely diffused throughout Western

\* H. H. Wilson's Works, vol. i. p. 120.

India, under the sectarian name of Rudra Sampradáya. Owing, however, to the fearful corruptions which subsequently, and by degrees, crept in, through the perverted sensuality of his descendants, this worship is now declining, and it is hoped, for the sake of degraded humanity, approaching extinction, unless healthy reforms be introduced to restore it to comparative purity.

Vallabháchárya ultimately settled at Benares, and it was whilst dwelling there, either at first, or subsequently, or during his previous travels, that he is said to have composed the works which bear his name, and in the composition of which he is reported to have had the assistance of certain learned Bráhmans, paid by him as his amanuenses. Some of these are, however, reputed to be supposititious. The works thus written are chiefly the following, which, although styled works, consist in some cases of but a few pages, or even merely a few lines. They are—

व्यास सूत्र भाष्य	Vyás Sútra Bháshya.
जैमिनी सूत्र भाष्य	Jaiminí Sútra Bháshya.
तत्त्व दीप निबंध	Tattva Dípa Nibandí.
भागवत टीका सुबोधिनी	Bhágavata Tiká Subodhiní.
सिद्धांत मुक्तावली	Siddhánta Muktvávalí.
पुष्टि प्रवाह मर्यादा	Pushti Praváha Maryádá.
सिद्धांत रहस्य	Siddhánta Rahasya.
अंतःकरण प्रबोध	Antah-karāṇa Prabhodha.
नव रत्न	Nava Ratna.
विवेक धैर्याश्रय	Viveka Dhairásraya.
कृष्णाश्रय	Krishnásraya.
भक्ति वर्धनी	Bhakti Vardhaní.
जलभेद	Jalabheda.
सन्न्यास निर्णय	Sannyás Nirṇaya.
निरोध लक्षण	Nirodha lakshaṇ.
सेवाफल	Sevápala.
पुरुषोत्तम सहस्रनाम	Purushottam Sahasranáma.

The fourth of these works, the Bhágavata Tíká Subodhiní, is the commentary of Vallabháchárya upon the Bhágavata, the chief source of the doctrines of the sect, and to which we shall have occasion subsequently to refer. But the most popular writings current in the sect, and which is also attributed to Vallabha, are the Vishnu padas, stanzas written in Brijabháshya in praise of Vishnu. It was at Benares, after the composition of several of these works, that Vallabha married a Bráhmañ girl of the name of Máh Lakshmi, shortly after which he went to Vraja, where he established an image of Śrí Náthji, in Samvat 1576, corresponding to A.D. 1520, on a sacred hill called Govardhan Parvata,\* which had been removed by the Muhammadans.

It was at one of the former visits of Vallabháchárya to Benares that he is stated to have posted on the walls of the temple the challenge to a disputation, such as frequently took place in the universities of Europe during the middle ages, immediately after the invention of printing, and in which the learned men of the day or place participated. This invitation was responded to especially by the followers of Śankaráchárya, the great Hindu philosopher, whose comment on the Vedas is held in such high esteem; and the books of the Mahárájas narrate that they were all defeated. It is evident that Vallabháchárya derived considerable repute from this occurrence; and it is most likely that a man of such disputatious renown, and so prominent and esteemed for his sanctity and knowledge, would have frequently to enter into these discussions upon his arrival at any celebrated city, or seminary.

In Samvat 1567 (A.D. 1511) Vallabháchárya's first son was born, and was named Gopinátha. His second son, named Vithalnáthji, was born in Samvat 1572 (A.D. 1516), in the

\* This hill is fabled to have been rendered sacred by the circumstance that on one occasion, while Krishna was playing there with his companions, it began to rain, and that he, to protect those who were with him from the shower, lifted the hill up on one of his little fingers as an umbrella over them.

village of Parnát, and it was to this son only that the incarnation of the parent descended. Vallabháchárya himself educated both his sons, thus fitting them for their progress through life, after which he withdrew from his family to Benares, where he became Sannyási, which implies absolute asceticism, or total abstinence from all intercourse with the world and all participation in its doings. He dwelt at the place only forty-two days, when he died, as it is said, on a hill called Hanumán Gháta, in the vicinity; but his followers asserted that he had been translated to Lílá, which means amorous sport. Another report gives a different account of the miracle in which he disappeared. It states that he "finally settled at Jethan Bér, at Benares, near which a *math* still subsists; but at length having accomplished his mission, he entered the Ganges at Hanumán Gháta, and, when stooping into the water, passed out of sight: a brilliant flame arose from the spot, and in the presence of a host of spectators he ascended to heaven, and was lost in the firmament."

From the time Vallabháchárya began to inculcate his new creed, which he called Pushti Márga, or the eat-and-drink doctrine, up to the day of his death, he had made eighty-four devoted proselytes. The record of the lives of these disciples is contained in a large volume entitled the Stories of Chorási Vaishnavas, and written in Brijabháshá. At the period of his quitting the earth Vallabháchárya was fifty-two years and thirty-seven days old. On his death it is said a dispute ensued between his sons relative to the succession to his gadi, which literally means "his seat," but implies his position as a teacher. This dispute, it appears, was decided by the intervention of the late king of Delhi in favour of the eldest son, Gopinátha, who dying, together with his son, Vithalnath became the sole representative of Vallabháchárya.

Vithalnath is represented as an able successor of his father, having made two hundred and fifty-two devoted proselytes

to the new creed, whose history is also narrated in a thick book. He likewise made long journeys, visiting Mathurá and Gokul, towns in the province of Agra which possessed a traditional celebrity, being renowned as the birthplace of Krishna. He resorted also to Dwárká, a place situated in Gujarát, sacred in the annals of Hindu superstition. The original Dwárká is said to have been swallowed up by the ocean, and the spot where it is supposed to have stood lies about thirty miles south of Porabandar. From Dwárká he progressed to Cutch, and thence proceeding to the centre of India, he conveyed his doctrines to Málwa and Mewár, making proselytes everywhere. He thence turned southward and visited Pandarpura, in the province of Bijapúr. This was another sacred locality, where he propagated his doctrines very extensively, his conversions taking a wide range. He made proselytes among the Baniás, or bankers; the Bháttíás, the Kanbis, or cultivators; the Sutáras or carpenters; and the Lowáras, or blacksmiths: a few Brahmans became also his followers, as well as some Musalmána. It is a circumstance of a remarkable character that these sectaries, who belonged to different castes, were permitted to eat and drink on the same table, which is a complete violation of the system of caste. These privileges have, however, long been rescinded.

Vithalnáthji, who is also known by the name of Gusáinji, went in Samvat 1621 (A.D. 1565) to Gokul, the birthplace of Krishna, with the full determination of passing the rest of his days there. After residing at this place for some time he was induced to alter his intention, prompted by a cause which does not appear, and he accordingly removed to Mathurá. Vithalnáthji evidently had very strong locomotive propensities, for he is said to have visited Gujarát six times during his life, and he even now seems to have been considerably unsettled, or he had accomplished the sectarian



object which induced him to visit Mathurá; for we find him, in Samvat 1629 (A.D. 1573), eight years afterwards, again at Gokul. It was in consequence of his ultimate permanent residence in this sacred city that he acquired the name of Gokul Gusáinji, which is perpetuated in all his male descendants.

He appears to have written several works of repute, and especially commentaries upon older treatises. In one of these works, Vidvanmandan, he has severely criticised and abundantly abused the sect and works of Śankaráchárya.

At the ripe age of seventy years and twenty-nine days, in Samvat 1649 (A.D. 1583), Vithalnáthji quitted the earth on the sacred hill of Govardhan Parvata, where the image was set up by his father. He was twice married, the name of his first wife being Rukminí, and that of the second Padmávatí. By these wives he had seven sons and four daughters. The name of the first son, born in Samvat 1597, was Girdharji; that of the second, born in Samvat 1599, Govinda Ráy; the third was Báلكrishnaji, born in Samvat 1606; the fourth, Gokulnáthji, born in Samvat 1608; the fifth, Ragunáthji, born in Samvat 1611; the sixth, Jadunáthji, born in Samvat 1613; and the seventh, Ghanashyamji, born in Samvat 1618. His daughters' names were Śobhá, Jamuná, Kamalá, and Devaká.

All these seven sons, upon the death of Vithalnáthji, established each his own *gadí*, or seat, assuming to be the incarnation of Krishna, and they dispersed throughout India to diffuse their doctrines and make proselytes.

It was the fourth son, Gokulnáthji, who became the most celebrated of all the descendants of Vithalnáthji. He is distinguished for having written a commentary on the Siddhánta Rahasya, and others. It is the vitality which he infused into the tenets of his particular community that has given it its persistency; for even to the present day the followers of his

descendants keep themselves separate from all the communities of his brothers, considering their own Gosáins as the only legitimate teachers of the faith. The followers of the other sons of Vithalnáthji have an equal degree of veneration for all the communities of the descendants of Vithalnáthji, whilst restricting their exclusive preference to their own particular division.

It was about the period of this dispersion of the sons of Vithalnáthji, that it is presumed they first acquired the title of Maháráj, which effectually conveys in its significance the full force of their wide sway and influence. They have many distinctive titles; they are called, for instance, Maháráj Gusáinji, Gusáinji Maháráj, Vallabha Kula, Agni Kula, Agni Svarupa, Achárya, Guru, Máh Prabhu, etc.; but the name for which they have the greatest respect appears to be that of Gausvámi, which signifies Lord of Cows, applicable also to Krishna.

The heads of this division of the sect are usually called Gokul Gosáins, or Gokulastha Gosáins. The worshippers of this sect are also widely diffused throughout Bombay, Cutch, Kattywár, and central India, and especially the province of Málwá. In all these places they are numerous and opulent, comprising the most wealthy merchants and bankers, and consisting chiefly of bháttíás, baniás, and lowanas. They have many establishments throughout India, especially at Mathurá and Brindávan, which latter place contains some hundreds, amongst whom are three persons of great opulence. In Benares the sect has two temples of great repute and wealth. The city of Jagannáth, in the east, as one of the great centres of Hindu worship, is particularly venerated by them; and the city of Dwárká, in the extreme west, at the extremity of the peninsula of Gujarát, which completes the zone of India, has equal respect paid to it.

There are at present about sixty or seventy Mahárájas

dispersed throughout India. In Bombay there are eight or ten, fifteen or sixteen at Gokul, and one or two at each of the following places, namely, Surat, Ahmedabád, Nagar, Cutch, Porabandar, Amreli, Jodapur, Bundi, Koti, etc. Of these sixty or seventy Mahárájas, there are only two or three who have any knowledge of Sanskrit : the rest are grossly ignorant and indulge merely in sensuality and luxury. They, however, fear no desertion, owing to the infatuation of their followers, and never take the trouble to preach, but give as an equivalent public exhibitions in their temples to divert attention. "Vallabháchárya taught that privation formed no part of sanctity, and that it was the duty of the teacher and his disciples to worship their deity not in nudity and hunger, but in costly apparel and choice food ; not in solitude and mortification, but in the pleasures of society and the enjoyment of the world. . . . In accordance with these precepts the gosáins, or teachers, are always clothed in the best raiment, and fed with the daintiest viands, by their followers, over whom they have unlimited influence. . . . These gosáins are often largely engaged in maintaining connection amongst commercial establishments in remote parts of the country : they are constantly travelling over India under pretence of pilgrimage to the sacred shrines of the sect ; and on these occasions they notoriously reconcile the profits of trade with the benefits of devotion. As religious travellers, however, this union of objects renders them more respectable than the vagrants of any other sect." Priestly craft is ever alert to obtain by fair means, or foul, the wealth needful to the sustentation of its power and self-indulgence. This is a vice not limited in its operations to India, or to the chiefs of the sects of the Hindu religion : it pervades all human society, with greater or lesser energy. The scheme is supported by very plausible and just reasoning, for it is but right that those whose function is exercised for the behoof of society at

large, and who are precluded from obtaining the means of livelihood from those sources common to the majority, should be supported by that majority for whom their labours are performed; and it is only when urged to excess, for culpable purposes, that this becomes reprehensible. The Mahárájas, consequently, as teachers of a doctrine and priests of a religion, when duly restricting themselves within their province, are thoroughly entitled to the means of living at the hands of those whom they teach. It is merely perversion and excess that can be complained of. The source of the permanent revenue of these priests is a fixed *lagá*, or tax, upon every article of consumption which is sold. This tax, although but trifling in each individual case, amounts to a considerable sum upon the innumerable commercial transactions that take place, and is always multiplied in each case where articles pass from hand to hand for a consideration. There seems to exist an unlimited power on the part of the several Mahárájas to impose this tax and to add *lagá* upon *lagá*. When, therefore, we consider the swarming population, the great consumption, and consequently the thriving business which is carried on, and the fact that the fixed revenue is often greatly augmented by the presents and votive offerings which are made by their followers from affection, or fear—the wealth, indolence, and luxury of the Mahárájas follow as a matter of course, and the corruption of society ensues as the result of their dissolute and effeminate teaching.

It is not necessary that we should further particularise the branches of the genealogical tree springing from the root of Vallabháchárya: it suffices that, like the deadly upas, they overshadow society with their malignant influences, in Western India especially; and it is with a view to counteract this blighting tendency that the present work has been undertaken, in the hope that the exposure of their acts and doctrines may

eventually bring their converts to reflect upon the depravity of their practices and the utter incompatibility of such vicious doings with a pure faith. The original teachers may have been well disposed men, but their descendants have widely diverged from their courses. The infatuation of the Vaishnavas is so great, that all the descendants of the Mahárájas are held from infancy in extreme veneration, and are nurtured in ignorance, indolence, and self-indulgence: they are empowered by their votaries to gratify through life every vicious propensity; and, when, exhausted by vice, they pass away in premature old age, they are held by their votaries to be translated to the regions of perfect and ecstatic bliss; for, as remarked by Mr. H. H. Wilson, it is a peculiarly remarkable feature in this sect that the veneration paid to their gosáins is paid solely to their descent, without any reference to their individual sanctity or learning: and, although totally destitute of every pretension to even personal respectability, they nevertheless enjoy the unlimited homage of their followers.

## CHAPTER IV.

## CHIEF AUTHORITY OF THE SECT.

IN treating generally of the sacred writings of the Hindus, we have briefly noticed the eighteen Purāṇas, which are evidently the productions of the later or nonvedic period. The Bhāgavata Purāṇa is the chief authority of the sect of Mahārājas, or Vallabhāchārya. It consists of twelve books, in the tenth of which the history of Kṛishṇa,\* as the eighth incarnation of Viṣṇu, is given in ninety chapters. This tenth book has been translated from the Sanskrit into Brijabhāshā, under the name of "Prem Sāgar, or the Ocean of Love;" and it was this that Vallabhāchārya selected, on which to found doctrines he designed to teach. To this work we must look as the source whence the Mahārājas deduced originally the ideas which they have gradually expanded into the desecrating libertinism which they practise.

We shall commence by quoting those portions of the "Prem Sāgar" which we conceive have most directly led, by the force of example and possibly by infatuation, to the practices at present followed in the temples of the Mahārājas. Vyāsa (believed to be the metamorphosed Viṣṇu) is the reputed author of this work, and it is therefore held as a revelation from the deity himself, is considered of the highest authority,

\* The worship of deified heroes is no part of the Vedic system; nor are the incarnations of the deities suggested in any other portion of the text which I have yet seen. According to the notions which I entertain of the real history of the Hindu religion, the worship of *Rājas* and *Kṛishṇas* by the Vaishnavas, and of *Madāras* and *Bhavadēvi* by Saivas and Śāktas, has been generally introduced since the persecution of the Bauddhas and Jains. The institutions of the Vedas are anterior to Bauddha, whose theology seems to have been borrowed from the system of Kapila.—*Colebrooke on the Hindu Religion*, p. 67, 68.

and is received with profound respect. Doubtless its true character is symbolical or allegorical, whereas the Mahárájas, by interpreting it literally, have thus converted its abtruse significations into a code of vicious immorality,—not merely sanctioning, but inculcating the most hideous sensuality.

The following are extracts from the “Prem Ságar,” describing the amorous sports of Krishna with Gopis, or female cowherdesses (known as the *lilá* of Krishna), from Mr. E. B. Eastwick’s English version of the work :

“As soon as the Autumnal Season departed, Winter came on (November and December), and excessive cold and frost commenced. At that time the young women of Braj began to say, one to the other, ‘Listen, companions! from bathing in the month Aghan (the 8th Hindú month) the sins of every successive birth are removed, and the wish of the heart is attained. Thus we have heard it said by aged people.’ Having heard this, it entered into the minds of all to bathe in Aghan, in order that they might surely obtain the divine Krishna as a bridegroom.

“With these reflections all the youthful women of Braj rose at early morn, and having put on their clothes and ornaments, came to the Yamuná to bathe. Having made their ablutions, and offered an oblation of eight ingredients to the Sun, they came forth from the water, made an earthen image of Gaur (a name of the goddess Parvatí), offered to it sandal wood, unbroken grains of rice, flowers and fruits; and setting before it incense, lamps, and consecrated food, performed their worship, and with joined hands and bent heads, having propitiated Gaur, said, “O goddess! repeatedly we ask this boon of you, that the divine Krishna may be our husband.’ In this manner the cowherdesses continually bathed, and fasting the whole day, at evening, having eaten curds and rice, slept on the earth, in order that the fruit of their religious abstinence might quickly be obtained.

“One day all the young women of Braj went together to an unfrequented place, furnished with steps to descend to the river, and on arriving there took off their clothes; and, having laid them on the bank, entered naked into the stream, and began singing the praises of Hari, and to sport in the water. At that time the divine Krishna, also seated in the shade of an Indian fig-tree, was tending the herds. It chanced that, having heard the sound of their songs,

he also silently approached, and began from his concealed position, to look on. At last, as he gazed, a thought entered into his mind, whereupon, having stolen all the clothes, he ascended into a Kadam tree, and having tied them in a bundle, placed them before him. Meanwhile, when the cowherdresses looked, the clothes were not on the bank; then, being confounded, they began to stretch forth their necks and look in all directions, and to say one to the other, 'Just now not even a sparrow has come here; sister, who has carried off our clothes?' Meanwhile, one cowherdess observed that, 'with a diadem on his head, a staff in his hand, an ornamental mark on his forehead made with saffron, wearing a necklace of wild flowers, clothed in yellow silk, having the clothes tied up in a bundle, and maintaining profound silence, the divine Krishn, mounted on a Kadam tree, is seated concealed.' She, on beholding him, cried out, 'Companions! see him, the stealer of our hearts, the stealer of our clothes, holding the bundle, is seated, enjoying himself in the Kadam tree.' Having heard these words, all the other young females of Braj beholding Krishn, were abashed, and, plunging into the water, with joined hands and bent heads, said, in a supplicating, coaxing manner,

"Friend of the poor!—grief-dispeller!—dear one! please, Mohan! give us back our clothes."

Hearing this, Kanháf said, 'Thus will I not give them, I swear by Nand; One by one come forth, then receive ye back your clothes.'

"The girls of Braj angrily replied, 'A goodly lesson this which you have learned, to bid us come forth naked! now, if we go and tell our fathers and our brothers, then they will come and seize you, raising the cry of "Thief!" and if we tell Jasodá and Nand, they will teach you a pretty lesson. We have some modesty; you have done away with all respect.'

"As soon as he heard these words, Krishn, enraged, said, 'Now you shall get back your clothes when you send and fetch them; and if not, not.' Hearing this, the cowherdresses said, alarmed, 'Kind to the poor! thou who carest for us, thou truly art the protector of our husbands. Whom shall we bring? For your sake it is that, fasting, we bathe in the month of Magashir.' Krishn said, 'If you are bathing in the month Aghan for me, giving me your affection, then lay aside your bashfulness and evasion, and come and take your clothes.' When the divine Krishn Chand spake thus, then all the cowherdresses, having consulted with one another, began to say, 'Come on, companions! what Mohan says,



that alone is to be attended to; since he knows all the secrets of our minds and bodies, what place for bashfulness with him?' Thus having determined amongst themselves, and obeying the words of Krishn, hiding with their hands their breasts and the parts which modesty conceals, the young women all issued from the water, and, having bent their heads, stood before him on the bank. Then Krishn, laughing, said, 'Now let each join her hands and advance, then I will give the clothes.' The cowherdesses said,

"Why does Nand's darling act deceitfully to us, simple maidens of Braj ?

He has tricked us; our consciousness and sense are gone, such pranks have you played, O Hari!

Taking courage, we have done what we are ashamed to do; now, O lord of Braj! perform your part.'

"When the cowherdesses, having spoken these words, joined their hands, then the divine Krishn Chand gave them their clothes, and approaching them, said, 'Do not take this matter ill; this is a lesson which I have taught you, for in the water is the habitation of the god Varun. Whoever, therefore, bathes in the water naked, all his moral and religious qualities pass away. Seeing the affection of your mind I was pleased, and have revealed this secret to you. Now go to your houses, and, returning in the month of Kátik (the second Hindú month), dance with me the circular dance.'"

.....

"One woman of Mathurá, whose husband would not suffer her to go, fixed her thoughts on Krishn, and, quitting her body, went, and, before them all, was united with him, as water goes and unites itself with water; and, after her, all the others, proceeding on, arrived there, where the divine Krishn Chand, together with the cowherds, was standing, under the shade of a tree, leaning with his hand on the shoulder of a comrade, with a triple bend in his body, and holding in his hand a lotus-flower. Soon as they arrived, they placed before him the plates, and making their obeisance, and gazing in the face of Hari, began to say to one another, 'Sister! this is he, the son of Nand, whose name we have heard from time to time, and on whom we have fixed our thoughts. Now, beholding his moon-like countenance, gratify your eyes, and enjoy the fruition of life.' Thus having spoken, and having joined their hands, with humble supplication they began to say to the divine Krishn, 'Compassionate Lord! without thy favour, where is a sight of thee accorded to any one? Happy is our fate this day, that we have obtained a sight of you, and become free from the sins of each successive birth.'

“The foolish, sordid, and proud Bráhmañ, whose mind is soiled by riches, pride, and avarice,  
 Regards the Deity as man : blind with this world's illusions, how should he recognize the truth ?  
 For whose sake you perform invocation, penance, and sacrifice ; on him wherefore not bestow food ?

Sire ! that riches, those relations, and that shame, is worthy of praise, which is useful to you, and that alone is penance, invocation, and knowledge, into which thy name enters.' Having heard these words, the divine Krishn Chand, having inquired after their welfare, began to say,

“ Make no reverential salutation to me ! I am but the blue boy of the chieftain Nand.

Do they who cause the wives of Bráhmans to pay homage to them, obtain high estimation in the world ? You, deeming us hungry, showed kindness to us, and, coming into the forest, took thought for us. Now what hospitality can we show you here ?

' Brindában, our home, is far away ; how can we show you courtesy ?

Had we been there, we would have brought some flowers and fruits and offered them. You, for our sake, undergoing trouble, have come into the jungle, and here we are quite unable to perform the duties of hospitality, and our chagrin on this account will always continue.' Thus courteously having spoken, again he said, 'It is long since you came ; now depart to your homes, because the Bráhmans, your husbands, will be expecting your return, since, when wives are absent, the oblation is not attended with happy results.' Having heard these words from Krishn, the Bráhmañ women, having joined their hands, said, 'Sire ! we have attached ourselves to your celestial feet, and have abandoned all regard for our family, and, hence, how can we return to the house of those whose words we have disobeyed, in hastening hither ? It is better, therefore, that we should remain under your protection, and, Lord ! one woman of our company, having formed the desire of meeting you, was coming, when her husband stopped her ; upon which that woman, being afflicted, surrendered her spirit.' Soon as he heard, the divine Krishn Chand smiled, and showed her, who, having abandoned her body, had come to him. 'Attend !' he said, 'He who shows affection to Hari, shall never suffer death ;—this woman came and joined me before you all.'”

Thus far having recited, the saintly Shukadev said, “Sire ! soon

as they beheld her, all were, for the moment, astonished. Afterwards their understanding returned, and then they began to sing the praises of Hari. Meanwhile the divine Krishn Chand, having eaten food, said to them, 'Now depart to your own abodes; your husbands will not rebuke you.'

.....

"When the divine Krishn carried off their clothes, he then gave this promise to the cowherdesses, that in the month Kátik, he would dance with them the circular dance. From that time the cowherdesses, cherishing the hope of this dance, remained solicitous in mind, and continually, when they rose up, used to propitiate especially the month Kátik. It happened that as they persevered in their propitiations, the pleasure-giving Autumnal Season arrived.

"From the time when the month Kátik commenced, an end was put to fierce heat, cold, and rain,

The lakes were full of pallacid water, and the expanding lotus was freshly blooming.

The night-flowering lotus and the Bartavella, like lover and mistress, gazed, rejoicing, on the moon at night.

The ruddy goose with the lotus droop, who ever regard the sun as their friend.

"One day the divine Krishn Chand, issued from the house on the night of the full moon in the month Kátik, and beheld the stars sprinkled in the clear sky, and the moonbeams spread in the ten quarters. A cool and gentle breeze, fraught with odours, continued blowing, and on one side the appearance of the thick forest imparted exceeding beauty to the scene. On seeing such a scene, it occurred to the mind of Krishn, that he had promised to the cowherdesses, that in the Autumnal Season he would dance with them the circular dance, and that the promise must be fulfilled. Having thus reflected, the divine Krishn entered the woods, and played on the flute. Having heard the sound of the Bambú, all the young women of Braj, who were inflamed with desire, through separation (from Krishn) were greatly agitated. At last, abandoning all regard for their relations, dashing from them the modesty belonging to the well-born, and forsaking their household duties, in great confusion, with their ornaments put on at random, they arose and hastened. One cowherdess, who, when she arose from beside her husband, to go, was stopped on the road by her husband, led back to the house, and not permitted to depart, fixed her thoughts on Hari, and, quitting her body, went and joined him before all the rest.

Beholding the affection of her mind, the divine Krishn Chand immediately conferred on her beatitude."

Thus far having heard, king Parikshit inquired of the saintly Shukadev as follows, "Gracious Lord! the cowherdesses not knowing the divine Krishn to be God, did not regard him as such; they only looked upon him as a sensual object. How had that woman salvation conferred on her? This explain to me and tell, that the doubt of my mind may depart." The saintly Muni Shukadev said, "Incarnation of Justice! they who even ignorantly sing the praises of the greatness of the divine Krishn Chand, they too undoubtedly obtain the reward of faith and final beatitude. Just as if any one, without knowing what it was, should drink nectar, he also becoming immortal would live (for ever); and, if he drank it with knowledge of its properties, it would affect him in the same way. This all know, that the quality of a thing and its fruit cannot but result; and just such is the powerful efficacy of worship paid to Hari; whoever worships him, with whatever disposition of mind, obtains beatitude. It is said,

"Invocation, the rosary, the denominational and sectarian marks,\* all of them are useless.

"The vain-minded man plays his antics (*lit.* dances) to no purpose; the true only please Rám."

"And, attend! I will now relate to you the different persons, and their different feelings towards the divine Krishn, who obtained beatitude from him. Nand and Jasodá looked on him as their son, the cowherdesses as their lover; Kans worahipped him through fear; the cowherds, regarding him as their friend, repeated his name; the Pándavs as their darling; Sisupál respected him as an enemy; the family of Yadu held him to be one of their own members; and Jogis, Jatis, and Munis, knowing him to be the Supreme Being, fixed their meditations upon him: but in the end all, without exception, obtained beatification. If, therefore, one cowherdess, by fixing her thoughts on the Deity, passed the ocean of existence, what marvel is it?"

Having heard this, Parikshit said to the saintly Muni Shukadev, "Gracious Lord! the doubt of my mind has departed; now be gracious enough to continue the history." The saintly Shukadev said, "Sire, when all the cowherdesses, each in her own different company, ran and joined the Light of the World, the Ocean of

\* Of a lotus, trident, etc., made on the body or forehead of worshippers of Vishnu and other gods.

Beauty, the divine Krishna Chand, as, during the four rainy months, the rivers run violently and mingle with the ocean, then the scene was such that Bihári Lál has no power to express the beauty of that adornment, for Hari, decked out with ornaments, and dressed as a juggler, appeared so heart-delighting, beautiful, and charming, that the young women of Braj, beholding him, remained amazed. Then Mohan, after inquiring after their welfare, assumed a peevish tone, and said, 'Tell me how, at this time of night—the hour of goblins and ghosts—you have passed this dread road, and come into the vast forest, with your clothes and ornaments cast on at random, in a state of extreme agitation, and having abandoned the regard due to your family? It behoves not women to act so boldly. It is said, that "should a woman have a husband, who is a coward, vicious, stupid, deceitful, ugly, leprous, blind of one eye or of both, lame of hand or foot, poor, or aught else, even then she ought to serve him, and from this alone her welfare and estimation in the world arise." It is the duty of a well-born and chaste lady not to leave her husband, even for a moment, and that wife who, quitting her own spouse, goes to another man, finds, in successive births, hell as her habitation.' Thus having spoken, he added, 'Hearken! you have come, have seen the dense forest, the clear moonlight, and the beauty of Yamuná's bank; now return home, and, with earnestness of purpose, wait on your husbands. By this your welfare will be in every way consulted.' Soon as they heard these words from the mouth of the divine Krishna, all the cowherdesses were for a time indeed, bereft of sense, and buried in a boundless ocean of thought;—afterwards,

"With downcast looks they drew deep sighs, and stood scratching the ground  
with the nails of their feet;  
From their eyes a stream of tears descended, like a broken necklace of pearls!

"At length, being deeply agitated by grief, they began with sobs to say, 'Ah, Krishna! you are a great deceiver! At first, indeed, by playing on the flute, you stole away our judgment, thoughts, mind, and all that we possessed; and now, turning pitiless, and practising deceit, you desire, by your cruel words, to deprive us of life.' Thus having spoken, they added,

"Folk, kinsmen, house, and husband, we have left; neglected, too, the re-  
proach of people, to which we are exposed.  
We are defenceless, there are none to aid us; give us protection, Lord of  
Braj!

And those people who attend on thy celestial footsteps, they care

not for wealth, corporeal things, character, or greatness; of them, indeed, you are the husband, from birth to birth, O Deity! O soul's Beauty!

“‘Where shall we go and make our abode? our spirits are bound up in affection for you.’

“On hearing these words, the divine Krishn Chand smiled, and called all the cowherdesses to him, and said, ‘If you are imbued with this affection, then dance the circular dance with me.’ Having heard these words, the cowherdesses laid aside their grief, and gladly assembled on all sides, and, continually gazing on the face of Hari, began to reap the enjoyment of their eyes.

“The dark-blue Krishn, with body of the hue of clouds, stood in the midst; and such was the beauty of the fair ones, as they sported,

That they resembled golden creepers, growing from beneath a blue mountain.

“Then the divine Krishn gave this command to his Illusive Power, ‘We will engage in the circular dance, wherefore do thou prepare a fair place, and remain standing here, and whoever shall ask for anything, whatever it may be, do thou bring and give it.’ Sire! the Illusive Power, on hearing this, went to the bank of the Yamuná, and prepared a large circular terrace of pure gold, and having studded it with pearls and diamonds, fixed on all sides plaintain trees with young shoots, for pillars, fastened on them gay festoons of various kinds of flowers, and, returning to the divine Krishn Chand, told him. On hearing it, Krishn was pleased, and, taking with him all the young women of Braj, went to the bank of the Yamuná. Having arrived there, they saw that the brilliance of the circular terrace erected for the circular dance, was four times more beautiful than that of the moon's orb, and on all sides of it the sand was spread out like the moonbeams. A cool, sweet, fragrant breeze, continued blowing, and on one side the verdure of the dense forest derived increased loveliness from the night.

“On beholding this scene, all the cowherdesses were much delighted. Near that spot was a lake named Mán Sarowar, to the banks of which they went and put on clean robes and ornaments, such as their minds desired, and having adorned themselves from head to foot, returned, playing in harmony on fine instruments, such as the lute and timbrel. Then, intoxicated with love, they laid aside all care and diffidence, and, in company with the divine Krishn, began to play on instruments, to sing and dance. At that time the divine Govind, in the midst of the circle of the cowherdesses, appeared as beautiful as the moon in a circlet of stars.”

Thus far having related, the saintly Shukadev said, "Hearken, Sire! when the cowherdesses, having abandoned, in the dance, judgment and discernment, mentally regarded Hari as their natural husband, and thought him utterly under their influence; then the divine Krishn Chand reflected in his heart as follows :

"These now imagine me subjected to them; they mentally regard me as a natural husband;

Their judgment is gone; modesty has left their persons; they twine themselves around me, and with fond affection embrace me, as their beloved one.

They have forgotten knowledge and reflection; I will go and leave them, since their pride has increased.'

"Let us see what they will do in the forest without me, and what will be their condition?' Thus having reflected, the divine Krishn Chand, taking with him the divine Rádhiká, disappeared from sight."

The saintly Muni Shukadev said, "Sire! upon the sudden disappearance of the divine Krishn Chand, it became dark before the eyes of the cowherdesses, and being much afflicted, they were as distressed as a snake that has lost its crest-gem. Hereupon one of them began to say,

"Tell me sister! where is Mohan departed, having left us?

But lately he clasped my neck with his arm, and embraced me.

Just now, in truth, closely united with us, he was dancing and rejoicing. In these short moments where has he departed? Did no one among you see him as he left us?' Having heard these words, all the cowherdesses, deeply dejected at separation from their beloved one, said, drawing deep sighs,

"Whither shall we go, what shall we do? To whom shall we call aloud and tell (our loss)?

Do not you know at all where he is? How shall we rejoin Murári?'

"Thus having spoken, being intoxicated with the love of Hari, all the cowherdesses began, as they searched, and sang the praises of Krishn, to exclaim, lamenting, thus :

"Why have you left us, Lord of Braj? We have bestowed all we possess upon you.'

"When they found him not, then all, as they went on, said amongst themselves, 'Sister! here, indeed, we see no one; of whom shall we ask the road which Hari has taken!' Thus having

heard, one of the cowherdesses said, 'Hearken, Sister! an idea has occurred to me, that all the beasts and birds and trees which are in this forest, are Rishis and Munis, which have descended on earth to behold the sports of Krishn: ask ye them! These standing here are spectators. They will point out to you the direction which Hari has taken.' On hearing these words, all the cowherdesses, distressed at their separation (from Krishn), began to question each individual thing, both inanimate and animate:

"O fig-trees of various kinds! you have obtained your lofty stature by your meritorious acts!

You, most of all, have been beneficent to others, in that you have taken on Earth the form of trees.

You have endured the pain inflicted by heat, cold, and rain, and for the sake of others you have remained standing.

O bark! blossoms! roots! fruit! and branches! with which (ye trees) advantage others!

Nand's darling has bereft us all of mind and property; say, kind beings! has he passed this way?

O Kadam! mango! and Kachnár! have you seen Murári going in any direction?

O Asoka, Champaca, and oleander! have you seen Balbír passing by?

O blooming Tulsí, very dear to Hari! Thou whom he never separates from his person,

Has Hari to-day come and met you? Who will tell us? who will point out the way?

Dear jasmine, Juhí, Málti! did the youthful Kanháti come in this direction? To the Antelopes the women of Braj called aloud, 'Have you seen the forester (Krishn) passing here?'"

Thus far having recited, the saintly Shukadev said, "Sire! in this manner all the cowherdesses, continually inquiring of beasts, birds, and creeping shrubs, and filled with (thoughts of) Krishna, began, in childish sport, to imitate the slaughter of Pútaná, and all the other exploits of the divine Krishn, and, at the same time, to search on. At last, as they continually searched, after proceeding some distance, they saw the footsteps of the celestial feet of the divine Krishn Chand, together with the lotus, barley, banner, and iron goad (imprinted) on the sand, continue glittering. Soon as they saw this, the women of Braj, having made a reverential obeisance to the dust, which gods, men, and Munis search for, placed it on their heads, and, resuming a confident hope of meeting Hari, proceeded on. Then they beheld that near the traces of those celestial feet the footprint of a female also was ever imprinted. Beholding this, surprised, they went forward, and saw that in one place there had fallen, upon a bed of soft leaves, a fair and jewelled mirror. Of



it they began to ask, but when, filled with the pangs of separation, it also was silent, then they began to inquire of one another, 'Tell, me, Sister! why did he take this with him?' Then one, who knew well the feelings of lover and beloved one, made answer, 'Friend! when the lover sate down to wreathe the long back hair of his mistress, and his lovely form was hid from sight, at that time the fair one took the mirror in her hand, and showed it to him she loved, and then the image of his divine face appeared before her.' Having heard these words, the cowherdesses felt no resentment, but began to say, 'Well must she have worshipped Shiva and Párvatí, and great must have been the penance she performed, that alone she is privileged to sport securely with the soul's Lord.'

"Sire! all the cowherdesses indeed in this direction were wandering about in search (of Krishn) bewildered with the emotions caused by separation from him, prattling and talking, and in the other direction the divine Rádhiká, enjoying excessive delight in the society of Hari, supposed her lover was entirely under her influence, deemed herself the principal person of all, and admitting pride into her mind, said, 'Dear one! I am now unable to proceed further, take me on your shoulders and so go on with me.' Immediately on hearing these words the divine Krishn Chand, the destroyer of pride and searcher of hearts, sat down smiling and said, 'Come! be pleased to mount upon my shoulders.' When having stretched forth her hand she was about to mount, then the divine Krishn vanished from sight and she (Rádhiká) remained standing with extended arm as (at first) she put forth her hand, just as having parted from the cloud the lightning would remain separate, or as the moonbeams at variance with the moon (might appear) when left behind by it. And the dazzling brightness cast from her white body shadowed upon the earth was beautiful, like a lovely woman standing on a golden ground. From her eyes a stream of water continued flowing, and she was unable even to drive away the black bees which, attracted by the sweet perfume, came perpetually and settled on her mouth. Thus uttering deep sobs, she remained alone in the forest, weeping through the pangs of separation in such a manner that, hearing the sound of her lamentation, all beasts and birds, trees and creeping things, were weeping, and she continued exclaiming thus—

'Alas, Lord! chief of benefactors! Whither, O capricious Bihári, hast thou gone? I am thy suppliant at thy feet, thy slave! Ocean of mercy! recall me to thy thoughts.

"Meanwhile all the cowherdesses also searching on, arrived beside

her, and continually embracing her, all of them, as they in turn came up, received such gratification as he does who, having lost great riches, finds moderate treasure, or half of that he lost.

“At length, all the cowherdesses perceiving her deep distress, took her with them, and penetrated into the great forest, and as far as they could see the moonlight, so far the cowherdesses sought for the divine Krishn in the forest. When in the darkness of the dense forest they could not find their way, then they all returned thence, and, taking courage, and assuring themselves of rejoining Krishn, came and sat down on that same bank of the Yamuná, where the divine Krishn Chand had conferred much delight upon them.”

The saintly Shukadev said, “Sire! all the cowherdesses seated on the banks of the Yamuná, intoxicated with love, began to sing the exploits and virtues of Hari, saying, ‘Beloved one! since you came to Braj, ever since that time, having come here, you have diffused new joys. Lakshmi, placing her confidence on your celestial feet, has come and fixed here her perpetual abode. We cowherdesses are your handmaids, shew compassion and quickly direct your thoughts to us. Since we beheld your dark, comely, and piquant figure, we have become your slaves without purchase. The arrows of your eyes have smitten our hearts, and therefore, dear one! wherefore should not they be accounted your own? Our lives are departing; now, then, compassionate us. Lay cruelty aside, and quickly return to our sight. If it was really your purpose to slay us, then wherefore did you save us from the venomous serpent, fire and water, and why suffered you not us then to die? You are not merely the son of Jasodá; Brahmá, Rudr, Indr, and the other gods, by their humble supplications, have brought you for the protection of the world.

“O souls! Lord! at one thing we greatly marvel, that, if you will slay those who are your own, whom will you defend? Beloved one! you are the searcher of hearts, why do you not remove our distress, and fulfil the hope of our minds? What, is it against weak women that you will display your valour? O dearest! when we recall your gentle smiling glances, full of love, and the arch of your eyebrow, and your coquettish eyes, the bend of your neck, and your gay discourse, then what pangs are there which we do not suffer! And when you were going into the forest to pasture the cows, at that time from fixing our thoughts on your celestial feet, the gravel and thorns of the forest came thence and were rankling in our hearts. Departing at dawn, you were returning at eve, yet still

those four watches appeared to us four ages. When seated before you we were gazing on your handsome form, then we used to think in our minds that 'Brahmá is an utter dolt to have made the eyelid, as it were, to impede our steadfast gaze.' "

Thus far having recited, the saintly Shukadev said, "Sire! during this same night, all the cowherdesses, afflicted with the pangs of separation, sang on in many various ways the virtues and exploits of the divine Krishn Chand till they were exhausted, but still Bihári came not. Then truly being very dejected, yet still cherishing a hope of union (by death) they abandoned all confidence of surviving him, and through extreme impatience, became insensible, and falling down, so wept and exclaimed that, on hearing them, animate and inanimate things also were oppressed with heavy affliction."

The saintly Shukadev said, "Sire! when the divine Krishn Chand, searcher of hearts, perceived that the cowherdesses could not survive without him,

Then amongst them appeared Nand's son, just as  
 A juggler eludes the sight, lies hid, and again displays himself.  
 When they saw Hari returned, all started up to consciousness,  
 As when life is infused into a corpse, the senseless members revive.  
 Deprived of seeing him, the minds of all had become agitated,  
 As though a mind-agitating snake had bitten all and departed.  
 Their lover, knowing their grief to be unfeigned, came arriving,  
 He watered the creepers with nectar, and revived them all.  
 As the Lotus dejected at night, so were the fair ones of Braj;  
 Having seen the beauty of the sun's orb, their large eyes expanded."

Thus far having recited, the saintly Shukadev said, "Sire! on beholding the divine Krishn Chand, the root of joy, all the cowherdesses having suddenly emerged from the ocean of painful separation, approached him, and were as delighted as one who, drowning in an unfathomable sea, rejoices on finding a ford. And being collected on all sides they stood. Then the divine Krishn, taking them with him, came where he had first indulged in the circular dance, and other delights. On arriving a cowherdess took off her mantle and spread it for Krishn to sit down on. When he sat on it, some of the cowherdesses, incensed, said, 'Great sir! you are very deceitful, and know how to take away the minds and wealth of others, but you never acknowledge the favours of any one.' Thus having spoken, they began to say among themselves, 'Good qualities he forsakes, and takes the bad, deceit continues pleasing to his mind. See, sister! and reflect, how shall we deal with him effectually?' Having heard this, one among them said, 'Companion! do you

stand aside, since from our own words we derive no advantage. Lo! I will make Krishn himself avow it.' Thus having spoken, she asked the divine Krishn with a smile, 'Sire! One person confers favours (or is grateful) without having received any; a second reciprocates a benefit; a third, in return for benefits, gives back the reverse; a fourth does not so much as even admit into his mind the sense of having received a favour at all; of these four, which is the good, and which is the bad man—this do you explain to us and tell.' The divine Krishn Chand said, 'Attend, all of you and listen! I will point out to you the good and the bad. The best, then, is he who confers kind offices without receiving them, as the father loves his son; and to do good for good done is not meritorious, as in the case of the cow which yields milk for the food given her. As for the man who looks on a benefit as an injury, know him to be an enemy who does that. The worst of all is the ungrateful man, who obliterates all sense of obligation.'

When, on hearing these words, the cowherdesses, looking in one another's faces, began to laugh, then, indeed, the divine Krishn being confused, said, 'Attend! I am not to be reckoned among these four, as you suppose, and are, therefore, laughing; but my way is this, that whoever desires anything of me, whatever it may be, I fulfil the desire of his mind. Perhaps you will say, if this be your custom, then why did you thus forsake us in the forest? The reason of that is this, I put your affection to the proof; do not take this matter ill, but consider what I say to be true.' Thus having spoken, he added,

"Now I have made trial of you; you persevered in remembrance, and thought of me.

You have increased your affection for me, like a poor man who has obtained wealth.

Thus you came for my sake, and cast away regard for popular report, and respect for the Vedas.

As the Bairági (an ascetic) abandons his dwelling, and with entire purpose of mind, fixes his affection on Hari.

How can I give you exaltation? (though I recompense you) the obligation I owe you will not receive its equivalent.

Though we should live a hundred years of Brahmá, yet the debt I owe you will not be discharged."

The saintly Muni Shukadev said, "King, when the divine Krishn Chand had thus fondly spoken, then, indeed, all the cowherdesses, laying aside their anger, were pleased; and, having risen, enjoyed various delights in the society of Hari; and, filled with emotions of joy, began to indulge in sports. At this time,

Krishn used the Jogt's illusive power,—the particles of his body became many different bodies.

To all he gave pleasure to the full of their desire, sporting with perfect affection.

As many cowherdesses as there were, just so many bodies did the divine Krishn Chand assume, and, taking all with him to that same terrace of the circular dance, he again commenced dancing with delight.



Rás Mandala, or Circular Dance.

The cowherdesses joined hands two and two, between each two was Hari, their companion ;

Each thought him beside her—so thought all ; none perceived his other forms ; Each put her fingers into the fingers of another, and danced gaily, circling round, taking Hari with them ;

Here, intermediate, (danced) a cowherdless, there, intermediate, the son of Nand, like dense clouds on all sides, and between them the flashing lightning,—

Krishn, of the dark blue hue, and the fair girls of Braj—like a necklace of gold beads and sapphires.

Sire! in this manner the cowherdesses and Krishn, standing up, began to blend the tunes of various kinds of instruments, and running over in prelude the notes of very difficult airs, to play and sing, and, selecting tunes in a high key, pleasing and full of contrast, and others raised half a tone higher, or a whole tone, or two tones, and others which they extemporised while they sang them, represented, by the dance, the emotions they were intended to convey. And their joy was so exuberant that they retained no longer their consciousness, corporeal or mental. In one place, the breasts of some of them were uncovered; in another, their diadems fell off. Here, necklaces of pearls, snapping asunder, were falling down; there, wreaths of forest flowers. The drops of perspiration on their foreheads glittered like strings of pearls; and the ringlets on the fair faces of the cowherdesses were, in their dishevelled state, like young snakes, which, through desire of nectar, had flown up and fastened themselves on the Moon. At one time, a cowherdess, blending her voice with the sound of Krishn's flute, was singing in a treble key; at another, one of them sang, unaccompanied. And when a cowherdess, having stopped the sound of the flute, was bringing from her throat its entire note with exact agreement, then Hari remained fascinated with delight, just as a child, beholding its image in a glass, stands riveted.

"In this manner, singing, and dancing, and displaying various kinds of emotions, and blandishments, and coquetry, they were giving and imparting delight; and mutually pleased, and laughing gaily, they were embracing, and making a propitiatory offering of their clothes and ornaments. At that time, Brahmá, Rudr, Indr, and all the other deities and celestial musicians, seated on their cars, together with their wives, beholding the bliss of the circular dance, were, through joy, raining down flowers, and their wives, beholding those pleasures, and filled with desire, were saying in their hearts, 'Had we been born in Braj, we also should have enjoyed the circular dance, and other delights, with Hari.' Such was the concert of musical modes (the Rágs of which there are six), and airs (the Ráginís of which are thirty), that, hearing them, even the winds and waters ceased to move, and the moon, with the circle of stars, being fascinated, was pouring down nectar with its rays. Meanwhile, the night advanced, and six months passed away, and no one was aware of it, and from that time the name of that night has been—the night of Brahmá."

Thus far having related, the saintly Shnkadev said, "Earth's

Lord! sporting on in dances and diversions, a fancy entered into the mind of the divine Krishn Chand; whereupon, taking the cowherdesses with him, he went to the bank of the Yamuná, and, having plunged into the water, and sported there, he dispelled his fatigue, and came forth, and thus, having accomplished the wishes of all, he said, 'Now, four *gharis* (about one hour and a half) of the night remain; do you all depart to your own homes.' Having heard these words, the cowherdesses, being dejected, said, 'Lord! how can we go home, quitting your celestial lotus-feet? Our greedy hearts listen no whit to this direction.' The divine Krishn said, 'Listen! as Jogís fix their thoughts on me, so too do you abstract and fix your minds: wherever ye may be there will I remain with you.' On hearing this, all were pleased, and taking leave, departed to their own houses; and none of the inmates knew of this secret, that the women had been away."

. . . . .

Krishna speaks to his father.

'Listen, father! Kans has sent for us; our uncle Akrár has brought these tidings. Take milk, sheep, and goats; it is the sacrifice of the bow; there offer them. Let all accompany you: the king has said it; the case admits not of delay.

When the divine Krishn Chand, with such explanations and advice, had addressed Nand, then that chieftain, at that very time, having summoned criers, caused a proclamation to be made throughout the city to this effect, 'To-morrow, at early dawn, all will together proceed to Mathurá: the king has summoned us.' On hearing this intelligence, all the inhabitants of Braj, as soon as it dawned, came, bringing presents; and Nand also, taking with him milk, curds, butter, sheep, goats, and buffaloes, having caused the cattle in his carts to be yoked, went with them. Krishn and Baladev also, taking with them the cowherd youths, their companions, mounted on their cars,—

In front were Nand and Upanand; in rear of all, Haldhar and Govind."

The saintly Shukadev said, "Lord of the earth! all of a sudden, having heard of the departure of the divine Krishn Chand, all the cowherdesses of Braj, much agitated and distressed, left their homes, and arose and hastened in confusion, and lamenting and talking incoherently, stumbling and falling, came where the divine Krishn Chand was seated in his car. On coming up, they stood around the car, and, joining their hands, began to say with humility, 'Why, O Lord of Braj! do you forsake us? we have given all we possessed to

you. The affection of the good never suffers decrease: it ever remains, like the writing in the lines of the hand; but the regard of the fool is not lasting, but resembles a wall of sand. What such crime have we committed against you that you are departing and turning your back upon us?' Having thus addressed the divine Krishn Chand, the cowherdesses, having turned their eyes towards Akrúr, added,—

'This Akrúr\* is very cruel; he is altogether ignorant of our pain.

That being—to be deprived of whose company for a single moment renders us desolate—him he takes away along with him.

He is deceitful, cruel, and stern of heart. Who vainly gave him the name of Akrúr?

O Akrúr! cruel, and void of understanding. Wherefore do you injure weak, dependent woman?'

Using such harsh words, and abandoning all consideration and reserve, they laid hold of the car of Hari, and began to say among themselves, 'The women of Mathurá are very wanton, artful, beautiful, and accomplished; Bihári, having formed an attachment for them, and being overcome by their good qualities and taste, will take up his abode entirely there. Then how will he remember us? Great is their good fortune, indeed, that they will remain with their beloved one. What such fault has occurred in our invocation and penance from which the divine Krishn Chand forsakes us?' Thus having spoken among themselves, they again addressed Hari, 'Your name truly is the Lord of Cowherdesses; wherefore do you not take us along with you?

How will each moment pass without you? If you are absent for an instant our bosoms burst with sorrow.

After shewing us affection, why separate from us? relentless, pitiless, you feel no attachment.'

Thus the fair ones uttered their supplications there, and were thoughtful plunged in a sea of grief:

They remained stedfastly gazing in the direction of Hari,—like a fascinated antelope, or the Chakor looking at the moon;

The tears fell dropping from their eyes; and their curls, falling loose, were spread over their faces.

The saintly Muni Shukadev said, "King! at that time this indeed was the state of the cowherdesses, which I have described to you; and the lady Jasodá—with the tenderness of a mother—embraced her son, and, weeping, was saying, with intense affection, 'Son!

\* There is an *equivoc* here. A-krúr signifies "not cruel," though it is here a proper name.



take with you, as you go, provisions sufficient for the number of days (which will elapse) till you return thence. And when you have arrived there, place your affections on none; but quickly return, and present yourself to the sight of her who gave you birth.' Hearing these words, the divine Krishn, having dismounted from his car, and having comforted and admonished all, took leave of his mother, and, having made his obeisance, and received her blessing, again mounted his car and departed. At this time, in the one direction, Jasodá, with the cowherdesses, in great emotion and sobbing, were calling out 'Krishn! Krishn!' and, in the other direction, the divine Krishn, standing up in his car, and calling out, was saying, as he departed, 'Do you go home, and have no anxiety; I will return in four or five days at most.'"

.....

"Sire! these cowherdesses, distracted by separation from the divine Krishn, and singing his praises alone, in their several companies, with their thoughts fixed on their beloved one, began on their way to sing of the exploits of the Supreme Being.

One said, 'Kanhái met me;' another, 'He has run off and hidden himself. From behind he seized my arm; there stands he, Hari, in the shade of the Indian fig.'

One says, 'I saw him milking;' another, 'I beheld him at early dawn.' One avers that, 'He is pasturing the cattle; listen! given ear, he plays the flute. By this road, sister, we will not go; the youth Kanhái will demand alms of us; He will break our water-pots, and untie the knots (of the cords on which we carry them), and, having surveyed us a little (*i.e.* with a mere glance), will steal away our senses;

He is concealed somewhere, and will come running; then how shall we be able to escape?'

Thus speaking, the women of Braj departed, their frames being greatly agitated through separation from Krishn."

The saintly Muni Shukadev said, "Lord of the Earth! when Udho had finished repeating his whispered invocations, then, having issued from the river, having put on his clothes and ornaments, and taken his seat in his car, when he took his way from the bank of the Kalindí towards the house of Nand, then the cowherdesses, who had gone forth to fill water, beheld his car on the road, coming from a distance. On beholding it, they began to say among themselves, 'Whose is this car which is coming towards us? Let us take a survey of this, then let us advance.' Hearing this, one cowherdess among them said, 'Sister! it may be, perhaps, that the deceitful Akrúr may have come, who led the divine Krishn Chand

to Mathurá, and caused him to dwell there, and brought about the death of Kans.' Having heard this, another of them said, 'For what has this betrayer of confidence come? on one occasion, indeed, he has carried off the root of our life; now will he take our life itself?' Sire! having spoken many such things among themselves,

The women of Braj remained standing there; they set down their water-pots, having lifted them from their heads.

Meanwhile, when the chariot drew near, then the cowherdesses, having seen Udho from a small distance, began to say among themselves, 'Sister! this truly is some one of a dark-blue colour, with lotus eyes, and a diadem on his head, wearing a garland of wild flowers, dressed in yellow silk, and with a silken scarf of the same colour, who, seated in the car of the divine Krishna Chand, comes looking towards us.' Then one cowherdess from among them said, 'Sister! this person has, since yesterday, come to the house of Nand, and his name is Udho, and the divine Krishna Chand has, through him, sent some message.'

"On hearing these words, the cowherdesses, seeing that it was a solitary place, abandoned reserve and modesty, and ran up and approached Udho, and, knowing him to be a friend of Hari, made obeisance to him, and, having inquired after his welfare, joined their hands, and stood surrounding the chariot on all sides. Having seen their affection, Udho also descended from his car. Then all the cowherdesses, having caused him to sit down under the shade of a tree, themselves also took their seats, surrounding him on all sides, and, with much tenderness, began to address him :

'Well have you done, Udho, in coming; you have brought us tidings of Mádho (Krishn);

You have always remained near Krishn; give us the message which he delivered to you.

You were sent only for the sake of his mother and father; he takes thought for no one else;

We have given all we possessed into his hands; our souls are entangled in his feet.

He pursues only his own objects; he has now afflicted all, without exception, in departing.

And as the bird deserts the tree which is destitute of fruit, just so Hari has abandoned us; we have bestowed on him our all; but still he has not become ours.' Sire! when the cowherdesses, inspired with love, had in this manner spoken many such words, then Udho, having beheld the firmness of their affection, when he was about to

rise with the intention of making his obeisance to them, then, immediately, a cowherdess, having seen a black bee sitting upon a flower, under pretence of addressing it, said to Udho,—

“O honey-maker! thou has drunk the juice of the lotus-feet of Málhav; hence hast thou the name of Madhukar (the honey-maker), and thou art the friend of a deceitful one; for this very reason he has made thee his messenger, and sent thee; touch not thou our feet, for we know that all of a dark-blue hue are deceitful; such as thou art, just such is Krishn; wherefore, do not thou salute us. Just as thou wanderest about, drinking the juice of various flowers, and belonging to none, just so Krishn also makes love, yet is constant to none.’ The cowherdess was thus speaking, when another black bee came, seeing which, a cowherdess, named Lalitá, said,—

‘O bee! do you remain apart from us, and go and tell this in the city of Madhu,

Where the divine Krishn Chand and his humpbacked consort dwell at ease; for why should we speak of one birth? this very custom is yours through successive births. King Bali gave you all he possessed; him you sent to Pátál, and a virtuous wife like Síta, you, innocent as she was, expelled from your house. When you brought this condition on even her, then what great loss have we suffered?’ Thus having spoken, all the cowherdesses together joined their hands, and began to say to Udho, ‘Illustrious Udho! we, deprived of the divine Krishn, are widowed; do you take us with you.’”

The saintly Shukadev said, “Sire! on these words proceeding from the mouth of the cowherdesses, Udho said, ‘The message which the divine Krishn Chand sent, that I will explain to you and tell—do you listen with attention. It is written, “Do you abandon the hope of sexual delight and practise devotion, I will never separate from you;” and Krishn says, “Night and day you fix your thoughts on me, and for this same reason I hold none so dear as yourselves.”’

“Thus having spoken Udho added, ‘He who is the First Male, the Imperishable One, Hari, on him you have always fixed your affection, and whom all extol as the Invisible, the Unseen, the Impenetrable, him you regard as your husband; and as earth, wind, water, fire, and air dwell in the body, so the Supreme Being dwells in you, but by the quality of illusion appears separate. Continue to fix your recollection and your thoughts on him; he always remains accessible to his votaries, and from contiguity, perception and meditation are destroyed; on this account, Hari has gone to a distance and fixed his habitation, and the divine Krishn Chand

explained this also to me and said, that, playing on the flute he called you to the woods, and when he saw your love and the pain you felt at separation evinced, then he danced together with you the circular dance.

When you forgot his divinity, the chief of Yadu vanished from sight.

“ ‘Again, when recovering your perception, you mentally fixed your thoughts upon Hari, then forthwith, knowing the devotion of your hearts, the Supreme Being came and appeared to you.’ Sire ! soon as these words issued from the mouth of Udho,

Then said the cowherdesses, incensed, ‘We have heard your words, now remain apart from us ;

You have told us of knowledge, devotion, wisdom ; you tell us to abandon meditation, and point out to us the sky,—

On whose sports our mind is fixed ; him you call Náráyan.

He who, from his childhood, bestowed pleasure upon us, how has he become Invisible—the Unseen ?

He who is possessed of all good qualities, and gifted with all beauties of form, how can he be quality-less and form-less ;

Since in his dear body our souls are wrapped up, who will give ear to your words ?”

One of the company arose, and, after reflection, said, ‘Conciliate Udho.

Say nothing to him, sisters ! but hear his words, and continue gazing on his countenance.’

One said, ‘It is not his fault ; he came sent by Kubjá.

Now, as Kubjá has instructed him, that very strain he sings.

Krishna would never speak thus, as, since his arrival in Braj, he has spoken.

By hearing such words, sister ! thorns pierce us — we cannot endure to hear.

He tells us to abandon sexual delight and practise devotion ; how can Mádho (Kriahn) have spoken thus ?

Inaudible repetition of the Divine name, penance, abstinence, vows, and religious observances ; all these are the (befitting) practices of widow.

May the youth Kanhái live on through successive ages ; he who bestows happiness on our heads.

While one’s husband survives, who makes use of the ashes of cowdung ? tell us where this custom is observed !

For us vows, devotion, fasting are in this, to regard with unceasing affection the feet of the son of Nand.

Who will impute blame to you, Udho ? Kubjá has led us all this dance.

Thus far having related, the saintly Muni Shukadev said, “ Sire ! when Udho heard from the mouths of the cowherdesses words such as these, imbued with affection, he then mentally regretted that he had spoken to them of penance, and with a feeling of shame he preserved silence and remained with bent-down head. Then a cow-

herdess said, 'Say, is Balbhadr well? and does he, too, thinking on the affection of his childhood, ever recall us to his mind or not?'

"Having heard this, another cowherdess from among them said, in answer, 'Companions! you, indeed, are but rustic cowherds' wives, and the women of Mathurá, are fair to see; captivated by them, Hari indulges in delight; why should he now take thought of us? Since he went and dwelt there, O companions! from that time he has become the spouse of others. Had we known this at first, how would we have suffered him to depart? Now, we gain nothing by our regrets, whence it is better to abandon all grief, and remain with hopes fixed on the stipulated time. For just as during eight months the earth, the forests, and the mountains, in expectation of the rainy clouds, endure the heat of the sun, and when the rain comes it cools them, so Hari also will come and visit us.'

"One said, 'Hari has effected his purpose, has slain his foes, and assumed the government,

Wherefore should he come to Brindávan? Why should he abandon empire to feed cows?

Abandon, O companions! hope of the promised return! anxiety is gone, for it has become despair.'

One woman said, disquieted, 'Wherefore should we abandon hope of (seeing) Krishn?

" 'In the forest, hill, and on the bank of the Yamuná, wheresoever the divine Krishn and Balarám had sported, beholding these same places, recollection truly returns of our souls' Lord Hari.' Thus having spoken, she added,

" 'This Braj has become a sea of grief, his name is a boat in the midst of a stream;

Those who are sinking in the water of the pangs of separation; when will Krishn bring them across?

How has the recollection that he was the Lord of Cowherdesses departed? Does he not feel some sense of shame on account of his name?'

"Having heard these words, Udho, having reflected in his inmost heart, began to say, 'All praise to these cowherdesses, and to their firmness! that they have abandoned all they possessed, and remained immersed in contemplation of the divine Krishn Chand.' Sire! Udho, indeed, having beheld their affection, was just then applauding them in his heart of hearts, when, at that moment, all the cowherdesses arose and stood up, and conducted Udho, with much ceremony to his house. Having perceived their affection, he also, having arrived there, and having taken his food and reposed him-

self, spoke to them of the divine Krishn, and bestowed on them extreme gratification. Then all the cowherdesses, having shewn their veneration for Udho, and placed before him many offerings, joined their hands, and said, with much humility, 'Illustrious Udho! go you and say to Hari: Lord! formerly, indeed, you were shewing us much favour; you took us by the hand, and led us with you in your wanderings; now you have gained royal power, and, at the bidding of a woman of the city, Kubjá, you have sent a letter to us (advising) penance. We, weak women, uninstructed in holy rites, have not so much as learnt of our spiritual preceptor the initiatory mystical prayer to be addressed to the patron Deity; whence, then, should we have spiritual discernment?

To him (Hari) our childhood's love was given; what have we known of the rites of penance?

Why did not Hari himself allot our penance as he departed? This is not fit subject for a message.

Udho! do you explain and say to him, our lives are departing; let him come and preserve them.'

Sire! thus having spoken, all the cowherdesses, indeed, fixing their thoughts on Hari, continued glad, and Udho, having made his obeisance to them, arose thence, and, seated on his car, came to Gobardhan. There he abode a few days, and, when he again set out thence, then, wherever the divine Krishn Chand had sported, there Udho came, and continued in each place two or four days.

"At length, after some days, he returned again to Brindaban, and, having gone to Nand and Jasodá, joined his hands, and said, 'Seeing your kindness, I have remained so many days in Braj; now, with your permission, I will proceed to Mathurá.'

The saintly Shukadev said, "Sire! on a time, the divine Krishn Chand, the Root of Joy, and Balarám, the Abode of Pleasure, were sitting in a palace studded with jewels, when Baladev said to the Supreme Being, 'Brother! when Kans sent to call us from Brindá-ban, and we went to Mathurá, then I and you gave this promise to the cowherdesses, and Nand and Jasodá, that we would quickly come and visit them; whereas we have not been there, but have come and fixed our abode in Dwáriká. They will be thinking of us, and if you will give me permission, then I will go and visit my birth-place, and, after having comforted them, will return.' The Supreme Being said, 'Very well!' On hearing these words, Balarám took leave of all, and, taking his ploughshare and club, mounted his chariot and departed.

Balarám reached Gokul, where he saw Nand and Jasodá, who inquired after the welfare of Krishna.

“When Jasodá, being afflicted, began to weep, then Balarám entered into many explanations with her, and, having consoled and comforted her, restored her confidence. Afterwards, having taken refreshment, and eaten betel, he went forth from the house, when, what does he behold?—that all the young women of Braj, with wasted frames and dejected minds, dishevelled hair and squalid appearance, desponding, and oblivious of their household duties, deeply imbued with love, intoxicated with the emotions of youth, and singing the praises of Hari, are wandering in various directions, agitated with the pangs of separation, and inebriated with desire. Sire! on beholding Balarám, all were much pleased, and ran up hastily, and, having made obeisance, joined their hands, and, standing on all sides of him, began to ask him questions and to say, ‘Tell us, Balarám, Abode of Happiness! now where dwells the beautiful Syám,\* our Life? does Bihári ever think of us? or, having obtained a kingly throne, has he forgotten all his former love? Since he departed hence he has but once, by the hand of Udho, sent us a message, and that enjoining penance! after that he has taken no thought of any of us; and now he has gone and fixed his habitation in the sea; wherefore, then, should he inquire after any of us?’ On hearing these words, a cowherdess exclaimed, ‘Sister! who would make trial of the love of Hari, after seeing the manner in which he has treated us all?’

He belongs to none, and loves none; he who has turned his back on his father and mother.

He could not remain an hour without Rádhá, and that, forsooth, is what causes him to stop away.

Again, what fruit have we, who, abandoning our households, neglecting our family honour, and the respect of the world, have left our children and husbands to form an intimacy with Hari? At length, having caused us to embark on the vessel of love, he has abandoned us amid the sea of separation. Now we hear that Krishna has gone to Dwáriká, and contracted many marriages, and that he has brought and wedded the sixteen thousand and one hundred princesses whom Bhaumásur had confined; and now sons and grandsons have been borne to him by these wives, wherefore then should he leave them and come here?’ Having heard this speech, another cowherdess

\* *Syam*, i.e. dark-blue; a name of Krishna.

said, 'Sister! do not you entertain regret for the words of Hari, for Udhho, indeed, when he came, caused us to hear all his qualities.' Having said thus much, she added, 'Friend! now listen to my advice,

Let us now touch the feet of Balarám, and continue to sing his good qualities.

He is fair of body, not dark; he will not speak deceitfully.'

Sankarshan \* heard and replied, 'For your sakes I have made this journey.

When I departed, I told you I would come, and for this Krishna sent me to Braj.

I will stay two months, and dance the circular dance; I will fulfil all your desires'

"Sire! Balarám, after saying thus much, gave orders to all the young women of Braj, saying, 'To-night is the full moon of the month Chaitr, do you put on your ornaments and come into the woods, I will dance with you the circular dance. Having said this, Balarám departed at evening time to the wood; after him came all the young women of Braj also, having dressed themselves in fair garments and ornaments, and adorned themselves from head to foot. They came and joined Baladev.

All stood with their heads bent down; the beauty of Haldhar cannot be described.

Of the colour of gold, he was robed in blue; his moon-like countenance and lotus-eyes fascinated all hearts.

In one ear, an earring diffused its radiant beauty, as though the sun and moon were united.

The other ear had drunk of the flavour of the celebrity of Hari; his ears had not a second earring.

On all parts of his body were many ornaments, whose beauty cannot be described.

Thus speaking, the fair ones fell at his feet, 'Engage in sports and the ecstatic circular dance with us.'

"Sire! on hearing these words, Balarám uttered the (mystical sound) Hún! On his pronouncing this word, all the things requisite for the circular dance came and were present. Then, indeed, all the cowherdesses abandoning reserve and diffidence, giving themselves up to the passion of love, took lutes, tabouras, cymbals, pipes, flutes, and other musical instruments, and began to play and sing, and making a merry sound, to gratify the Supreme Being, by dancing and gesticulation. Hearing and seeing their playing, singing, and dances, Baladev, also, much pleased, after drinking some spirituous liquors, joined them in the song and dance, and indulging in a variety of sportive blandishments, began to impart and receive pleasure. At that time, divinities, heavenly musicians and

\* A name of Balarám.



choristers, and gnomes, came, with their wives; and, seated on their cars, and singing the praises of the Supreme Being, were raining down flowers from mid-air. The moon, with its circle of stars, beholding the delight of the circular dance, was showering down ambrosia with its rays; and wind and water, also, were stilled."

Having related thus much of the history, the saintly Shukadev said, "Sire! in this same manner, Balarám, remaining in Braj during the two months of Chaitr and Baisákh, at night, indeed, engaged in the circular dance and other delights with the young women of Braj, and in the day-time gratified Nand and Jasodá, by talking to them of Hari. In this state, one day, at night-time, as they danced the circular dance, Balarám went,

And having reposed on the river's bank, Rám said there angrily,  
 'Yamaná, do thou come and flow here; lave me with thy thousand streams.  
 If thou dost not obey my words, thy waters shall be divided piece by piece.'

"Sire! when the Yamuná, through pride, heard the words of Balarám, as though it heard them not, then, indeed, Balarám, being incensed, dragged it with his plough, and brought it to him and bathed. From that same day the Yamuná is still crooked there. Afterwards, having bathed, Balarám, having bestowed pleasure on all the cowherdesses, took them with him, and departing from the wood, came to the city. There,

The cowherdesses said, 'Listen, Lord of Braj! take us too along with you.'

Having heard this speech, Balarám consoled and comforted the cowherdesses, and having inspired them with confidence, took leave of them, and went to Nand and Jasodá to bid them farewell. Afterwards, having talked to and exhorted them also, and inspirited them, he remained there some days, took leave and departed to Dwáriká, and in a few days arrived there."

The saintly Shukadev said, "Sire! the divine Krishn Chand always abode in the city of Dwáriká; increase and prosperity shone always in every house of the descendants of Yadu; men and women were always finding some new attire in dress and ornaments; they rubbed their bodies with sandal and fragrant paste, and perfumed themselves; the merchants, having cleansed and swept the shops, roads, and crossways, caused them to be sprinkled, and there traders of various countries brought various articles for sale; in different places Bráhmans recited the Vedas; in every house people heard or

narrated stories and Puránas ; good and holy men sang the praises of Hari during the eight watches ; charioteers, yoking continually chariots and cars, brought them to the royal gate ; demigods, heroes, champions, and warriors of the race of Yadu, mounted on cars, chariots, elephants, and horses, came to salute the king ; skilful persons amused him by dancing, singing, and playing ; panegyrista and bards, chanting eulogiums, received elephants, horses, clothes, weapons, grain, money, and ornaments of gold, studded with jewels."

Having related thus much of the history, the saintly Shukadev said to the king, "Sire! in that direction indeed, in the royal city of king Ugrasen, in this manner, various kinds of amusement were going on, and in this direction the divine Krishn Chand, the Root of Joy, with his sixteen thousand one hundred and eight youthful wives ever indulged in sports. At times, the youthful ladies, overpowered by their love, dressed themselves in the guise of their Lord ; at times, the enamoured Hari adorned his wives. And the sports and pastimes which they mutually practised exceed description ; I cannot describe them, that could only be done by a spectator."

Having said this much, Shukadev said, "Sire! one night the divine Krishn Chand was diverting himself with all his youthful wives, and beholding the various actions of the Supreme Being, celestial choristers and musicians, playing on lutes, timbrels, pipes, and kettle-drums, were singing the excellences (of the Deity), and there was a harmonious concert, when, as they sported, a thought entered the mind of the Supreme Being, whereupon, taking all with him, he went to the bank of a lake, and, entering the water, began to sport therein. Then, as they played in the water, all the women, being filled with blissful love for the divine Krishn Chand, lost their corporeal and mental consciousness, and seeing the male and female *Anas Cassra* seated on opposite sides of the lake, and calling to each other, they said,

'O ruddy goose ! why dost thou call out mournfully ? why sleepest thou not at night from separation from thy lover ?

Deeply agitated, thou callest ever for thy husband ; to us thou ever discourtest of thy spouse.

We, indeed, are become the slave-girls of Krishna ;' thus having spoken, they went on.

"Again they began to address the ocean, saying, 'O Sea ! thou who drawest deep sighs, and wakest night and day, art thou then separated from any one, or grievest thou for the fourteen gems thou

hast lost?' Having spoken thus again, beholding the moon, they said, 'O Moon! why remainest thou with wasted body and sad mind; what, hast thou consumption, that thy frame daily wanes and increases; or whilst thou beholdest the divine Krishn Chand, art thou fascinated in body and mind as we are?'

Having related thus much of the history, the saintly Shukadev said to the king, "Sire! in this same manner, all the youthful women addressed many words to the wind, the clouds, the cuckoo, the mountains, rivers, and swans, which you can imagine. Afterwards, all the women sported with the divine Krishn Chand, and ever continued in his service, and in singing the praises of the Supreme Being, and derived enjoyment such as their minds desired; while Krishn discharged his duties, as a householder, as became him. Sire! to the sixteen thousand one hundred and eight queens of the divine Krishn Chand, whom I have before mentioned, to each of them was born ten sons and one daughter, and their offspring was numberless; I cannot describe it. But I know thus much, that there were thirty millions, eighty-eight thousand, and one hundred schools, for teaching the offspring of the divine Krishn, and as many teachers. Moreover, among all the sons and grandsons of the divine Krishn Chand, not one was deficient in beauty, strength, prowess, wealth, or piety; every one was superior to the other; I am unable to describe them."

Having said thus much, the Rishi said, "Sire! I have sung of the sports of Braj and of Dwáriká, which give pleasure to all. Whoever recites them with affection shall, without doubt, obtain supreme beatitude. Whatever advantage results from performing penance, sacrifice, alms, and religious vows, or bathing at places of pilgrimage, the same results from hearing the history of Hari."

## CHAPTER V.

## RELIGIOUS DOCTRINES OF THE SECT.

VALLÁBHÁCHARYA, his son Vithalnáthji, and all his descendants, are known as the incarnations of the god Krishna. The object of their incarnation has been stated in Nijvartá. According to this authority, the residence of Krishna is denominated Gouloka, a place far above the three worlds, and having, at five hundred millions of yojans below it, the separate regions of Vishnu and Síva. The region of Krishna Gouloka is indestructible, whilst all the rest is subject to annihilation. In the centre of it abides Krishna, of the colour of a dark cloud, in the bloom of youth, clad in yellow raiment, splendidly adorned with celestial gems, and holding a flute. He is in the full and eternal enjoyment of his wife Rádhá and three hundred millions of gopis or female companions, each gopi having a separate palace of her own, with three millions of female attendants. Two of these gopis, named Priyá and Chandrávati, once quarrelled about Krishna. Priyá sent for Krishna to spend a night with her; and as Krishna was, according to engagement, going to her palace, he unfortunately met Chandrávati, who, knowing his intention, contrived to seduce him to her own palace, telling Krishna that she saw Varshabhánu, Priyá's father, going along the road. Krishna, fearing the anger of Priyá's father, went with Chandrávati. When this came to the knowledge of Priyá, the two gopis quarrelled, and cursed each other, their imprecations being to the effect that they should fall from

heaven to the earth with all their retinue and everything belonging to them. Upon this Krishna, out of affection to both of them, promised that he would descend as a man to work out their salvation, and restore them to their original abode in the highest of heavens. Priyá, who was the first to fall from heaven, appeared on the earth as a new born babe at a spot called Champáranya. The fall of Chandrávati followed, and she made herself known as a child at Charañádiri. Krishna followed them both, and appeared first incarnate in the person of Vallabháchárya, at Champáranya, and at the moment of his birth effected salvation for Priyá. In his second incarnation, in the person of Vithalnáthji, Vallabháchárya's son, at Charañádiri, he effected salvation for the second gopi, and thus restored them both to their former state of bliss in the highest of heavens. Each of the gopis had, previous to their descent to the earth, three millions of attendants in the heavens, some of whom accompanied their mistresses at the time of their fall; while, of those who remained behind, multitudes are daily descending, one after the other, in the persons of the followers of the sect, to secure whose recovery to the heavenly abode the successive generations of Vallabháchárya are born as incarnations of the god Krishna. They redeem their followers by sending them to Gouloka, where the disciple, if a male, is changed into a female, who obtains the everlasting happiness of living in sexual intercourse with Krishna in the heavens.

We now come to the doctrines promulgated by Vallabháchárya, and which constitute his claim to be the founder of the sect. He condensed his teachings into the compact form of the Pushti Marga, or the way of enjoyment, a sort of creed for the convenience of those of his votaries who had neither leisure, education, nor inclination to study his doctrines in detail, and who were satisfied to adopt the faith in which they had been brought up.

According to Dwárkesh, there are ten principles of the Pushti Márga, or the sect of Vallabháchárya. They are known as DAS MARAMS, meaning ten principles or ten sects, and are as follows :—

- (1.) To secure the firm support of Vallabháchárya.
- (2.) To exercise chiefly the worship of Krishna.
- (3.) To forsake the sense of public or Vaidik opinion, and be supplicant to Gopisha (Krishna).
- (4.) To sing praises with feelings of humility.
- (5.) To believe that I am a gopi\* of Vraj.
- (6.) To swell the heart with the name of Krishna.
- (7.) To forsake not his commands for a moment.
- (8.) To put faith in his words and doings.
- (9.) To adopt the society of the good, knowing them divine.
- (10.) To see not the faults, but speak the truth.

Whether the Siddhánta Rahasya be intended as a commentary upon this Pushti Márga or not, it is evidently an amplification of some of the tenets of the sect; Vallabháchárya gives it as a direct revelation with which he was inspired. The text and the translation of it are as follows :—

श्रावणस्वामन्त्रे यत्रै एकादशां महानिधि । साक्षाद्भवता प्रोक्तं  
तदचरय उच्यते ॥ १ ॥ ब्रह्मसंबंधकरणात्मवेषां देहत्रीवयोः । सर्वदो-  
षनिवृत्तिर्हि दोषाः पंचविधाः स्मृताः ॥ २ ॥ सहजा देशकान्त्या  
लोकवेदनिरूपिताः । संयोगत्राः स्पर्शत्राय न मन्तव्याः कदाचन ॥ ३ ॥  
अन्यथा सर्वदोषाणां न निवृत्तिः कथंचन । असमर्पितवस्तूनां तस्मा-  
द्बर्जनाचारैत ॥ ४ ॥ निवेदिभिः समर्थैव सर्वं कुर्यादिति स्थितिः । न  
मतं देवदेवस्य स्वामिभुक्तिसमर्पणम् ॥ ५ ॥ तस्मादादी सर्वकार्ये सर्ववस्तु-  
समर्पणम् । दत्तापहारवचनं तथा च सकञ्चं हरेः ॥ ६ ॥ न ग्राह्यमिति  
वाक्यं हि भिन्नमार्गपरं मतम् । सेवकानां यथा लोके व्यवहारः प्रसिध्य-  
ति ॥ ७ ॥ तथा कार्ये समर्थैव सर्वेषां ब्रह्मता ततः । भङ्गाले सर्वदोषाणां

\* Female companion of Rádha, one of Krishna's wives.

गुणदोषादिवर्णनम् ॥ ८ ॥ गङ्गात्वेन निरूप्यं स्यात्तद्वदपि विव  
हि ॥ ९ ॥

“ At midnight on *Ekdashi*, in the month of *Shráwan-shud*, God visibly uttered the (following) words which are here repeated word for word :

“ By entering into relation with **BRAHMA**, all persons' sins of body and mind are washed away. These sins are said to be of five kinds, viz., those which are congenital; those which owe their origin to time and place; those described in profane works and in the Vedas; those which are results of intimate association, and such as are produced by contact. These sins are not, and are never believed in, (after the above relation has been established). Otherwise (that is when such a relation has not been contracted) expiation of sins never takes place. That which has not been in the first instance dedicated should not be accepted. Offerers, after making their offerings, should do with them what they like; such is the rule. That offering which has (in the first instance) been enjoyed by its owner is not acceptable by the God of gods. Therefore in the first instance, in all doings, all things should be dedicated. That that which is given should not be taken, because the whole comes to belong to Hari, is the doctrine of other sects. (With us) the relation which subsists in the world between (a master and his) servants holds good; and everything should be done accordingly; that is, after dedicating, it should be enjoyed: hence it is that the *Brahmatva*, or the quality of **BRAHMA**, is obtained. As when all merits and demerits obtain the quality of *Gangá*,\* all of them promiscuously have the quality of *Gangá*; so now such is the case here. Thus is concluded, in *Siddhánta Bahasya*, composed by *Vallabháchárya*.”

Here we have the doctrine of the origin of sin, and its mode of expiation or absolution; and here is the first insinuation of the paramount importance of the *Gosáinji*, or *Guru*, as the direct mediator.

In the next extract we give will be found the punishments awarded by the doctrines of this sect to those who neglect due respect to their spiritual teachers, which is enforced as a paramount duty, the neglect of which involves fearful consequences.

\* The sacred river (*Ganges*).

The extracts given are translations of some of the articles of a work in Brijabháshá, written by Hariráyaji, the work itself being entitled "The sixty-seven sins and atonements, and their consequences."

32. Whoever holds (his) spiritual guide, and Sri Thákurji (or god) to be different and distinct, shall be born a *Sichánd*.\*

34. Whoever disobeys the orders of (his) spiritual guide, shall go to *Asipátra*† and other dreadful hells, and lose all his religious merits.

37. Whoever divulges the secrets of (his) spiritual guide, or of Sri Thákurji, shall for three births be born a dog.

39. Whoever, before his spiritual guide, or Sri Thákurji, sits in the posture called *Padmásan*, shall be born a serpent.

54. Whoever displays (his) learning before his spiritual guide, shall for three births be dumb. For three births he shall be a dog (or) an ass.

55. Whoever displays activity before his spiritual guide shall be born a *jarakha*.

56. Whoever, without paying his respects to his spiritual guide, performs worship, (his worship) shall become entirely fruitless.

59. Whoever shows the soles of his feet to his spiritual guide, or to Sri Thákurji, shall be born a serpent for ten years.

The next extract we shall give is a sort of commentary upon the Pushti Márga, enforcing its tenets, with the penalties attached to the neglect of them. It is written by the celebrated Śri Gokulnáthji, the fourth son of Vithalnáthji, whose followers are so exclusive as to avoid all intercourse with other sectaries. The work is written in Brijabháshá, and is entitled "Vachnámrat (Precept as sweet as nectar) of the Pushti Márga."

"He who, getting angry in his heart, maligns (his) Guru, and utters harsh terms towards his Guru, becomes dumb, and after that he becomes a serpent. He is then born a creature of the region of the vegetable kingdom, and after that he is born a creature of the region of the dead (or ghost). As he (Vaishnava) remembers Sri Bhagván (god), in the same way he remembers and repeats in his

\* A kind of bird.

† The name of a dreadful hell.



mind the name of his Guru. One having become a Vaishṇava should not see faults of (or in) others. He should not hear them with his ears. Even if he should see them with his eyes and hear them with his ears, still he should not consider anything of them in (his) mind. He understands or (says to himself) as follows:—I, who having fallen into this avidya (ignorance) in the form of máyá (delusion) see nothing but the faults; (but) there is not a particle of fault therein. . . . He does not consider himself happy by the acquisition of anything. By hearing the Śástras of the duties of *Grahasta* doctrines from any one, he does not allow himself to be absorbed into the Lowkik and Vaidik. The moral precepts of the Śástras connected with the Pushti Marga should be freely heard and related. All other Śástras cause one to swerve from the Pushti Marga. This should be firmly believed in one's own mind."

Herein the Guru is assimilated to Śri Bhagván, and severe punishment threatened for evil acts towards the teacher.

The next extract is a laudation of Śri Gosáinji or Vithalnáthji, the son of Vallabháchárya. It is fulsome in its comparison, and is extracted from a manuscript in Brijabháshá, entitled Astákshar Tiká. Its evident object is distinctly to enhance the supremacy of the Mahárájas, by the commendation of their ancestors, whose qualities it is here insinuated they inherit. It runs thus:—

"Behold! how is Sri Gosáinji.\* He is totally without desires; he is without wants; he is with desires fulfilled; he desires all virtues; he is possessed of all virtues; he is the very personification of the most excellent being (God); he is all incarnations; he is as beautiful as a million of Kándevas;\* he is possessed of the six virtues; he is the head of all those who appreciate sensual or intellectual pleasure, or poetry; he is desirous of fulfilling the wishes of his devotees. Such is Sri Gosáinji. Why should he want anything? He is himself the creator of the endless crores of worlds wherein his glory has diffused all over. He is the inspirer (or propeller) of the souls of all animated beings. He is praised by Brahma, Siva, Indra, and other gods. Such is Sri Gosáinji."

We next take a passage from a commentary, in Brijabháshá, on a work called the "Chaturślocki Bhágvat," the

\* Vithalnáthji, son of Vallabháchárya.

† Kandevas is god of love.

object of which is to exhibit the paramount importance of the Guru.

“Therefore in Kali Yuga there is no means of salvation similar to worship. Therefore when a man seeks protection of Sri Acháryaji\* alone, all his wishes are fulfilled. We should regard our Guru as God, nay, even greater than God; for if God gets angry, the Guru-deva is able to save (one from the effects of God’s anger); whereas if Guru is displeased nobody is able to save (one from the effects of the Guru’s displeasure).”

The next extract also makes the Guru superior to Hari (god) himself, in his power of salvation, and ordains offerings and promulgates the idea of the Mahárájas being the manifest incarnation of the deity. It is from a work in Brijabháshá, entitled “Guru Śeva, or Guru Worship.”

“When Hari (god) is displeased (with any one) the Guru saves him (from the effects of Hari’s displeasure). But when Guru is displeased with any one no one can save him (from the effects of the Guru’s displeasure). Therefore a Vaishṇava should serve the Guru with his body and money, and please the Guru.

“But the principal Gurus are Sri Acháryaji and Sri Gosáinji and the whole family called the Vallabha family. They are all Gurus as is mentioned in the Sarvottamji.

“Therefore God and the Guru are necessarily to be worshipped. If a man worships God he goes to Vyápi Vaikuntha.† But, by the worship of God, he goes to Vyápi Vaikuntha only when he worships the Guru. The worship of the Guru is to be performed in the same way as the worship of God.

“Offerings are to be made to the Guru. There is no particular quantity of offerings (ordained). You are to make such an offering as you feel inclined to make. But you are to reflect thus: ‘In this world there are many kinds of creatures: of them all we are most fortunate that we have sought the protection of the illustrious Vallabhácháryaji, Sri Gosáinji, and their descendants, who are manifestly (incarnations of) God the excellent Being himself.’”

Here we have the manifestation of the Mahárájas in their extreme cupidity. In order that the offerings to them should be as unlimited as possible, it is not prescribed what they are

\* Vallabháchárya.

† The highest of heavens, Gooloka.

to be. It is also ordained that they should be worshipped, and the promised reward for this is the highest heaven, whereas the mere worship of God entitles only to an inferior paradise.

We come now to a most important series of extracts, which fully develop the entire doctrine of adulterine intercourse. These are evidently inculcated to satisfy the lewd propensities of a libidinous priesthood, who, under the shield of religion, avert the avenging hand of outraged manhood, which suffers the chastity of its females to be openly violated, and the sacred purity of home defiled. They may well ask, "are these my children?" when the first form of adjuration that their religion demands is the Samarpan, the consecration of *tan*, *man*, and *dhan*, viz., "of body, organs of sense, life, heart, and other faculties, and wife, house, family, property, and self," to Krishna, or his representative, the Maháráj. The term *tan* implies the body in all its relations; *man* is the mind, with all its faculties and qualities; and *dhan*, as explained by the Mahárájas, signifies that the sectaries should place at their disposal sons, wives, daughters, and everything else before applying them to their own use.

The first passage we shall cite is from a commentary by Gokulnáthji (in Sanskrit, called "Virchita Bhakti Siddhánta Vivrutí") upon his grandfather's work called "Siddhánta Rahasya."

तस्मादादौ स्तोपभोगात्पूर्वमेव सर्ववस्तुपदेन भार्योपूत्रादीनामपि समर्पणं कर्तव्यं विवाहानन्तरं स्तोपभोगे सर्वकार्ये सर्वकार्यनिमित्तं तत्कार्योपभोगिवस्तुसमर्पणं कार्यं समर्पणं कृत्वा पश्चात्तामि तानि कार्याणि कर्तव्यानीत्यर्थः ॥

"Therefore in the beginning, even before ourselves enjoying, wives, sons, etc., should be made over; because of the expression, "Sarvavastu" (i.e. all things). After marriage, even before ourselves using her, [her (the wife's) offering should be made with the

view that she may become useful to ourselves. So likewise, even after the birth of a son, sons, etc., should also be made over]. On all occasions, and on account of all occasions, the thing to be used on that occasion should be made over. After making the things over, the different acts should be done."

This commentary thus enjoins on the sectaries total abnegation of self in behoof of the Maháráj. The next extract designates the Maháráj by the character which he is so ambitious to sustain among his deluded and outraged votaries. In Vithalesha-ratnavivarana :

"The Achárya is called '*Shrishá*,' which is rendered by the commentator to mean the '*Priya*,' or husband of many women. He is also described as 'the ocean of the *Rás lila*,' and as one whose sole aim is the *Rás lila*, which means amorous sports with many women."

A confirmation of this is found in a manuscript copy, in Brijabháshá, of Pushti Praváha Maryádá Tiká, by Hararáji.

"It is stated in Pushti Márga that God abides in the houses of the Vaishnavas by the adulterine love which (I) now describe : as when we bring another's son to our house, and (or) when we keep another's husband in our house by any mode whatsoever, he is won over by excessive affection. If we serve by our body, mind, wealth, or by any other mode, then another's son or husband will remain with us. In the same way does God ever abide in our house in union."

We may ask how should God abide in these houses but by his conceptions in the progeny of the Vaishnava, through the medium of the Maháráj.

It would seem that the fatuity of the sect of the Vaishnavas has attained its culmination ; for in the next extract, which is rather long, and of modern date, being published in Oct. 1860, by the Vaishnava Dharma Prasáraka Mandali (Society for the diffusion of the Vaishnava Religion), in a book printed in Gujarati, called "Swadharmavardhak and Sanshaya Chhedak," that is to say, "Promoter of our religion and destroyer of doubt," the apology or explanation of "adulterine love" was

attempted. It was clearly understood by these sectaries that society was aroused, and that it was necessary to do something to allay the ferment. The extract commences at page 27 of No. 2, vol. i., and runs thus:—

“In the above chapter it is stated that God himself has become, by parts, all the forms: consequently this whole universe is his spirit; consequently he is at play with his own spirit. With God, therefore, (the relation of) my-own-and-another's does not exist. All is his own. Consequently the sin of adultery does not affect Him. The sin of enjoying other people's things affects this world. With God nothing whatever is alien. God has therefore ordained the sin of adultery for this world. Now the ignorant say this: ‘Should a daughter or a son propose to (her or his) father to become his wife, what sin and immorality are contained therein. How sinful, therefore, are those who entertain towards God the adulterine love.’ Thus have they argued. Now the intelligent should consider this matter as follows: The gopis made the adulterine love with Sri Krishna, (is it to be maintained that) therefore they committed sin? Further, Mahadevaji and Ramachandraji married women of this world, namely, Parvatiji and Sitaji; and Sri Krishna married sixteen thousand princesses; (now) it would follow from the argument of these fools that they too acted improperly. If, as between God and this world, there has existed only the relation of father and children (as maintained by them), then Sri Krishna would not have married these maidens. But in God all relations abide. Both man and woman have sprung from God. Wherefore, with God, the two species of man and woman do not exist. Both these are the spirit of God. Consequently he is at play with his own spirit. In that no sin is incurred either by God or by (this) world. If any sin be committed (by such conduct) Sri Krishna would not have married the daughters of the kings. Thus (you) see how much contrary to the Sastras have they represented the subject, and confounded the ignorant.

“If there be any sin committed in entertaining the adulterine love towards God, then the most excellent Being would never have granted to the Vedas their request to entertain the adulterine love. The story is related by Brahmaji to Bhrigu Rishi in Brahád Váman Purán, which we now recount for the information of the people.

“Having heard the long offered prayers of the Vedas, the Lord spoke in a heavenly voice: ‘Oh! you Traditions, I am pleased with

you; wherefore ask such favours as you may desire.' When Sri Krishna so spoke, the Traditions said: 'Oh Lord, we regard all thy forms, such as Náráyan and others, as Brahmá, invested with attributes, in regard to which our belief is not full. And as to that which we call (usually) by the term Brahmá, the form of which is without attributes, and which is different from the indestructible Brahmá,—that form is beyond the reach of our mind, and our speech therefore beyond our knowledge. We request thee therefore to cause us to see that form.' Thus spoke the Traditions of the Vedas. Thereupon Sri Krishna, the most excellent being, showed them his all occupying heaven, and allowed himself to be seen. The kind of sight which the Traditions had on that occasion is thus described:—On that occasion, the Traditions, having seen the form of Sri Krishna, commenced to praise him thus: 'Oh, Sri Krishna, thy form is more beautiful than even a crore of Kámdevas, at the sight whereof desire is produced in us. Please, therefore, satisfy our hearts' desire, so that we may enjoy with thee in the form of women.' If thou wishest to grant our request, this is what we require.' When the Traditions of the Vedas spoke thus, the most excellent Being said, 'Oh, Traditions, this your hearts' desire is very difficult to be satisfied, and very difficult to carry out; however, as I consent thereto, your hearts' desire shall be satisfied; but it will not be satisfied just now.' He further said, 'When the Sárasvat age shall arrive, you will be born as gopis in Vrij. There, in the forest of Vrindá, I will gratify your desires in a chorus, and your adulterine love for me will exceed all (other love). By means of such a love you will gain me, and your object will be thus accomplished.' In this manner Sri Krishna told the Traditions to gain him by adulterine love. These traditions of the Vedas, who became the Gopikás, are called the traditional persons.

"In the same way it is related in the Rámayan as follows:—(When) Sri Rámachandraji proceeded to the forest of Dandaka (he found) there sixteen thousand Rishis (Sages) called Agnikumár performing penance. These Rishis, on seeing the person of Sri Rámachandraji, became enamoured. Thereupon, folding their hands, they made a request to Sri Rámachandraji thus: 'Oh Lord, a desire is produced in us to enjoy with thee in the form of women. Wherefore be pleased to gratify this our hearts' desire.' Rámachandraji thereupon, having been pleased, granted their request (by saying), 'This, your hearts' desire, will be gratified during the incarnation of Krishna.' Hence these Agnikumár Rishis became gopis in Vrij,

whose name is Agnikumár Gopikás. The tale thereof is recounted in the Kurma Purán, and also in Atharva-veda, thus: 'These Agnikumár Rishis, having been born as woman in Vrij, also attained the most excellent Being with the Traditions.'

"Thus it is related in the Vedas and Puráñas at various places that by whatsoever faith this soul may serve God, Hari gratified her desires accordingly. If there be any sin committed in the adulterine love, why did Sri Krishna and Sri Rámachandraji grant them their wish to be women. They would have been displeased with them, and then have punished them. But God is all form. He is in the form of father, and he is in the form of husband; he is in the form of brother, and he is in the form of son. In whatsoever shape one may wish to love God, his wishes are complied with accordingly. Nand-rájji and Vásudevji asked the boon of the son-form, and their wishes of having God for their son were granted. The gopis loved God as their paramour, and he became a paramour, and made them happy. And this the ignorant say is sin. How contrary is what they say to the Vedas and Puráñas. On this subject a devotee has said in the Sáki (verse) thus: 'What can the ass who feeds on the dung-hill know the pleasures of gardens? Sugar is his death, the world's refuse his life.' Meaning, the asses who feed on the dunghills, what do they know of the pleasures of gardens? that such and such pleasures are to be had in the gardens! By eating sugar the ass dies, and by eating the rubbish that lies on dunghills he lives.

"Similarly those devotees who long for the Para-brahma (Divine Spirit), their life is sustained by this very adulterine love. What could the non-devotees know of this love? They wish for the love of hell. (To them) to get (good) bodies, women, and property is to meet with God. Even by experience it is clearly known that there is no love like adulterine love. We are therefore enjoined in the Sástras to feel in Hari a love like the adulterine love. For see! although the adulteress may be engaged in the household work, yet day and night her mind is directed to the object of meeting her paramour; and if her paramour goes to a foreign country, in consequence of her separation from him, she does not relish her food, does not like to wear good ornaments, and by the excessive grief consequent on the separation she even gives up her life. To feel such love towards God is described in the Sástras as the most excellent thing. Of such love these fools say that it is loathsome. But it is nowhere mentioned that by the adulterine love we should carry on a criminal intercourse with God; because our souls are not

qualified like the gopis, nor could our souls have immediate connection with God. We will illustrate this by an anecdote. A certain woman was one evening going to her paramour. At the same time a Fakír was sitting in her way praying to God. But as it was dark she did not observe the Fakír, and accidentally struck him with her foot in passing, of which she was unconscious. Just then the Fakír did not say anything; but when that woman returned, the Fakír addressed her thus: 'Oh hussy, you struck me with your foot and passed on; but then, my attention being fixed on God, I did not speak.' Thereupon the woman replied thus: 'Had your attention been so fixed on God, you would not have been conscious of my having struck you with my foot. See, owing to my contemptible love in my paramour, I did not observe you, and was not even conscious of having struck you with my foot. Oh man, had your love really been in God, and your attention fixed upon him, how could you have known of my foot having struck you?' No sooner had the Fakír heard this than he seized his own ear, and prostrated himself at her feet and said: 'Oh mother, what you have now observed is true. From this day I have adopted you as my spiritual guide.' In this anecdote also a lesson is drawn from love. As Dattatraya Rishi derived instruction from twenty-four things, so should we draw the moral from the adulterine love."

We shall now see how the position of their sectaries is strengthened by a further citation from the works of Gokulnáthji, in a tract written by him in the Brijabháshá, entitled "Rasabhávana" (Love Faith). It is as follows:—

"Thus came Krishna to be called a great charioteer (a warrior). Similarly in this Pushti system (*i.e.* doctrines taught by Vallabháchárya), the most excellent Lord himself having conquered millions of Sváminijis in the Vrij devotees' forest of sexual enjoyment, came to be called a great charioteer. Therefore he began to dance with Sri Sváminiji (the chief mistress) when he could not cope in dancing with Sváminiji, and was defeated in other sexual commerce.

"Thereafter the female companions (of Sri Sváminiji) having collected all her hair, and twisted it with a string, and tied it into a knot, wherefore the same should be regarded thus:—The string in the form of Sri Sváminiji, and the hair in the form of Krishna, having coupled together after enjoying in a contrary manner.



“There are maidens in the house of Jasodáji (mother of Krishna; they regard Krishna (who is now a child) as their husband. The maidens, therefore, prepare a swinging bed instead of a cradle, whereon they lay Krishna, and enjoy with him.

“The Lord plays with the followers of Pushti Marga (*i.e.* followers of Vallabhacharya). Such play is fearful to the opponents, whereas such play is poetic happiness (ecstasy) to devotees or initiated.

“The elephant’s ivory toys are (symbolic) of the internal desires of Sri Sváminiji (the chief mistress). So when she goes into the forest Sri Sváminiji, by means of those toys, she enkindles (in him) the desire to amuse or enjoy like elephants.

“Sri Chandrávaliji, and Sri Yamunáji, and the virgins, and all the married women of Vrij, join together in an humble speech to Sri Sváminiji thus: ‘Let us become your servants. We are not like you. We are your servants. How can we reach God in your presence? Still we are yours.’ Having heard this humble speech, Sri Sváminiji addressed them us: ‘Though sagacious and possessed of the sixty-four good qualities, yet she is guileless; though the foremost among the accomplished, yet she is guileless.’ Wherefore Sri Sváminiji, seeing the humility of all the females, was pleased, and spoke thus: ‘Your name is Vrij Ratna (*i.e.* the jewel of Vrij), for you are the jewel in Vrij; for there is no other love as the love of husband which you cherish towards God. Therefore you are the most excellent among the excellent. Therefore your love for him is greater than mine. Firstly, you keep yourselves always holy; you have no connection with any gopi. Even sons, husbands, etc., in this world are for show in the world’s intercourse, but they have no connection with you. And, secondly, you are harmless. You are useful in your sexual commerce. You have no harm or jealousy in you. Thirdly, you are penetrated with the passion of love. Your passion is for the different modes of sexual commerce. You are very dear in my heart. In your coupled form, you act as our servants, and with affection wait on us. Therefore Sri Sváminiji, being pleased, tells God thus: ‘Because they are dear to you, they are exceedingly dear to me. They should be therefore allotted separate groves, so that you might carry on sexual commerce separately with them.’

“Then Sri Sváminiji produces from her person millions of female companions. They were named Lalitá; Visákhá, and so forth. Those that were exceedingly skilful and beautiful in sexual com-

merce are called Lalitá; those that are very expert in the inverted and other postures or positions (at sexual commerce) are called Visákhás."

Here we have an exaltation of the Prem Ságar itself. Its most voluptuous verses are less lascivious than this; and "Love Faith" here mantles with its wings "the Ocean of Love," hovering over the deep abyss.

A remarkable instance of how strongly these doctrines impress the imagination of young females is related by the same Gokulnáthji, in his account of the two hundred and fifty-two devotees of his father, Vithalnáthji, the Śrī Gosáinji Mahárajī. It is written in Brijabháshá. The following is the story:—

"Now there was Ganga Kshatriáni, a female devotee of Śrī Gosáinji, who was living in that Máhábán. This is an account of her. The mother of that Gangábái was very beautiful, and she was also very good looking, and she was in the bloom of her age. On one occasion Gosáinji went to the Máhábán and put up at the house of a Vaishnava, and that Kshatriáni was then residing close to the house of that Vaishnava. That Kshatriáni paid her homage to Śrī Gosáinji, when she witnessed a very great beauty equal to a crore of Kandrapas.\* Feelings of lust were then excited in that Kshatriáni, and she then became very much enamoured; so that she did not feel easy without seeing Śrī Gosáinji once daily. So she daily got up and came to Śrī Gokul, and having seen Śrī Gosáinji, she used then to go to her house; and she constantly said in her mind, 'Were I to meet him in a solitary or private place, the wishes of my heart would be fulfilled.' But she could not find an opportunity. Then one day that Kshatriáni thought in her mind, 'When Śrī Gosáinji goes to the privy I will go there.' So one day that Kshatriáni remained concealed in the privy, and afterwards Śrī Gosáinji went to the privy, when that Kshatriáni said, 'Maháraj, pray fulfil the wishes which I have in my heart.' But Śrī Gosáinji refused, saying, 'I do not know anything about that matter.' That Kshatriáni then became very obstinate, when Śrī Gosáinji, getting angry, said, "Do not be obstinate, and the wishes of your heart will now be fulfilled without your leaving your house. These are my prophetic words, and therefore you may go home.' That Kshatriáni, having heard these words

\* Kandrapa is a god of love.

of Sri Gosáinji, went away. Afterwards one day, when that Kshatriáni was asleep, she dreamed a dream in her sleep that she had connection with Sri Gosáinji, and from that very day that Kshatriáni was in the family way. Afterwards, when the time of pregnancy was completed, she was delivered of a daughter. She was extremely beautiful, and was a fountain of good qualities. She was then named Gangábai. Then that girl grew up; after which she was caused to tell her name to Sri Gosáinji.'

The next extract will show what care the Mahárájas take to free from blame the immoral practices which their doctrines inculcate. It is a story of adultery between two low persons, expiated in blood, but rewarded by a re-birth in a very high social position.

"A narrative related first of all by Sri Ácháryaji with his own mouth to the Vaishnavas on a certain occasion, and afterwards related by Sri Gopináthji to the Vaishnavas. There was a Bhil and a Bhilan, being two persons, husband and wife. They used to go to a jungle and to bring firewood daily, and they used to maintain themselves by selling the wood. There was another Bhil, who was also in the habit of going to the same jungle to fetch wood, and an intimacy then rose between the wife of the one Bhil and the other Bhil. At first the two persons, husband and wife used to go together for wood. She then fell in love with the other man. Afterwards that woman commenced going for wood to another jungle with the other or (stranger) man, with whom she had contracted an intimacy. So the woman went with him to a jungle, and there was a temple of God in a certain spot in that jungle. The two persons having gone there used to sweep and clean the temple, and then rest themselves there. They did so for several days, when, being overpowered with love, they took to singing. They then both got up from that place and went to their respective houses. Afterwards some one came and told the husband of the woman that his wife lived, or was in love, with such and such a man, and that those two persons were in the habit of going to such and such a place in such and such a jungle. Afterwards, one day, the husband of the woman followed his wife to the jungle. The two persons went first, and having gone there they swept and cleared the spot all around the place of God that was there, and then sat there in happiness. The husband of the woman then witnessed, while standing there, all the acts of the two persons, and

when the two persons had completed their worldly\* (or carnal) pleasures, the husband of the woman killed them both on the spot. The angels of Dharmarāja then came for the two persons, and immediately after them came the angels of Vishṇu; when the angels of Vishṇu said to the angels of Yam, 'Why have you come here? Sri Thákurji (God) has conferred on them the best place (in the heaven), and these two persons will moreover obtain better and a more desirable place than this (in the heaven).' The angels of Vishṇu then took the two persons with them, and having gone there they made them stand before Sri Thákurji (God). When Sri Thákurji told the two persons to ask for anything they liked; they then, having folded their hands together (in a suppliant manner), made the following representation:—'Maháráj, we have committed a very mean act; what is the cause of your showing so great a regard towards us?' When the angels of Vishṇu told them as follows:—'It is true you two persons have committed a mean act, but you cleaned the temple of (God) and Sri Thákurji (God) has favorably accepted the service performed by you; and therefore you both have now obtained the best place (in the heaven). Having therefore become pleased with you, I tell you two persons that you may ask (for anything you like).' The two persons then said, 'Maháráj, if you are pleased with us, and wish to confer a favour, then we pray that we may be born in the mortal world, and that we, having become husband and wife, may serve you. Pray favour us with a compliance with this (request).' When Sri Thákurji (God) said, 'Go, your wishes will be fulfilled.' Then the two persons became incarnate in this world. The man was born a son of a Rájá, and the woman was born a daughter of a Rájá."

We are heartily glad we are approaching the termination of this odious subject, for the next extract will close the series. We have considered it necessary to make these quotations in order fully to elucidate the reprehensible tendencies of the doctrines of these sectaries in reference to "adulterine love." Perhaps, without such positive and certain proofs obtained from the Mahárájas themselves, our readers might have suspected us of misrepresenting or exaggerating the foul practices of these priests. Here, however, the public has the "plain unvarnished tale" of their hideous immorality.

The following extract suggests some remarks upon the strange infatuation of a people who might evidently be made pure and good if the delusion which corrupts them could be removed. The writer evidently had a heart to feel the virtue of the Banian, although not to loathe the perverting doctrines of his sect. The translation is from a book in Brijabháshá, containing the account of the eighty-four Vaishnavas.

“A narrative of Krishnadás Brahmin, a devotee of Sri Acháryaji, the great lord. Krishnadás was living in a village: he was a worshipper of Bhagvant (God). There were five or ten Vaishnavas who, on one occasion, were going to Adél for the purpose of paying their homage to Sri Acháryaji, the great lord. They came to the house of Krishnadás. At that time Krishnadás was not at home: he had gone out on some business, and the wife of Krishnadás was at home. When the Vaishnavas came to the village, Sri Krishnadás had gone out to some other village. After that she went inside the house and began to consider as to what she should do now. She then recollected that Banian Daimaro always said to her that she should meet him, and that he would give her what she might ask for. So she said to herself, ‘I will fetch provisions and other articles from his shop to-day, and will tell him, I will meet you to-day; give me the provisions and other articles that I require.’ Having made this determination, she set out, went to his shop, and having given a promise to him, the woman brought all the provisions and other articles, and having come home, prepared the dinner, and presented an offering of it to Sri Thákurji (God); and having removed the offering at the due time, she caused the Vaishnavas to feast on the blessed food, of which the Vaishnavas partook in good style. After that Krishnadás came home in the evening, met all the Vaishnavas, and after saluting them, he entered his house and asked his wife what the news was, and whether she had given food to the Vaishnavas. She replied that she had given them food. Then Krishnadás inquired whence she had got the provisions and other articles, when the woman related to him all that had taken place: Krishnadás was thereupon much pleased with his wife. Afterwards the husband and wife both jointly partook of the blessed food, and Krishnadás then went to the Vaishnavas and passed the whole night in talking of the praise of God. When it was morning, Krishnadás having dispatched all the Vaishnavas,

they walked away, and Krishnadás went with them for a short distance to see them off. Afterwards he came home, presented the food offering to Sri Thákurji (God), and then, having removed it, as usual he covered it up and placed it aside. When Krishnadás returned home in the evening, both the husband and the wife jointly partook of the blessed food. Krishnadás then said to his wife, 'You gave a promise yesterday to the Banian, and the Banian must be expecting you, and therefore the promise given to him must be fulfilled.' The wife thereupon, having rubbed her body with an ointment, and bathed herself, and having ornaments, as are usual among the women, she set out. It was the rainy season, and it had rained that day, and there was mud on the road, in consequence whereof Krishnadás said, 'If you place yourself on my shoulder I will convey you there and return, otherwise your feet will be soiled with mud, as there is a great deal of mud on the road; and if your feet should get soiled, the Banian would treat you with disrespect.' Krishnadás thereupon placed his wife on his shoulder, and put her down near the shop of the Banian, when the woman called out to the Banian and asked him to open the door. The Banian then opened the door and took the woman inside, and then brought her some water to wash her feet with, when the woman said to the Banian, 'My feet are not soiled with mud.' The Banian then said, 'There is a great deal of mud on the road, and how is it that your feet are free from it?' Then the woman said to the Banian, 'You had better proceed with your business;' when the Banian said, 'You must tell me the circumstance.' The woman then said to the Banian, 'My husband placed me on his shoulder, brought me here, and went away.' On hearing the account, the Banian was struck with wonder, and he questioned her on the whole subject, and asked the cause of it, and requested her to tell him all, when the woman related to him all that had occurred. On hearing it the Banian thought of himself with contempt, and said, 'Happy is your life whose mind is so pure;' and having put his hands together in a suppliant manner, he saluted her, and said, 'Pardon me my offence: regard me with kindness; you are my sister.'"

We have thus terminated our account of the Maháráj doctrines. We think it cannot be read without exciting indignation against the priesthood who promulgate these immoralities; and perhaps not without provoking pity and contempt for those who submit to their domination. We hope

that the full exhibition of these enormities made in the extracts already given, and in the next following chapters, will help towards the eradication of a vile and debasing superstition. If this work should at all contribute to that good end, we shall have reaped a rich reward.

We shall conclude this chapter with a list of the various books, written in Brijabháshá language, which are considered as authorities by the sect. The first thirty-nine are translations from the Sanskrit, with commentaries, and the rest are original, in Brijabháshá language :

- |                              |                             |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. Sarvottam.                | 25. Sarn-áshtaka.           |
| 2. Vallabh-áshtaka.          | 26. Námávali-áchárají.      |
| 3. Krishna-premámrita.       | 27. Bhujanga-práyn-áshtaka. |
| 4. Vithalesha-ratna-vivarna. | 28. Námávali Gusáiji.       |
| 5. Yamun-áshtaka.            | 29. Siddhánta-bhávaná.      |
| 6. Bála-bhodha.              | 30. Siddhánta-rahasya.      |
| 7. Siddhánta-muktávali.      | 31. Virodha-lakshna.        |
| 8. Nava-ratna.               | 32. Shrinagára-rasamañdala. |
| 9. Antahkarana-prabhodha.    | 33. Vaidhavallabha.         |
| 10. Viveka-dhairá-shraya.    | 34. Agni-kumára.            |
| 11. Krishná-shraya.          | 35. Sharana-upadesha.       |
| 12. Chatura-sloki.           | 36. Rasasindhu. .           |
| 13. Bhakti-vardhani.         | 37. Kalpa-druma.            |
| 14. Jalabheda.               | 38. Málá-prasanga.          |
| 15. Padeáni.                 | 39. Chita-prabhodha.        |
| 16. Saniása-nirnaya.         | 40. Pushti-dradha-váratá.   |
| 17. Nirodha-laxana.          | 41. Dwádasa-kunja.          |
| 18. Sevá-fala.               | 42. Pavitrá-mañdala.        |
| 19. Síkshá-patra.            | 43. Purñamási.              |
| 20. Pushti-pravaha-maryádá.  | 44. Nitya-sevá-prakára.     |
| 21. Gokul-áshtaka.           | 45. Rasa-bhávaná.           |
| 22. Madhur-áshtaka.          | 46. Vallabh-ákhiána.        |
| 23. Nin-áshtaka.             | 47. Dhola.                  |
| 24. Janmavaifal-áshtaka.     | 48. Nija-váratá.            |

- |                             |                               |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 49. Chorási-váratá.         | 62. Sevá-prakára.             |
| 50. Baso-bhávaná-váratá     | 63. Múla-purusha.             |
| 51. Nitya-pada.             | 64. Sata-bálaka-charitra.     |
| 52. Shriji-prágata.         | 65. Yamunáji-pada.            |
| 53. Charitra-sahita-váratá. | 66. Vachanámrita.             |
| 54. Gusáji-prágata.         | 67. Pushti-márga-siddhánta.   |
| 55. Ashtakáviya.            | 68. Dasa-marama.              |
| 56. Vanshávali.             | 69. Vaishnava-batrisa-laxana. |
| 57. Vanayátrá.              | 70. Chorási-sikshá.           |
| 58. Lílá-bhávaná.           | 71. Sedasatha-prádha. [kruta. |
| 59. Svarupa-bhávaná.        | 72. Dwárkesha - krata - nita- |
| 60. Guru-seva.              | 73. Áchárji-prágata.          |
| 61. Chitavana.              | 74. Otsava-pada.              |



## CHAPTER VI.

## WORSHIP AND PSALMODY.

THE doctrines of the Mahárájas we have laid before our readers in the last chapter. Of their mode of worship we have now to treat. The present ceremonial or ritual has of course been the growth of time, being formed, or added to as circumstances have occurred, or the prompting desires of the priests may have suggested. We shall endeavour to give as clear and distinct a statement as is practicable, premising that much of the information contained in this chapter is derived from the works of Mr. H. H. Wilson, and from the oral testimony adduced upon oath in the course of the trial for libel, as well as from other sources of a true and unimpeachable character. We hope to lay before our readers a complete picture, as graphical as such collective means will enable us to paint, so as to sustain the judgment we shall have to pronounce, after deliberately summing up the facts, in the few concluding words of this chapter.

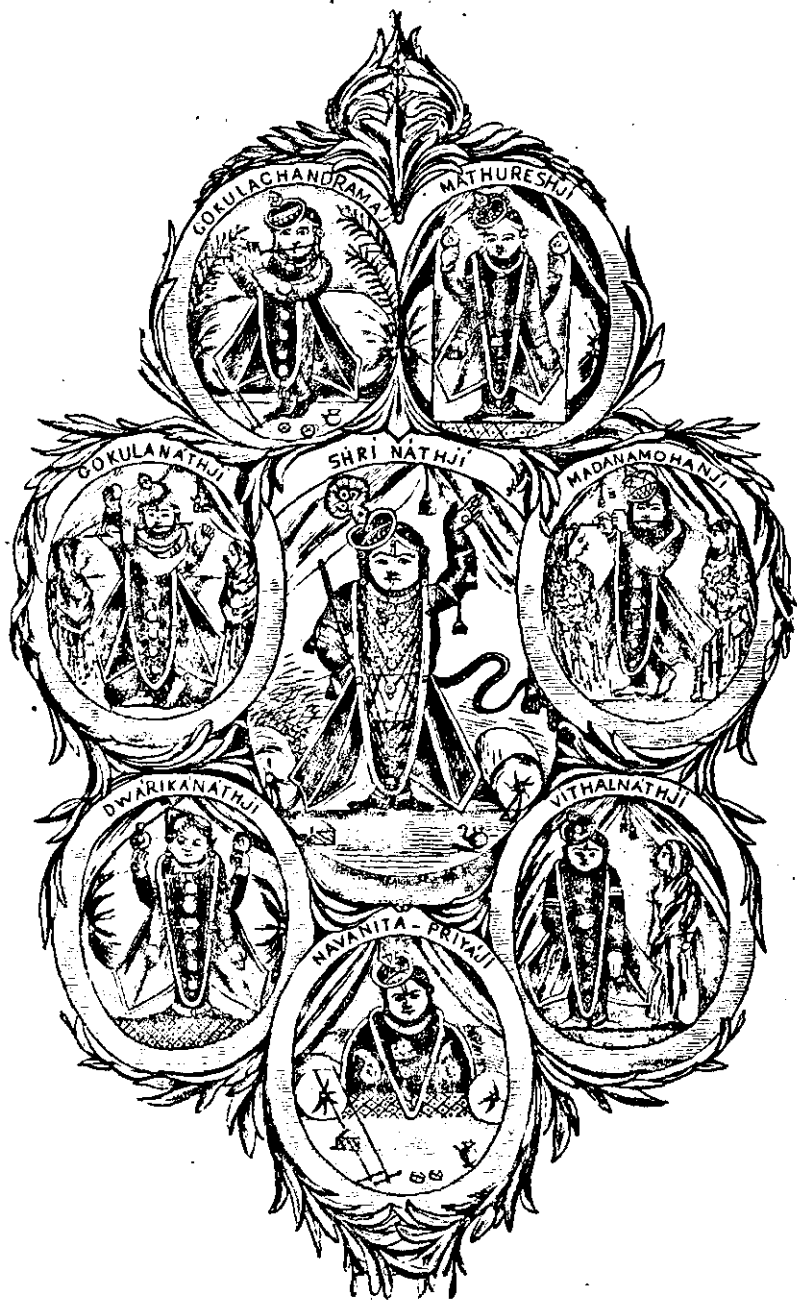
A Vallabhácháryan temple consists of three successive compartments. The central one is larger and more open than the other two, being intended for the accommodation of the numerous worshippers who daily throng there. Of the remaining two, one is the residence of the Maháráj, and the other is dedicated to the worship of the image of Krishna.

The temples are numerous all over India, especially at Mathurá and Brindában. In Benares there are two very celebrated and wealthy temples, one of which is dedicated to

Krishna under the name of Lálji, and the other to the same god under the name of Purushottamji. Those of Jagannáth and Dwáriká are also particularly venerated ; but the most celebrated of these establishments is that at Śri Náthadwár, in Mewár. "The image is said to have transported itself thither from Mathurá, when Aurangzeb ordered the temple it stood in to be destroyed. The present shrine is modern, but very richly endowed, and the high priest, a descendant of Gokulnáthji, is a man of great wealth and importance."\*

The image of Thákurji, or the idol, in the different temples, is either of stone or brass, and represents Krishna in various attitudes, corresponding to those which he is supposed to have assumed in the several periods of his earthly existence, either when performing uncommon feats or miracles, or living at particular places, or engaged in any peculiarly interesting scenes. Each of these is worshipped under a different name. That of Śri Náthji, being the most important and most honoured, is at Náthadwár. Krishna is here represented as a little boy in the act of supporting the mountain Govardhan on his little finger, to shelter his playmates from a heavy shower of rain which had suddenly overtaken them while at play. This image is always splendidly dressed, and richly decorated with ornaments, which are often of the value of several thousand pounds.

Vallabháchárya, the founder of the sect, is said to have distributed among his disciples more than thirty images, under various forms and names. These are still extant, and held in more reverence than modern ones ; and the Mahárájas, too, who possess them, are in consequence more respected than the other members of their fraternity. But of the thirty-five, the seven of *Navanita-priyáji* (literally, he who is fond of fresh butter), *Mathureshji*, *Vithalnáthji*, *Dwárikánáthji*, *Gokulanáthji*, *Gokulachandramáji* (the moon of



GOKULACHANDRAM

MATHURESHI

GOKULANATHJI

SHRI NATHJI

MADANMOHANJI

DWARIKANATHJI

VITHALNATHJI

NAVANITA-PRISHTI

Gokula), and *Madanamohanji* (the Lord of Lust-illusion)—these were procured by the seven grandsons of Vallabhá-chárya, each having one for himself, and are held in even greater reverence. The five first are now at Śri Náthadwár, Kottá, Kanoja, Kánkroli, and Gokula respectively, and the the two last at Jaypora. The Mahárájas are so covetous of possessing these, as well as the others distributed by the Vallabháchárya, that instances are related of their having endeavoured to possess themselves of them by the meanest of actions. One of them, named Girdharji, was, about thirty-five years ago, convicted of having stolen one from a Vaishnava at Damán. The images are sometimes so small and overloaded with ornaments, that the votaries can see nothing but their lustrous embellishments, which have an attraction of their own, apart from that of the image.

The worship of the images is very sedulously performed, the most devoted homage being paid to them at fixed periods, eight times every day. There are also seasonal festivals, when they are worshipped with more ceremony. On these occasions the image is profusely decorated, and especially in the spring, when it is beautifully adorned with flowers arranged with much taste. According to the nature of the festival, the image is made to sit on a seat, or is placed in a cradle, or is so disposed as to recline in a swing. The cradles and swings and seats are either of wood or of brass or silver. Crowds swarm to the temples on these occasions, flocking to see the Thákurji in all his glory. At these times the Mahárájas ostentatiously decorate themselves in their gayest attire, that they may attract the attention of female devotees. The following are the eight regular daily services.\*

1. "*Mangalá*, the morning levee: the image being washed and dressed, is taken from the couch, where it is supposed to

\* In the intervals, or when no particular festival is being celebrated, that part of the temple in which the idol is placed is closed, and the deity is invisible.

have slept during the night, and placed upon a seat, about half an hour after (and during winter about three hours before) sunrise: slight refreshments are then presented to it, with betel and *pán*. Lamps are generally kept burning during this ceremony.

2. "*Śringára*: the image having been anointed and perfumed with oil, camphor, and sandal, and splendidly attired, now holds its public court: this takes place about an hour and a half after the preceding, or when four *gharis* of the day have elapsed.

3. "*Gwála*: the image is now visited, preparatory to its going out to attend the cattle along with the cowherd: this ceremony is held about forty-eight minutes after the last, or when six *gharis* have elapsed.

4. "*Rája-Bhóga*, held at mid-day, when Krishna is supposed to come in from the pastures and dine: all sorts of delicacies are placed before the image, and both these and other articles of food, dressed by the ministers of the temples, are distributed to the numerous votaries present, and not unfrequently sent to the dwellings of worshippers of rank and consequence.

5. "*Utthápan*: the calling up, or summoning of the god from his siesta: this takes place at six *gharis*, or between two and three hours before sunset.

6. "*Bhóga*: the afternoon meal, about half an hour after the preceding.

7. "*Sandhyá*, about sunset: the evening toilet of the image, when the ornaments of the day are taken off, and fresh unguents and perfumes applied.

8. "*Shayan*, retiring to repose: the image, about seven in the evening, is placed upon a bed, refreshments and water in proper vases, together with the betel box and its appurtenances, are left near it, when the votaries retire, and the temple is shut till the ensuing morning."\*

\* H. H. Wilson's Works.

For the first of these services, in winter, the temple is opened at four o'clock in the morning, when it is quite dark, to give an opportunity to the Maháráj to communicate with his favourite female devotees, who much frequent it at this time. Upon all these occasions the ceremony is much the same, consisting of little more than waving a light, and presenting flowers, perfumes, and food to the image by the priests. At certain seasons the ceremony also includes rocking the swing or cradle of the image, or throwing *gulál* (red powder) over it. The votaries, on beholding the image or its lustrous embellishments, do nothing but repeat the name of the idol or Thákurji several times, with a variety of protestations and obeisances. This is the worship. There is no established ritual for general use, nor any prescribed form of worship.

Previously to the opening of the division of the temple where the image of the idol is placed, the Maháráj takes his stand near the image. Here, after the entrance of the votaries, he occasionally swings the image, or waves before it a small metallic lamp, in which burns a light, fed by clarified butter. The Vaishnavas, with their wives and daughters, having previously assembled in the passage, the door is opened, and the crowd rush to enter, crying out *Jaya! Jaya!* to prevent the doors being closed. The noise and confusion are immense. No time must be lost, for in ten or twenty minutes the doors are again closed. It is impossible all can get into the small room at once, and the weaker of the crowd have to await their turn to enter. To accelerate the devotions of those who have got in, and to induce them to make room for other devotees, who are anxiously waiting outside, one of the guardians of the temple mounts upon a rail, with a thick cord in his hand, to whip them along. Many of the devotees receive a very severe beating; and it has even happened that an eye has been lost, or other severe and permanent injuries inflicted. It is cus-

tomary for these guardians of the temple to receive a considerable bribe in money to stay them from inflicting this castigation upon persons who can afford to be thus mulcted. But in the event of this *donceur* not being forthcoming, either from incapacity or unwillingness, the malice of the guardians is exasperated, and they are unmerciful in the application of the cord.

During the four periods of worship in the afternoon, females visit the temples in large numbers; and at these times the crush is fearful and shameful, for males and females are intermixed, and many men who have intruded for vicious and immoral purposes, assault the modesty of females with impunity. The crowd is so dense that, on extraordinary occasions, females are totally denuded of their slight and loose clothing in the crush. The practice, therefore, of permitting men and women to associate promiscuously in the room where the idol is worshipped is highly objectionable. Frequent applications have been made to the *Mahárájas* to put a stop to these indecent proceedings, but they appear to sanction them by their indifference.

The first duty of the *Vaishnavas* who come to worship the image is to go to the *Maháráj*, who is found seated on a raised couch, and to prostrate themselves at his feet. The worshippers place their fingers on the toes of the *Maháráj*, and then apply them to their eyes. When females touch his toes, the *Maháráj*, who may have been attracted by one of them in particular, to indicate that he wishes for a further interview, presses her hand, and thus gives her the sign of solicitation. This is considered a high and distinguishing honour: it is fully understood and appreciated, and the favour is readily reciprocated. The parties avail themselves of the first opportunity to carry their purpose into effect, and we shall shortly see how readily such an opportunity is obtained. When it is understood that this distinction has

a consecrating force, the excuse for infatuated compliance is at once found.

Upon the door of the temple being opened, the musicians and songsters placed there commence a succession of lascivious chaunts, descriptive of Krishna's amorous sport with the gopis. These choristers and musicians occupy a place opposite the image and the Maháráj, but behind the worshippers who throng through the open intervening space. The mode of solicitation by the Maháráj during this worship is the throwing upon the votaries of *gulúl*, a red powder, made of a certain wood ground down; but this is done only in the spring and upon high festivals. In throwing this powder, which is often made up into small balls, the Maháráj aims chiefly at the breasts of the females. It is also customary for him to project a yellow extract obtained from flowers, from a syringe, at the worshippers, and particularly at the females.

Besides the adoration of the image, worship is performed to the Maháráj himself. There are generally eight or ten Mahárájas in Bombay, each having a separate temple, the dimensions of which vary according to the means and influence of the high priest. In one of the apartments of his residence, the Maháráj, during the time that divine honours are paid to him, seats himself on a raised seat. The Bháttiás, the Baniás, the Lohánás, the Multánis, and other persons, are the followers of his religion, and are known as *sevakas*, or servants. All of them, rich and poor, adore him by saluting his feet; and for a short time after these devotions, the rich or influential are accommodated in the hall, while persons of moderate means are left to shift for themselves in a large public room or courtyard. One apartment of the building known as the *zanána-kháná* (seraglio) is occupied by the Maháráj's wife and daughters, who never appear in the sight of men: their residence is considered sacred, and only the *sevakis* (female worshippers) have permission to enter it.



Next to the Maháráj himself, his wife (*vahuji*) and daughter (*betiji*) receive homage in the *sanána-kháná* from his female devotees.

The Maháráj can be otherwise worshipped at all hours of the day; that is to say, in the intervals of the worship of the idol, at which times his presence is required adjacent to the image of the god. It is at these times of his separate worship in his own residence that females are presented with the facile opportunity of showing their appreciation of the high honour of the selection he has made of them by throwing *gulál*, pressing their hands, or projecting on their breasts the yellow liquid extract of flowers.

Up to eight or nine o'clock every morning the Maháráj is engaged in performing ablutions and saying prayers, the rest of the day being whiled away at meals, in conversation, in repose, and in pleasure. After his meals, he seeks the privacy of his bedroom, which adjoins the *sanána-kháná*, and except on any urgent business—for instance, that of attending the worship of the idol—he does not leave this apartment until three or four o'clock in the afternoon. During the Utthápan period of worship, which begins at two p.m., the wives and daughters of the Vaishnavas visit the wife and daughters of the Maháráj in the *sanána-kháná*, from whence some of them proceed with presents of fruits, milk (in silver goblets), and other things, to the Maháráj's bedroom; and the most fortunate of them, according to their notions, comes out purer than before. If, while the Maháráj is in the sitting-room speaking to his followers, a female happens to come to the temple with her present of fruits, or whatever else it may be, he immediately retires into the *sanána-kháná*, and there accepts the present from her, and ministers to her lust.

The dust on which the Maháráj has walked is eaten by the votaries. Even his very wooden shoes are worshipped, as is also his *gádi* or seat. His feet are champoed, he is

decorated with precious ornaments, he is frequently bathed by his votaries in saffron and milk: money and many precious articles are presented at his feet with humiliating prostrations, and the worship is directed not only to the Mahárájas personally but to their very pictures.

In the morning, when the Maháráj is at his ablutions, a number of Vaishnavas collect at a short distance; and as he stands up to wipe his body, one of the Vaishnavas, or ministers of the temple, approaches him with reverence, takes into a vessel the water dropping from his *dhotar* (the cloth covering the lower part of his body). This dirty impure water is esteemed to be of high virtue, and is distributed among all present at the temple, who drink it with feelings of pride and satisfaction! What remains is reserved for some hours for the purification of absent Vaishnavas. The remnants of the Maháráj's meals, called *juktan*, are preserved, being considered very precious, and can be had on a formal application by any Vaishnavas who desire to eat them. In private banquets and caste feasts, given with the Maháráj's permission, these impure remnants are first served, and are eaten as though they were ambrosia! The *pán-sopári* (leaf and betelnut) which the Maháráj throws out after chewing, is called *ogár*, and is collected and preserved to be distributed to males and females, who take a great pleasure in chewing it over again.

In the month of Shrávan, the Maháráj takes delight in sitting on the *Kindolá* (a sort of swing), when his male and female followers move it backwards and forwards with their hands. This privilege of swinging his Holiness is purchased with presents to him. At the time of the Holi holidays (the saturnalia of the Hindus), the Maháráj stands in front of the temple and permits his followers to hail him with *gulál* (red powder). Some of the Mahárájas on these occasions throw the *gulál* in return on some especial favourite female worshipper, and indulge publicly in acts of impropriety and indecency.

The other occupations and amusements of the Mahárájas consist in social intercourse, in riding about and driving in their carriages, and in talking of the amorous sports of Krishna. In the intervals of their official priestly duties, they have recourse to every variety of amusement and pleasure; and not a few of them rejoice exceedingly in displaying indecent pictures to their female devotees, to excite them to amorous sports. The Mahárájas also undertake the settlement of caste disputes; they are usually solicited to be arbitrators in cases where the right of property is contested, and generally they subtly contrive that but very little of it shall come into the possession of the litigants. They are very great epicures, and consummate judges of every species of delicacy and good living, several of them indulging excessively in intoxicating drugs, such as *bháng* and opium. In the evening they are usually invited to the houses of the wealthy Vaishnavas, whither they resort sumptuously attired, and fragrant with attar of roses and other luscious perfumes, in order that they may be the more attractive to those with whom they come in contact. Their visits are always of a semi-religious character; and therefore, upon these occasions, wives and daughters of the Vaishnavas whom a Maháráj thus honours by visiting, entertain him with the songs which may be characterised as the psalmody of their religion. Ten or twenty minutes after he has taken his seat, all the members and friends of the family join in applying to him odoriferous stuffs, in offering him wreaths of flowers, in waving a light round him, in presenting him with money, and in prostrating themselves at his feet.

“The hymns, or sacred songs of a sect, are generally the most fervid exposition of their religious feelings. The hymns sung by the women of the Vallabháchárya sect, in honour of the Mahárájas and in their presence, are certainly no exception to this general rule. They are passionate with all the

passions of the East, erotic pantings for fruition of a lover who is also a god. As it is said of the *gopis* in the *Vishnu Purána*, 'every instant without Krishna they count a myriad of years, and, forbidden by fathers, husbands, brothers, they go forth at night to sport with Krishna, the object of their love,' so these hymns, sung at this day by the wives and daughters of the Vallabhácháryans to their Mahárájas, express the most unbridled desire, the most impatient longing, for the enjoyments of adulterine love."\*

These females yield themselves unhesitatingly to the ignoble task of exciting the gross passions of these priests, for whose pleasure, and to stimulate whose lusts, they, upon these visits, and also on festive occasions, sing songs which we quote as specimens of the lascivious poetry in which the Mahárájas find pleasure.

मोहन मलपता घेर आया रे ॥  
 भेतो लधने भोतीडे वधाया रे ॥  
 वाहले मारे करझानी द्रष्टे जेधुं रे ॥  
 आध मारे अे वर सु मन मोह्युं रे ॥  
 पड्युं मारे नंदना कुंवर साथे पातु रे ॥  
 हवे हुं तो हेम करी राप्पीरा छांतु रे ॥  
 दुगी जन केहयुं होय ते केहेले रे ॥  
 वाहणा मारा इत्य कुमण वये रहेले रे ॥

[TRANSLATION OF THE ABOVE.]

Mohan merrily came to [my] house,  
 With pearls [by throwing them over him] I welcomed him ;  
 My beloved one looked with an affectionate eye :  
 O sister ! of this husband my heart is enamoured ;  
 [To marry] the son of Nanda I am destined ;  
 And how can I now conceal it ?  
 Let the wicked say what they may,  
 Darling ! let my heart be thy dwelling place.

\* Judgment of Sir Joseph Arnould.

અતીરે ઉલટ ધણો આવે મારે અંગે ॥  
 સામ સુંદર વર યેહા છે સંગે ॥ ૧ ॥  
 મુખડું જોયા વના પાણી ન પીઉં રે ॥  
 રસીક સુંદર વર જોઈ જોઈ જીવું રે ॥ ૨ ॥  
 મુજને ન વારીરા માહારી રે માડી ॥  
 દરરાણુ કરવાને જાઈરા દાહડી ॥ ૩ ॥  
 સમપણુ તો સાંભળીયાનું સાચું ॥  
 ખાકી સરવે દીસેછે કાચું ॥ ૪ ॥  
 કેહરો તેને કેહવારે દેશું ॥  
 આપણુ સરવે સાંભળી લેશું ॥ ૫ ॥

[TRANSLATION OF THE ABOVE.]

An excitement, extreme and great, in my body is created ;  
 The azure-coloured beauteous husband with me is sitting. 1  
 Without seeing [his] beauteous face, even water I will not drink ;  
 The amorous and beauteous husband, by seeing oft and oft I'll live. 2  
 Restrain me not, Oh ! my mother,  
 To pay my homage to him, daily I will go. 3  
 As to the connectionship, that of the Sávalyā\* is the only true one,  
 [And] all others appear to be but imperfect. 4  
 He who tells may tell, we will permit to do so,  
 And to them [with indifference] we shall listen. 5

પરદેરા જાઓતો વલબકુળ વેહેલા આવજો જો ॥  
 અખગાને સંદેરા કાહવજો જો ॥ પરદેરા ॥ ૧ ॥  
 આપણી આસાને આધીન અમે છઈએ જો ॥  
 આપે સરણે લીધાં અમને ચીત ધરીજો ॥ પરદેરા ॥ ૨ ॥  
 સુંદર દ્રષ્ટી દવાણુ અમ ઉપર કરીજો ॥  
 તેથી તન મન લીધાં અમારાં હરીજો ॥ પરદેરા ॥ ૩ ॥  
 આપ સારૂ મેં લોક લાજ નવ ધરીજો ॥  
 મુને આપના ચરણની ઈલા ધણીજો ॥ પરદેરા ॥ ૪ ॥  
 આવી વીનવી કરેછે દાસી ધણી જો ॥  
 વેલા આવસો તો દાસી ધરો રાજી જો ॥ ૫ ॥

\* An appellation of Krishna.

[TRANSLATION OF THE ABOVE.]

If to foreign lands you, the descendants of Vallabha, should go,  
 Soon do you return.  
 And to [us] gentle women messages do you send. 1  
If to foreign lands.

To your commands obedient we are,  
 Us, the suppliant, you have accepted with all your heart. 2  
If to foreign lands.

A pleasant look, you the compassionate, by casting upon us,  
 Of our bodies and hearts have deprived us. 3  
If to foreign lands.

For your sake the sense of public shame I have not entertained,  
 A great desire I entertain for your feet. 4  
If to foreign lands.

Many such intreaties [your] female slaves are making,  
 If soon you will return, pleased will become [your] female slaves. 5

વલભકૃષ્ણ છે કામણુ ગારા કાનજે ॥  
 કામણીઆં કીધારે વ્રજની વાટમાં રે લોલ ॥ ૧ ॥  
 જોને બેની મુખકું પુનમ ચંદ્ર જે ॥  
 આણીઆવી આંખિરે મનડાં મોહી લીધારે લોલ ॥ ૨ ॥  
 એ વાહલાની પાસે યજ્ઞને દાસી જે ॥  
 લોકોની લાજથી હવે હું નથી પીહવાનીરે લોલ ॥ ૩ ॥  
 હવે બેહની મેંથી ધરનાં કામ ન થાયરે ॥  
 વાહલાને દેખીને મનડા મોહી રહારે લોલ ॥ ૪ ॥  
 વલભકૃષ્ણ છે કામણુ ગારા કાન જે ॥  
 કરડાને ઠણકેરે મનડા હરી ગયારે લોલ ॥ ૫ ॥  
 આપ છો પરમેશ્વર સરૂપ જે ॥  
 વલભ વર વરીને હું અતી પ્રેમથી રે લોલ ॥ ૬ ॥  
 વલભ વરને શરણે સુખીઆં યાશુરે ॥  
 તેઓની સંગતથી વધકુંઠ પાંમસું રે લોલ ॥ ૭ ॥

[TRANSLATION OF THE ABOVE.]

The descendant of Vallabha is the amorous Káná,  
 Enamoured, he has made [us], in the roads of Vraj.

Bowing down? 1

See, sisters, the full moon-like face,

With his sharp eyes my heart he has enticed and attracted.

Bowing down? 2

To that dear [soul] having become a female slave,

The public shame I will now no longer fear.

Bowing down? 3

Now, sisters, the household affairs I cannot perform,

By seeing the dear [soul] my heart has become enticed.

Bowing down? 4

A descendant of Vallabha is the amorous Kána,

The sound of the jingling of [his] toe-rings has deprived me of my heart.

Bowing down? 5

The very personification of God you are,

Having married [or accepted] the Vallabha husband with extreme love.

Bowing down? 6

By our submitting to the Vallabha husband, happy we shall become

By his association, the Vaikuntha\* we shall obtain.

Bowing down? 7

મેહેત્રે પધારો માહરાજ ॥ માણીગર મેહેત્રે પધારો ॥  
 વાહલ વધારો વ્રજ રાજ ॥ માણીગર મેહેત્રે પધારો ॥ ટિકા ॥  
 કચી રાખીએ એકકી, ઘણા દીવસની ગોઠ ॥  
 રાજ મળે તો કીજીએ, આવી રહીએ મારે ઓઠ ॥ માણી ॥  
 હું સરખી બહુ આપને, મારે તો એક આપ ॥  
 રેહવાનું નથી રાજવીન, કોને કહું પરીતાપ ॥ માણી ॥  
 સેજ સમાચી કુલરે, આનંદ ઉર ન સમાય ॥  
 પ્રાણુવન તાંહાં પોદવા, દાસી પતોટે પાવ ॥ માણી ॥  
 હું પણ દાસી રાવધી, બાહિ ગ્રહ્યાની લાજ,  
 જાનન લેહેરે જાવએ, માનો મારા રાજ ॥ માણી ॥  
 પ્રીતમ દાસ દવા તણા, શ્રી વ્રજ રાજ કુમાર ॥  
 ઘણા દીવસની હાંમએ, પુરો પ્રાણુ આધાર ॥ માણી ॥

[TRANSLATION OF THE ABOVE.]

May it please thee to visit my palace, lord;

Welcome be thou to my palace, charming lord.

Increase, O king of Vraj! thy love [to me];

Welcome be thou to my palace, etc.

\* The paradise of Vishnu.

Many a story, and accumulated secrets  
Of the heart I have to relate;  
I shall narrate them, if you but meet [me],  
Overflowed has it up to my lips.  
Welcome be thou, etc.

You have many like myself,  
But you are the only one I have;  
I cannot live without you, my lord,  
To whom shall I express my pangs?  
Welcome be thou, etc.

Bespread with flowers is the bed,  
The heart cannot keep the joy within itself:  
Life-nourisher, thou liest there;  
Thy servants shampoo thy feet.  
Welcome be thou, etc.

Similarly I am also thy humble servant.  
As thou hast held my arm, keep thou thy pledge:  
The bloom of my youth is fading away;  
Believe, my Lord, what I say.  
Welcome be thou, etc.

Gallant of [your] slave Dayá,  
Prince of Vraj, bestower of Life,  
Satisfy the long felt desire;  
Welcome be thou to my palace, charming Lord.

ब्रजना श्रवणु कहे वीनती, श्री वलभनंद  
श्री गोकुलमंद, वेगे ते आंशु मोडलो ॥  
तमारा दरराणु वीना श्री वलभ रे, कोहो श्रु केम रेहेवाय  
मनडां ते राप्पा केम रेह, नैखे नीर भराय ॥ व्रज० ॥  
अरज सुखो रे आदर करी रे, श्री नमनाश्रु रे माय  
ब्रहे तणा दुःख दोहेलां, कहे श्रु केम रेहेवाय ॥ व्रज० ॥  
दुर रहे केम आलखे रे, कहे श्रु कांहेनी गीत  
आज कालनुं कोषिनीही, छे श्रु पुर्वनी प्रीत ॥ व्रज० ॥  
हरी हैपामां राप्पने, रे छे पुर्व स्नेह  
द्या करो दीनानाथश्रु, नहीतर तज्जुं आ देह ॥ व्रज० ॥



વ્રજ માલતી વાસ માંયુ, સદા રેહ સી ગોકુલ ગામ  
 કાર્તીકાને કાંઠે, ઓ ઠકરાણી ધાટ ॥ વ્રજ ॥  
 નૈણા બરી કાહરે નીરખથુ, ઓ ઠકરાણી ધાટ  
 અંતરમાં ઇચ્છા ધણી, જોઉં વ્રજની વાટ ॥ વ્રજ ॥  
 અમે સુકાઇને તજ થયાં, રે સી હલધર વીર ॥  
 ધીરજ રાખી નવ ગેહુ, બરી બરી આંવેહે નીર ॥ વ્રજ ॥  
 રાંક ઉપર શીયા રૂણા રે, પ્રભુ ઘન દયાલ  
 દાસી જણી પોતાણી, કરજો સેવકીનો સંબોધ ॥ વ્રજ ॥

## [TRANSLATION OF THE ABOVE.]

O life of Vraj! I pray thee,  
 Illustrious beloved one [source of] pleasure, Moon of Gokul,  
 An invitation send with speed.  
 Without seeing thee, O illustrious, beloved one,  
 Say, dear, how am I to live?  
 How shall my heart be restrained?  
 [My] eyes with tears are suffused [O Life of] Vraj! 1  
 Harken attentively to [my] prayer, O revered mother Jamna!  
 The pangs of separation are unendurable.  
 Now, how am I to live? [O Life of] Vraj! 2  
 How shall I abide at a distance?  
 Say, dear, whence this law.  
 Neither of us is of to-day or yesterday:  
 [Our] love is from the first [O Life of] Vraj! 3  
 O Hari, in thy heart retain  
 [Our] love [which] is of former times.  
 Be merciful, O Lord of the lowly and destitute!  
 Otherwise I will put off this earthly tenement.  
 O Life of Vraj! an invitation send. 4  
 I want a resting place amidst the jasmine [bowers] of Vraj,  
 That always exist in the town of Gokul,  
 On the banks of the Kalindri,  
 At the landing place of Thakarani,  
 O-Life of Vraj! an invitation send. 5  
 When shall I satisfy my eyes with a full view  
 Of the landing place of Thakarani.  
 Inwardly I have a great desire,  
 I am longing to be called to Vraj,  
 O Life of Vraj! an invitation send! 6

I am withered like [dried] cinnamon :  
 O Hari, brother of the plough-bearer,  
 I can have patience no longer.  
 [My eyes] are constantly filled with tears,  
 O Life of Vraj ! I beseech thee ! 7  
 What wrath is this against [me] an innocent person ?  
 O Lord, [who art] merciful to the humble,  
 Regarding [me] as thy servant,  
 Protect [me thy] servant,  
 O Life of Vraj, I beseech thee ! 8

ઉભા રોહો તો કહું વાતડી, ખીહારીલાલ  
 તમ માટે ગાળીએ મેં જાતડી, ખીં  
 ને દાહડે મલીયાતાં વરંદમાં, ખીં  
 તે દાહડાની તાલાવેળી તનમાં, ખીં  
 વેદનાના વીરહેની તે ક્યાંહાં બાંખીયે, ખીં  
 ભીતરનો બડકો તે કીયાંહાં દાખીયે, ખીં  
 કૂટકારી સરખી કૂર વનમાં, ખીં  
 કળ ના પડે પણ રજની દીનમાં, ખીં  
 ષેલી ઠરી છું સહુ ગામમાં, ખીં  
 કેમ કેહવાય જેવું દુઃખ તનમાં, ખીં  
 તાલાવેળી લાગી મારા મનમાં, ખીં  
 ક્ષણે ક્ષણે બણકારા પડે કાનમાં, ખીં  
 પ્રાણ પ્રોવાયો છે તમો તનમાં, ખીં  
 વીકલતાની વાત કેહેવી, ના ખને, ખીં  
 ધરમાં જાઉં ને જાઉં આંગણે, ખીં  
 આતુરતા એવી કહાં લગી સહુ, ખીં  
 છો અતુર શીરોમણી તાંહાં શુ કહું, ખીં  
 પ્રીતડી કીધો તો હવે પાળીયે, ખીં  
 આતુર શરણે આપ્યને ન ટાળીયે, ખીં  
 તમારે હું સરખી હજરો હશે, ખીં  
 મારાં તો પ્રાણ તમ વીના જશે, ખીં  
 ખોળીયું પણ ખીજનું ગમે નહીં, ખીં  
 લાલચ લાગાં નહણા, તો જઈએ કહીં, ખીં  
 નખશીખ લગીએ સ્વરૂપગુણ બરીયાં, ખીં

આવડા રૂપાળા તે કોણે કૃપિયા, ૐ  
 હસો છો મધુર વાંકુ જોઈને, ૐ  
 કટાક્ષ કટારીએ નાખ્યાં પ્રોધને, ૐ  
 વાંસળી વળડે તેમાં વીરેહ, ૐ  
 અબજાને જોતાં બીચક કેમ રેહ, ૐ  
 દરેદી હોય તે જાણે દરદને, ૐ  
 અવર દુખ એની આગળ ગરદમાં, ૐ  
 કેહનાર કેહયે મણુ છો ધણી, ૐ  
 દયાના પ્રીતમ હું દાસ તમ તણી, ૐ

[TRANSLATION OF THE ABOVE.]

Gallant Lord!

If you tarry a while, I'll tell you a tale.  
 On your account, I have wasted my body:  
 Since meeting at Vranda,  
 I have been suffering from anxious longing and hankering;  
 To whom shall I speak of the pangs of separation?  
 How can I suppress the inward flame?  
 Bewildered do I roam in the woods;  
 I do not feel a moment's rest day or night;  
 The whole village reckons me as mad.  
 How can I express adequately my agony?  
 My heart burns with a longing and hankering desire;  
 Constant echo runs in my ears;  
 Our souls are threaded together.  
 I cannot express the uneasiness of my mind;  
 From window to window, to and fro, I run.  
 How long shall I suffer from such eagerness?  
 Thou—the gem of [my] forehead, adept in all secrets,  
 What shall I say to thee?

As thou hast loved me, now fulfil thy pledge;  
 Reject not one who has sought thy protection:  
 Thou mayst possess a thousand like myself;  
 [But] I cannot exist without thee;  
 The sound of any one pleases me not:  
 My eyes being enticed, now where can I go?  
 From top to toe you are full of beauty and perfection.  
 Who could have made thee so beautiful?  
 Thou smilest sweetly, glancing aside;

Thy wink as a dagger wounded my heart,  
 The sound of thy flute breathes woes of separation :  
 How can the weaker sex preserve their modesty ?  
 The diseased can only feel the agony of pain ;  
 Other diseases are nothing when compared with this.  
 Let people say what they may, but thou art my Lord ;  
 O Lord of Dayá, I am thy servant.

ઉભા રોહોતો કહું એક વાત મારા વાહલા ॥  
 મરડી જ્યોત્ષો શાને મુખરેજી ॥  
 વચન દીધું તે પાલીધું નથી રે વાહલા ॥  
 હું જાણ્યું છું લાગું તેનું દુઃખ રેજી ॥  
 મારી અરજ સુણો તો કહું એક મારા વાહલા  
 વીચારો નથી મારો વાંક રેજી ॥  
 હું વહુ વાર ખાલે વેરા મારા વાહલા  
 અખળા માણસ ઘણું રાંક રેજી ॥  
 સાસરીયાં મુને સહુ સાચવેરે વાહલા ॥  
 પરણીયો ના મુકે મારી પુંક રેજી ॥  
 સાસુડી ઘણી સેહેતાન મારા વાહલા ॥  
 નણદી આગળ ન નભે જીક રેજી ॥  
 જળ જાઉં તો જોડે યાવ માહારા વાહલા ॥  
 ગોરસ વેચતા સહીયર થોક રેજી ॥  
 માટે ઠાહકું નાખ્યું છે તક વીનરિ વાહલા ॥  
 આપણ ડરવું રે દુરીજન લોક રેજી ॥  
 હરી મારૂં રૂપનું ગુમાન રખે જાણતા રે વાહલા ॥  
 તે આપની આગળ તો નથી તેહ રેજી ॥  
 તન મન સોખું છે તે દીવસનું રે વાહલા ॥  
 જરની દીધી છે નજર તેહ રેજી ॥  
 બાણે જોજન નથી આવતું રે વાહલા ॥  
 નીક્રા ન આવે કરે શેન રેજી ॥  
 હું કાંઈ ધીકું છું રાત દીવસ મારા વાહલા ॥  
 આપને વીચારે નથી એન રેજી ॥  
 ખીજી કસરતો કાંઈ નથીરિ વાહલા ॥  
 સમો જો મળે તો મુખ યાવ રેજી ॥  
 એજ વીચાર આઠે પેર મારા વાહલા ॥

મનકુંડે મારે ના કહ્યું જાવ રેજી ॥  
 પણ તે તો આવી છે તક આજ માહરા વાહલા ॥  
 પીયુડા પોહચે છે પરગામ રેજી ॥  
 મારી નણ્ણી વળાવી આજ સામરે રે વાહલા ॥  
 ગોરસ વેચીયાનું અગત કામ રેજી ॥  
 માટે સંજાએ વેહળા આવજો રે વાહલા ॥  
 આપણે મળીયુ અંસીયટ ચોકરેજી ॥  
 સંગે સખા ન કોઈ લાવરો રે વાહલા ॥  
 હું પણ નહીં લાકું સહી પર રોક રેજી ॥  
 તેજ પ્રમાણે મજા બેઠું જણારે વાહલા ॥  
 પુરણ અબીલાખ રમ્યાં રંગ રેજી ॥  
 પ્રસન થયા જીવન દયા તણારે વાહલા  
 જીલો અજીત ને અનંગ રેજી ॥

[TRANSLATION OF THE ABOVE.]

If you stop a while, I'll tell you a tale.  
 Why do you turn your face from me?  
 I have not fulfilled the word I gave,  
 And this I believe has offended you :  
 I'll offer an apology, should you listen to it :  
 It's no fault of mine, do you see :  
 In my appearance I am a young married girl ;  
 And being of the weaker sex, I am very meek.  
 My husband's relations all keep a watch over me ;  
 My married one would not, if I go out, but follow me ;  
 No false pretence would stand before my husband's sister.  
 If I go to bear water, or sell the products of the dairy,  
 My companions are in crowd with me.  
 Therefore, I have delayed for want of an opportunity :  
 We should dread the wicked people.  
 Do not think I am proud of my beauty ;  
 It's nothing when compared with yours.  
 Since we have exchanged glances,  
 I have dedicated to you my body and mind ;  
 I cannot relish food at dinner,  
 Nor can I get sleep when I lie down ;  
 My heart burns within itself day and night ;

I have no rest on account of your separation :  
 There is no other fault but this.  
 If an opportunity occurs happy we shall be ;  
 All the day this is the only thought engaging my mind.  
 But opportunity offers itself to-day ;  
 My husband leaves for a foreign town ;  
 My husband's sister is sent back to the house of her husband to-day ;  
 To dispose of the products of the dairy is my important business.  
 Come, therefore, early at sunset,  
 To the grove of *Bansibatt*, where we shall meet ;  
 Take no companion with you,  
 And I too will not bring any.  
 Thus they both met  
 And sported to their complete satisfaction :  
 The cherisher of *Dayá* was delighted,  
 And conquered the unconquerable cupid.

It is the fatal result of the gross and indecent religion thus inculcated and practised by the Vallabhácháryans, that females are rendered callous to the moral degradation into which they are betrayed by their religious preceptors. These preceptors imbue their teachings with the idea that all emanates from the highest source of spiritual inspiration, they themselves being absolutely its full impersonation upon earth ; and their doctrines impressively inculcating that they are even superior to the Divinity himself, because, although ostensibly the mere medium of communication between him and the worshippers, they can save when it is beyond the power of the god, and can grant absolution and ensure pardon to the positive certainty of their votaries eventually enjoying the delights of paradise. The moral nature of the devotees being thus controlled and subjugated, they succumb slavishly to the infatuation, unconscious of the foul snare into which they fall ; and under the supposition that they obtain honour and spiritual exaltation by immoral contact with these incarnations of deity, lend themselves willingly to minister to their corrupt pleasures.

The Maháráj is invited to the houses of the Vaishnavas when they are sick or on the point of death: in the latter case, he puts his foot on the breast of the dying person, with a view to free him from sin, and receives, in return for the blessings he thus confers, from ten to a thousand rupees.

In Bombay alone there are from forty to fifty thousand Vallabhácháryans. We may therefore form some conception of the manner in which the depravity of which we have spoken percolates through this community, which, as we have before seen, consists of the most wealthy and most intelligent inhabitants; and to how much greater an extent it may indirectly corrupt society by its contaminating influence. The Vaishnavas are strictly prohibited from showing to the followers of other sects the book containing the amorous poetry, and, indeed, all the books issued by the Mahárájas.

The preliminary initiation of the Vallabhácháryans commences very early in life. The first instruction takes place at the age of two, three, or four years. The child is then taken to the Maháráj, who repeats to it the "Astákshar Mantra," or formula of eight letters, viz., श्रीऋष्यः षुर्षं मम (Śri Krishna sharnanam mama), that is, "Śri Krishna is my refuge." This the child is made to repeat after the Maháráj, who then passes round its neck a string with *tulasi* (*ocimum sanctum*) or grass beads, called *kanthi* or necklace; and then the ceremony is complete. The second initiation, called *samarpana*, which signifies consignment, takes place in the case of a male at the age of eleven or twelve years. He then becomes a full member of the sect, and is fitted for the duties of life. In the case of a female, it takes place upon her marriage, or shortly previous. This celebrated *samarpana*, or absolute self-dedication to Krishna, and his incarnation, the Maháráj, is also known as *Brahm-sambandha*, which means connection with BRAHMA (the Supreme Being). The votary

is required to repeat it daily, mentally and alone, after bathing, and it may not be recited to any one. It is in Sanskrit, and its form is as follows :—

॥ श्रीं श्रीकृष्णः शरणं मम सहस्रपरिवत्सरमितकालजातकृष्णवियोगजनिततापक्लेशानंततिरोभावोहंभगवतेकृष्णायदेहेन्द्रियप्राणांतःकरणतश्च मौञ्जदारामारपुत्राप्तचित्तेहपराष्णात्मनासह समर्पयामि दासोहं कृष्णतवास्मि ॥ १ ॥

TRANSLATION.

“Om! Sri Krishna is my refuge. I, who am suffering the infinite pain and torment produced by enduring, for a thousand measured years, separation from Krishna, do to the worshipful Krishna consecrate my body, organs of sense, life, heart, and other faculties, and wife, house, family, property, with my own self. I am thy slave, O Krishna.”\*

For the performance of each of these ceremonies, the Maháráj is paid a fee in money, which is not usually restricted to the prescribed amount, but is ordinarily accompanied with collateral presents, depending upon the opulence, position, or devotion of the votary. Its technical name is the *bhet*, or present.

This *samarpana*, which professedly absolves from all sins previously committed, is deduced from the *Siddhánta-rahasya*, and incorporates the dedication there referred to. It is not a barren principle, it must bear fruit; as the preceptor says: “To each of us (himself a Krishna) you thus offer your body, your soul, your wives, your sons, your daughters, your body, mind and property. Before you enjoy any portion of *dhan*, you must offer it, him or her, to your god personified in us.”†

The new full sectary thus goes forth, although disencumbered of his sins, yet heavily burdened morally, and without a claim to any possession; for in this formality he has renounced every possession to his Maháráj. He goes forth to repeat his

\* Translated by Dr. John Wilson.

† Speech of Mr. T. O. Anstey in the Libel Case.



*mantra*, whilst numbering the beads of his rosary, which consists of one hundred and eight, made either of the stem of the *tulasi* plant, or sandal-wood. He is marked on his forehead with two perpendicular red lines, which converge in a semi-circle (with a red spot in it) at the root of the nose. These marks are daily renewed after bathing. He goes forth thus to be recognised by his brother sectarians, who mutually salute each other with hands raised to the face and the palms united, exclaiming *Jaya Śri Kriṣṇa* or *Jaya Gopāla*, Victory to Śri Kriṣṇa! Victory to Gopāla! He goes forth with these marks upon him to be recognised as the enthusiastic devotee of the Mahārāj, to whom he has desecrated the purity of his home, under the terrible threat of the denial "of the deliverance of his soul, and of its re-absorption into the divine essence;" under the threat here, also, of excommunication from all intercourse with his fellow devotees, and under the prohibition of enjoying food, or participation in the worship of his idol. His contempt can be purged only by presents and submission, or by the strong act of renunciation of the sect, which few have the moral courage to resolve upon, chained as they are by the relations of life, or the artificial bondage of a conventional condition of society.

The woman goes forth a ruined victim. She is undone by the obscenities which she has witnessed and practised, through the dissoluteness of the Mahārāj, whom she has been taught to solicit by means of every possible artifice and blandishment, and by enticing presents. She conceives herself to have been honoured by the approach of her god, to whose lust she has joyfully submitted. Her whole nature is thus corrupted.

After receiving this initiation, it is incumbent upon the votary to visit the temples at Gokul and Śri Nāthadwār at least once in their lives. Having done so, the greatest devotees become *marjūdis*,\* and can then be attended only

\* Devoted to the worship of the god.

by such persons as shall have also visited the same temples. The mere performance of *samarpana* is not sufficient to attain this object, for "such disciples may eat only from the hands of each other. The wife, or the child, that has not exhibited the same mark of devotion can neither cook for such a disciple, nor eat in his society."\*

The followers of these Mahárájas have usually in their houses an image of Krishna and a small book or wooden case containing portraits of Krishna in various attitudes, as well as of Vallabháchárya and some of his descendants, which they worship after the morning ablutions and bath. The image represents a young child, and the worship consists in playing before it with toys and childish trifles. But previously to this worship, the suppositious child must be aroused from the slumbers of the night by the ringing of a bell. It is then bathed and dressed, and offerings of fruit and other things are placed before it; a lamp is waved before the image, the light being produced by the combustion of clarified butter; a rosary of one hundred and eight beads is gone over, and with the numbering of each a repetition is made of the *mantra* of eight letters, as follows:—*Śri Krishna sharnanam mama* (Śri Krishna is my refuge). After this the *thákurji* (idol) is placed on his bed, and the votary takes his morning repast, and proceeds about the usual routine of his daily avocations.

These are the chief ceremonies of worship, and it will be seen that they are deeply impregnated with the vice inherent in the doctrines on which the ceremonial is framed. It must astonish every one that such debasing practices should proceed from the religious code of intelligent, if not educated, persons; and those who are accustomed to think and to test everything by reason and common sense, can scarcely believe that such fanaticism can exist in an enlightened age. India was the centre of civilization for ages, while other portions of

the world were in a state of barbarism ; and it is therefore the more remarkable that it should be the *locale* of this pestilential moral miasma, which the rapid and almost universal spread of intelligence has failed to dissipate. The existence of so foul a plague-spot would suggest that our moral nature has its antithetical phases, and, like the luminaries of the sky, is now at its zenith and now at its nadir ; and that the absolute progression of our race, without Divine aid, is but an idle dream and a baseless hope. It would almost seem to be the duty of the rulers of the realm of India to prohibit these practices, in the interest of our common humanity, leaving to public opinion the delicate task of correcting mere social follies and aberrations. Our governments may be legitimately held to be guardians of *public* morals. At any rate, the efforts of philanthropists for the enlightenment and reformation of India should be increased a hundred fold.

## CHAPTER VII.

EFFECTS OF THE DOCTRINES AND WORSHIP OF  
THE VALLABHACHARYANS.

ALTHOUGH in the preceding chapters we have incidentally adverted to the natural effects of the dissolute teachings of Vallabhacharya and his immediate descendants, and of the commentators who have endeavoured to elucidate the tenets of the sect, we shall here briefly recapitulate them, and show at one view the tendency of the teachings themselves and the baneful effect of the ceremonial which has grown out of them.

One of the most conspicuous effects of the doctrines and ceremonial is to draw away the attention of the sectarians from the knowledge of the true God. The superstitions which the Mahárájas have introduced, to subserve their purpose of controlling the consciences of their adherents, lead them to see God only in their religious guides, and to worship them as absolute impersonations of the Deity. "According to the old Bráhmínical tenet," developed in the philosophical Upanishads on which the Vedánta system is founded, "Brahma, the *all containing* and Indestructible, the Soul of which the Universe is the Body, abides from eternity to eternity as the fontal source of all spiritual existence: reunion with Brahma, absorption into Brahma, is the beatitude for which every separated spirit yearns, and which after animating its appointed cycle of individuated living organisms, it is ultimately destined to attain. This, then, is the pure and sublime notion

of the reunion of all spirits that animate living but perishable forms with the Eternal Spirit, not limited by form, debased into a sexual and carnal coition with the most sensuous of the manifestations or '*avatárs*' of God. . . . The religion which thus degrades the pure idea of spiritual reunion with God into the gross reality of carnal copulation with its hereditary high priesthood, appears to be sensuous in all its manifestations. *Rás Lilá*, or '*amorous dalliance*,' is held forth as the highest bliss here; *Rás Lilá* is the principal employment of Paradise hereafter: one of the many amatory names of the Maháráj is the '*Ocean of Rás Lilá*,' and when a Maháráj expires he is not said to die, but to extend himself to an immortality of *Rás Lilá*."\*

"If these things are sanctioned by the authoritative works of the religious sect; if reunion with God is figured under the emblem of sexual intercourse; if love for God is illustrated by the lustful longing of an adulteress for her paramour; if paradise is spoken of as a garden of amorous dalliance; finally, if the hereditary high priests of the sect are directed to be worshipped as gods and revered as the incarnations of God, it is not a matter of surprise that the ordinary devotees should make little practical distinction between Krishna and the Maháráj—that they should worship the Maháráj with blind devotion, and that their wives and daughters should freely give themselves up to his embraces, in the belief that they are thereby commingling with a god." †

Multitudes of the populace, therefore, servilely submit to all that these priests may chose to dictate; and they yield themselves passively to these delusions, which obtain an entire ascendancy over them. They are so subdued by this moral and intellectual paralysis, and so thoroughly debased by the apprehension of the consequences of thwarting their priests, that they have no will to exert in resistance to the debasing

\* Judgment of Sir Joseph Aracald.

† *Ibid.*

practices which the Mahárájas have introduced, in supreme contempt of their abject and devoted followers. Were the Mahárájas, as the Jesuits were, an intellectual and highly educated class, we might conceive of such a subjection to them; but the instances of culture among these men are so extremely rare, and their spiritual ascendancy is so entirely maintained as a hereditary right, without any respect to their character or qualifications for the sacerdotal office, that there is nothing by which we can account for the influence they exercise. That men who, in the ordinary business of life, and in their daily intercourse with others, are acute and intelligent, quick to perceive their rights and persistent in maintaining them, should submit to be the victims and the dupes of these priests, and should adopt and allow the vile practices they have introduced, is a mystery which we are unable to solve, except by a reference to the power of superstition to enthral the mind. It may be laid down as an axiom, that we are more usually and effectively acted upon by what is near than by what is remote. In the daily and hourly agitations of society, we see men act both deliberately and impulsively, upon proximate instigations, without weighing the possibilities of distant consequences and contingencies. And, in this case, the threat of being born a thousand times as a dog, a serpent, an ape, or an ass, after passing from this life, makes the deluded followers of this superstition the serfs of the priests, whose wills they slavishly obey even to the extent of suffering the most hideous humiliation. Hope also comes to the help of fear; and the futile promise that they shall pass, without any intervening transmigration, direct to Goloka, excites in the minds of the Vaishnavas a strong desire to give to their priests valuable presents, and blinds them to the degradation to which they are subjected in their families by their craft and lust.

Upon the females, who are entirely destitute of education, and who live in a climate which early develops the passions,

and in a moral atmosphere in many respects unfavourable to purity and delicacy, the superstition has still more baneful effects. By it a door is opened to every tempting inducement, and for the outlet of a flood of evils. Where there is no knowledge of moral turpitude, the females of the country yield to their worst impulses, and think that they are doing right. They are taught by their parents and friends to obey their own natural promptings, and to submit unhesitatingly to those solicitations from without, compliance with which has the promise of both temporal and spiritual reward. The explanation here is easier than in the case of the man; for although woman, normally, has perhaps a keener perception of right and wrong than man, her intelligence is enfeebled by the want of education and enlightened society, and the force of example and the power of precept. Thus she almost necessarily becomes the victim of her own excited imagination.

Hindus! we exhort you to educate your females, that you may have a virtuous progeny from a pure and uncontaminated source; for, under the circumstances we have been compelled to narrate, often to our utter disgust, a man cannot be sure that his child is his own, and not the offspring of a licentious voluptuary. Virtue is inherent in the female breast, and if duly nurtured, like a fair tree properly cultivated and tended, will in its season yield its noble crop of cheering blossom and sustaining fruit. Abjure the degrading tenets that debase you; arouse yourselves to the dignity of manhood, and cast the chain from your necks. Trample down this vile priesthood into the mire they create around you, and raise yourselves to the position your intelligence fits you to hold. Divest your females of the notion that intercourse with the Mahárájas is an honour, and that amorous connection with them is bliss. Make them renounce this vile superstition. Claim them as your own only, and bind them to yourselves and your families by the strong and hallowed ties of conjugal, parental, and

filial affection. Let not your homes have the scent of the impurities of the temple, whose odour should be disgusting to your nostrils.

Another conspicuous result of the effect of the precepts inculcated by the Mahárájas is the formation of the "Rás Mandalis." These are "carnal love meetings." The institutions, if it may be so called, or rather the practice, is derived from the account of the Rás Lílá, the ancient mythological story of the gopis, or female cowherds, mixing, dancing, and becoming passionately enamoured of Krishṇa. The meetings of these societies are held privately at the residence of some orthodox and rich Vaishṇavas. They take place in the evening, and at them are read stories from "The Tales of the Eighty-four Vaishṇavas," and from "The Tales of the Two Hundred and Fifty-two Vaishṇavas," which profess to relate respectively the histories of the converts of Vallabháchárya and of Vithalnáthji. We have had occasion, in our chapter on the doctrines of the Mahárájas, to quote some of these licentious narratives, to which we refer our readers back for illustration, not choosing to cite any more from such prurient-sources. The reading of these books excites and stimulates the passions, and we may be prepared to expect what must follow. Indeed, it is very questionable whether this stimulation is not the ostensible and main object of the meeting, rather than any religious motive. These readings, principally for the purpose of exciting concupiscence, is inculcated by the religion. Friendly Vaishṇavas take their wives, and possibly females of their acquaintance, with them to these meetings, and a discourse on matters of love and affection is read. It is not to be supposed that these societies have any resemblance to the Platonic concourse of the middle ages, entitled the *Cours d'Amours*, a Parliament of Love, which pronounced its "*arrets*," or sentences determining cases of conscience, or propounded ingenious subtleties for discussion. No!



These meetings are of a practical character, with but a step from word to deed. To them sweetmeats are taken, which are consecrated to the books, after reading, and these they put bit by bit into each other's mouth, each feeding another's wife.

“The wife of one Vaishṇava will put a morsel into the mouth of another Vaishṇava, who, in return, does the same to her, with all the practical manifestations of the most ardent love. After they have exhausted the sweets of these preliminaries, the intoxication of delight so overpowers them, and they become so enrapt with the ardour of the love that inflames them, that, forgetting the earth and its platitudes, they ascend to the very summit of celestial beatitude, and blend together in the ecstasy of superlative bliss.”

We have but given a paraphrase of what this passage says in plainer and unmistakable language. We will proceed now to some of the rules which regulate the Rás Mandali. These direct that if one male Vaishṇava wish to enjoy the wife of another Vaishṇava, the latter should give him that liberty with great delight and pleasure. Not the slightest hesitation is to be made. It is a primary condition that a Vaishṇava who wishes to be a member of this Mandali should join it together with his wife. The Vaishṇava who has no wife, or who has not been married, can also join the Mandali, and enjoy the wives of other Vaishṇavas. There are two or three such Rás Mandalis in Bombay, and they are found in other parts of India where Vaishṇavas dwell. Capt. McMurdo, the Resident in Kutch, has noticed the Rás Mandali. He says:—“The well known Rás Mandalis are very frequent among them (the Bháttíás) as among other followers of Vishṇu. At these, persons of both sexes and all descriptions, high and low, meet together; and, under the name and sanction of religion, practice every kind of licentiousness.”

It is not to be supposed that the Mahárájas permit their

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votaries to have the exclusive enjoyment of these Rás Mandalis; for this would be an act of self-denial, not consistent with their tenets. They themselves perform the part of Krishna with the gopis, and represent the Rás Lilá. It occurs in one part of the evidence in the Libel Case that the enactment of this "amorous sport" may be witnessed upon the payment of a fee, and one of the witnesses had actually paid the fee to see it performed between the Maháráj, as Krishna, and a young Bháttíá girl.

## CHAPTER VIII.

## PROFLIGACY OF THE MAHÁRAJAS.

OUR whole narrative has been scarcely anything but one continuous recital of the profligacy, debauchery, and licentiousness of the notorious Mahárájas. They find their infatuated votaries such willing victims, that their unresisting weakness tends to perpetuate and aggravate the evil; for all propensities, good and bad, by the very force of habit, become strengthened and confirmed. We cannot wonder, then, that these Mahárájas, accustomed from infancy to be treated with veneration, and to have every desire immediately and profusely met and gratified, should not desist from practices that have become bone of their bone and flesh of their flesh. Nurtured in indolence and sensuality, with the barest smattering of education, what can it be expected they should become but the precocious practitioners of every depravity? Accustomed to delicate nurture, the choicest viands, the richest habiliments, the smiles of women, and the abject and debasing servility of men, they unwittingly become gross sensualists; and the great wonder is, that, in the continuous practice of so much debauchery and dissipation, they should live even to the age of manhood. Comparatively few of them reach old age.

The Mahárájas must be often well-favoured, to inspire women with so strong a passion as to purchase intercourse with them at any cost, as they have sometimes done; for this surely cannot always be traced to a religious source, but must often arise from depraved sensuality. Women have been

known to part with their personal ornaments to purchase intercourse with these priests; and, upon returning home, they have pretended to their husbands, or to the elders of the house, that the ornaments were lost in the crush of the throng which pressed to pay adoration to the image of the idol. The Mahárájas are solicitous to obtain the notice of all their female votaries; but only their particular favorites, or the exceptional charms of a beautiful female novice, specially allure them. That they may not lose any opportunity of fascinating, they go to the temple attired in the choicest raiment, from which streams the rich perfume of the unguents they have been anointed with: they are as odorous and as iridescent as a parterre of bright coloured and sweet scented flowers. Can we wonder, then, at the infatuation of the females, thus assailed through every sense, and whose imaginations are intoxicated by the desire and expectation of realizing sensuous connection with an incarnate god? Some females, in their impassioned devotion, dedicate themselves wholly to this sensual enjoyment; and are so strongly impressed with its beneficial and meritorious efficacy, that they dedicate their daughters to the same service. It has often happened, in the case of the sickness of husband or child, that, in order to procure their recovery, women have vowed to dedicate their daughters to the embraces of the priest. But it must be remembered that females, when young, are already initiated, as far as sight is concerned, in the alluring mysteries of this profligate religious frenzy: they behold from infancy all the processes of the atrocious superstition, and grow up to maturity in the pestilential atmosphere of moral impurity. They are thus prepared for what follows.

The profligacy, debauchery, and licentiousness which characterize the sect of Vallabháchárya have been noticed by several distinguished persons, two or three of whom flourished some hundred years ago. Dámodar Svámi, a dramatic writer, com-

posed a Sanskrit drama entitled *Pákhanda Dharma Khandan* (The Smashing of Heretical Religion), in the year of Samvat 1695 (about A.D. 1639), in which a distinct reference to Vallabhachárya and his sect is made as follows :—

आर्ये विदितमेव भवत्या वेदैः क्वापि पलायितं प्रियतमे वार्त्ता पि न  
श्रूयते सांख्यं योग पुराण धर्म निचयः क्वांतर्गतो वृक्षते श्रीमद्वृक्ष-  
विटुलेश्वरमुखैः श्रुत्यर्थबाधोद्यतैः प्रोक्तं स्वात्म निवेदनं युवतिभिः सं-  
वृक्षते सांप्रतं

वंटे कर्षे च हृष्ये कटितटविषये मस्रवे काष्ठमाक्षां वृंदायाः संदधानो  
मृगपदसदृशं चंदनं वै खलाटे. राधेकृष्येति खल्पन् श्रुतिपद्यविमुखो  
वेदिकान् भर्त्समानः स्त्रीवृदैः कामपूरैः प्रति पदमिच्छितो वैष्णवी  
चुंबमानः भो भो वैष्णवाः श्रूयतां आच्छिन्नं मुत्रनिबंधनमायताक्षः  
स्वच्छं निपानमशनं स्वपराब भेदः स्वात्मार्षेयं युवतिभिर्गुरुषु प्रयुक्तं  
धन्यं च वैष्णवमतं भुवि मुक्तिहेतुः

परस्परं भोष्यमहर्निशं रतिः स्त्रीभिः समं पानमनंतसौहृदं श्री बीकु-  
लेशार्पितं चेतसां नृणां रीतिः परा सुंदरि सारवेदिनां

यत्पादुका पूजनं मुखधर्मः सुतासुषादार समर्पणं च न पूजनं ब्राह्मण  
वेदिकानां नवा तिथेः ब्राह्मव्रतोपवासः

[TRANSLATION OF THE ABOVE.]

“The Sūtradhára (says to the Nati):—O dear, the Vedas have fled somewhere; no one knows the story of their flight (i.e. whither they have gone). The collection of the Sākhya, Yoga, and the Purānas, has sunk into the bowels of the earth. Now, young damsels, look to the self-dedication preached by Shrimat Vallabha Vittakeshvara, who has conspired to falsify the meaning of the Vedas.

“Enters a Vaishnava, having on his neck, ear, hand, head, and around his loins, a wreath made of the *Vrinda* (*Ocimum Sanctum*,

or Tulsi), having on his forehead *Gopichandana* (a substitute for sandalwood). He is one who repeats Rádha! Krishna! Being opposed to the Shruti, he is the reproacher of those who adhere to the Vedas. He finds at every step crowds of females filled by *káma* (lust or cupid). He is the kisser of female Vaishnavas. Ye Vaishnavas, ye Vaishnavas, hear the excellent and blessed Vaishnava doctrine: the embracing and clasping with the arms the large-eyed damsels, good drinking and eating, making no distinction between your own and another's, offering one's self and life to gurus, is in the world the cause of salvation.

“Mutual dining, carnal intercourse with females night and day, drinking, forming endless alliances, are the surpassing, beautiful customs of the persons who have consecrated their souls to Sri Gokulesha. Charity, devotion, meditation, abstraction, the Vedas, and a crore of sacrifices, are nothing: the nectarine pleasure of the worshippers of the *Páduka* (wooden-slipper), in Sri Gokula, is better than a thousand other expedients. Our own body is the source of enjoyment, the object of worship reckoned by all men fit to be served. If sexual intercourse do not take place with the Gokulesha, the paramour of men is useless, like a worm or ashes.

“The chief religion of the worshippers of the *Páduka* is the consecration of a daughter, a son's wife, and a wife, and not the worship of Brahmanas learned in the Vedas, hospitality, the *Shraddha* (funeral ceremonies), vows, and fastings.”\*

Sámal Bhatta, a distinguished Gujaráti poet, who flourished in Gujarát about a hundred and fifty years ago, in his poem entitled *Sudá Boteri* (Seventy-two Parrots) makes the following remarks in the twenty-fourth story of the book:—

वैष्णव धरमभां कहुं ॥ इनैये श्रीधुं कांभ ॥  
 सोल शहस्र संतोषीया ॥ नटवर नेनां नाम ॥ २३ ॥  
 गोसाईच गुर् नेहना ॥ समरपल्ली सरदार ॥  
 तन मन धन सोपे तेहने ॥ नीरमण पोतानी नार ॥ २४ ॥  
 वैष्णव वैष्णवभां आचरे ॥ रासभंडणीनी गीत ॥  
 वंसत रमेछे वैष्णवो ॥ परसपरे अहु श्रीत ॥ २५ ॥  
 को वैष्णव सामणा ॥ को अके वैष्णव भांड ॥  
 डेठलाक वैष्णव रांडुवा ॥ डेठलाक रांडी रांड ॥ २६ ॥

\* Translated by Dr. John Wilson.

ઢાપા કરેછે છેલજી ॥ બાંડ બાંડ ધલેછે બાલ ॥  
 સ્ત્રીમારે વેસ વગોવતા કરે ॥ કામનિયોના કાજ ॥ ૨૭ ॥  
 બિજે મારગ ઓજનો ॥ કેહવાય ધણીનો ધરમ ॥  
 નર નારો મજેછે એકઠાં ॥ કરેછે કુડાં કરમ ॥ ૨૮ ॥

[TRANSLATION OF THE ABOVE.]

In the Vaishnava religion it is said  
 Kanayá (*i.e.* Krishna) did this business—  
 He gratified sixteen thousand (*gopis*),  
 Arch-actor is his name.  
 (They) whose high priest is Gosáji,  
 The head of the Samarpanis (*dedicators*),  
 Make over to him their bodies, minds, and wealth,  
 (And also) their pure females (or wives).  
 The Vaishnavas among themselves practice  
 The observances of the Rás Mandali :  
 The Vaishnavas sport among themselves the spring sports,  
 Having great love towards each other.  
 Some Vaishnavas are dark,  
 Some Vaishnavas are indecent talkers,  
 Some Vaishnavas are effeminate,  
 Some (are even like) widows.  
 (They) make foppish seal-impressions,\*  
 (And) put on indecent brows ;  
 They debase their appearance by adultery,  
 Being destroyer of female (virtue).  
 Another sect is that of Braj ;  
 Their religion (is) called the husband's religion ;  
 \* (Among them) the males (and) females mix together  
 And do wicked acts.†

Akha Bhagat, a man of distinguished piety, who flourished  
 in Gujarát about the same time, and who was once a follower  
 of the Mahárájas, used to recite a couplet which has since  
 become a proverbial saying among the Gujaráti people, and  
 which is as follows :—

‘યુર કીવો મેં ઓકુજનાથ, ધરડા વ્યજદને ધાલી નાથ ॥  
 વંન હરે ધોડો ન હરે, એનો યુર કલ્યાણ યું કરે ॥ ૧ ॥

\* On their persons with the *gopachandan* or white earth.

† The attention of the author was directed to this passage by Kalidas.

## [TRANSLATION OF THE ABOVE].

“ I adopted Gokulnâth for my guru, and thus put a string in the nostrils of an old bullock : one who lightens wealth but does not lighten the pressure (on the heart),—what good can such a guru confer ? ”

In the Kāvya Dohan (the Cream of Poetry), or Selections from the Gujarâti Poets, we find the following piece, written probably about a hundred years ago, by Krishnarâm, a Gujarâti poet :—

વૈષ્ણવ યજ્ઞને વેષ, અખખાને આરાધે ॥  
 કરે ધર્મનો દ્વેષ, શિવની નિંદા સાધે ॥ ૯૧ ॥  
 સમર્પણી યજ્ઞ સ્નાદ, શીરા પૂરી જમતા ॥  
 યુરનો લેઈ પ્રસાદ, રામા સંગે રમતા ॥ ૯૨ ॥  
 પરનારીને સંગ, પ્રીતે મનમાં પેસે ॥  
 અર્જુનકારથી અંગ, સરસ સમાવી બેસે ॥ ૯૬ ॥  
 વેદ વિનાના ધર્મ, વાચે નિત્ય વિખાણે ॥  
 કૃષ્ણ અંદ્રનાં કર્મ, જીવ સરીખા જાણે ॥ ૧૦૦ ॥  
 દંભી જનનો દાસ, યજ્ઞને શીરા નમાવે ॥  
 વિહલ તણો વિશ્વાસ, શુદ્ધને મન બાવે ॥ ૧૦૨ ॥\*

## [TRANSLATION OF THE ABOVE].

Having assumed the appearance of a Vaishṇava,  
 They worship the feeble sex.  
 They hate (the true) religion,  
 And accomplish the defamation of Shiva.  
 Having become Samarpani (dedicators) (they) indulge  
 In (the sense of taste by) eating *Sirâ-pura*.  
 They receive the consecrated food from their guru,  
 (And) play with women.  
 (Thoughts of having) connection with other women  
 Habitually occupy their minds.  
 Having decked up their persons,  
 With ornaments they sit.

\* Kāvya Dohan, pp. 110, 111, 2nd edition.



(Their) non-Vaidik tenets  
 (They) daily read and praise.  
 The deeds of Krishna Chandra  
 (They) regard as (if they were their) soul.  
 They become the slaves of impostors,  
 (To whom they) bow their heads.  
 The minds of (these) Shúdra (Vaishnavas) like  
 To place their faith in Vithal.

Sajjánand Swámi, better known as Swámi Náráyan, who flourished in Gujaráti about sixty years ago, and founded a new sect, exposed the immoralities committed by the Mahárájas, and thus induced the intelligent portion of the Vaishnava community to become his followers.

Mr. H. G. Briggs, the author of "The Cities of Gujaráshtra," in the eleventh chapter of his work, referring to Sajjánand Swámi, says:—

"No longer influenced by those dreads which had hitherto intercepted his career, he commenced his crusade against the *Vallabha Kula*, better known as the Gosáinji Maháráj. He boldly denounced the irregularities they had introduced into their forms of worship, and exposed the vices which characterized the lives of their clergy" (pp. 237, 238).

In the "Transactions of the Literary Society of Bombay" (now the Bombay Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society), vol. ii., published in the year 1820, Capt. McMurdo, Resident in Katchh, writing about Katchh and its people, makes reference to the Mahárájas as follows:—

"The Bháttíás are of Sindh origin. They are the most numerous and wealthy merchants in the country, and worship the Gosáinji Mahárájas, of whom there are many. The Maháráj is the master of their property, and disposes of it as he pleases; and such is the veneration in which he is held, that the most respectable families consider themselves honoured by his cohabiting with their wives or daughters. The principal Maháráj at present on this side of India is named Gopináthji, a man worn to a skeleton and shaking like a leaf, from debauchery of every kind, excepting spirituous liquors.

He is constantly in a state of intoxication from opium and various other stimulants which the ingenuity of the sensual has discovered. He was originally a Brahman" (vol. ii. pp. 230, 231).

Mr. Frederick Hall, formerly Professor of the Government College at Benares, published in 1854 Káshi Námah, one of the Persian works of the deceased Munshi Shilal Sheikh, in which the author makes a distinct reference to the sect of the Gokul Gosáins, or the Mahárájas. We give below the text and its English translation:—

دویم کوشائین کوکل بکوکلست مشهوراند بیشتر اوضاع ظاهر مثل  
 کوشائیان بندرابن و وضع قشقه علحدہ و مُریدان آنها بیشتر بقالان  
 گجراتی اند کہ پیشہ مهاجینی دارند دیگر کسی کمتر ب مریدی آنها  
 میل میکنند و مُریدان آنها از مرد و زن بوقت مُرید شدن تن من  
 دهن ہر سہ چیز گور آرین مینمایند یعنی در خدمت و برای خوشی  
 و از جسم و دل و زر در بیخ ندارند و زن و مرد ہر روزہ بلاناغہ و بعضی  
 سہ مرتبہ برای دیدار مرشد و بت معبود میروند و سواي این آن  
 قدر حُسن اعتقاد ماتحتق دارند کہ بوقت شادی منکوح خود را بلا  
 تصرف اول بخدمت پیر دستگیر می فریستند بعدہ اُلش مُرشد کامل  
 بکام مُریدان غافل میرسد و اگر احياناً شخصی از مُریدان در فرستادن  
 منکوح بطورند کورتالی و تاہل نماید برغم آنها منکوح او عقیمہ  
 میگردد و شوہرش را سود بہبود نمی شود چون خطرہ مرقومہ از  
 مدت دماغ آن ابلہان را پریشان ساختہ بترس و خوف درین عمل  
 منکرہ می کوشند و سواي منکوح جدید نیز اگر بطرف زوجہ کسی

مُرید میلان مرشد می شود به مجرد استمزاج حاضر میسازند و جمیع این ابلهان اعمال فسق و فجور مُرشدرا کرشن کریرا می شمردند و مرشدرا معبود خود دانسته ارشاد او را بمنزل وحی آسمانی میدانند و رازداری اعمال او می سازند خورد نوش آنها نهایت لطیف و فاخره و اکثر متمول می باشند

[TRANSLATION OF THE ABOVE.]

“*The Gokul Gosáinjis.*—They are generally known (by the name of) Gokulasth. In all their outward manners they are like the Bandrában Gosáins, and they apply the Kasliká (mark made by the Hindus on the forehead) in a different way, and their followers are mostly Gujaráti grocers (or banians), who carry on the business of máhajans (or bankers). Few other people are inclined to become their followers. Their followers, whether men or women at the time of becoming their followers, make an offering to the guru (i.e. the spiritual guide) of these three things, namely, body, mind, and wealth,—that is, for (his) service and gratification; and they withhold not from him their bodies, hearts, and gold. Men and women unflinchingly go once every day, and some of them three times (daily), in order to behold the face of their spiritual guide, or the adored idol. And, besides this, they are so firm in their good faith, that when they marry, they first send their wives to their spiritual guide without having made use of them; and the leavings of their accomplished guide are afterwards tasted by the ignorant disciples. Should any one of the disciples hesitate to send his wife as mentioned above, she becomes, agreeably to their belief, a barren woman, and her husband will not benefit by her; and as this dread has disordered the brains of those foolish people for a long time, they, from fear, exercise this obnoxious act. Besides the newly married wife, should the guide desire the wife of any followers, as soon as they discover his intentions they produce her; and all these fools regard the wicked and sinful deeds of their guide as the gambols of Krishna, and, considering their adored guide as God, they respect his words as revelations from heaven, and conceal his doings. The food and drink of these (Gosáins) are delicious and luxurious, and most of them are wealthy.”

The immoralities of the Mahárájas were proved before the Supreme (now High) Court of Bombay in the year 1862. Dr. John Wilson, who (in the words of Sir Joseph Arnould), "has studied the subject with that comprehensive range of thought—the result of varied erudition—which has made his name a foremost one among the living orientologists of Europe," says in his testimony as follows:—

"The sect of Vallabháchárya is a new sect, inasmuch as it has selected the god Krishṇa in one of his aspects—that of his adolescence, and raised him to supremacy in that aspect. It is a new sect, in as far as it has established the *Pushti-márga*, or way of enjoyment, in a natural and carnal sense. The sect is new in its objects, and new in its methods. The god Krishṇa is worshipped by its members in the form of images, and in the form of the persons of their gurus, the so-called Mahárájas. The Maháráj is considered by a great many of his followers as an incarnation of God, as god incarnate according to Hindu notions, which are peculiar on that subject. The Vallabhácháryans hold that Vallabháchárya and his official descendants are incarnations of the god Krishṇa, without holding that there is a complete embodiment of him in any one of them. According to Hindu notions, there have occurred nine incarnations of Vishṇu, the last of them being that of Buddha. The orthodox Hindus do not believe in any incarnations which are said to have taken place between the time of Buddha and the present day. The Vallabhácháryans, on the contrary, hold that Vallabháchárya and his descendants are incarnations of Krishṇa. They view the Maháráj as intermediate between themselves and the god Krishṇa, in the sense of being entitled to have his *dicta* received as equal to those of Krishṇa himself. . . . *Tan*, *man*, and *dhan* (in the formula of Vallabháchárya initiation) are used in an all-comprehensive sense—*tan*, embracing the body in all its members and functions; *man*, referring to mind in all the mental powers and faculties; and *dhan*, comprehending all property and possessions, which have to be placed at the disposal of the god through the Maháráj, according to the doctrines of the sect. I have seen passages in works published by the Mahárájas of the sect, according to which the sectaries should make over their sons, wives, daughters, and every thing else before applying them to their own use."

We shall not dwell longer upon this subject than to recite

an extract from the judgment of Sir Mathew Sansse, in the Maháráj Libel Case:—

“It appears abundantly from works of recognised authority written by other Mahárájas, and from existing popular belief in the Vallabháchárya sect, that Vallabháchárya is believed to have been an incarnation of the god Krishna, and that the Mahárájas, as descendants of Vallabháchárya, have claimed and received from their followers the like character of incarnation of that god, by hereditary succession. The Mahárájas have been sedulous in identifying themselves with the god Krishna by means of their own writings and teachings and by the similarity of ceremonies of worship and addresses which they require to be offered to themselves by their followers. All songs connected with the god Krishna, which were brought before us, were of an amorous character, and it appeared that songs of a corrupting and licentious tendency, both in idea and expression, are sung by young females to the Mahárájas, upon festive occasions, in which they are identified with the god in his most licentious aspect. In these songs, as well as in stories, both written and traditional, which latter are treated as of a religious character in the sect, the subject of sexual intercourse is most prominent. Adultery is made familiar to the minds of all: it is nowhere discouraged or denounced; but, on the contrary, in some of the stories, those persons who have committed that great moral and social offence are commended; and, in one of them, the actors are awarded the highest position in the heaven of the Vaishnavas, although for some attention paid on one occasion to the clearing of a temple of the god. The love and subserviency inculcated by the Hindu religion to be due in a spiritual sense to the Supreme Being, has been by those corrupt teachings materialised, and to a large extent transferred to those who claim to be his living incarnations. It is said to be ceremonially effected by a mystic rite, or dedication of ‘mind,’ ‘property,’ and ‘body,’ (or *man, dhan, and tan*), which is made in childhood by males, but by females in the ceremony of marriage; and a popular belief appears to exist to a considerable extent, that this dedication confers upon the Mahárájas absolute rights over the ‘minds,’ ‘properties,’ and ‘bodies’ of their followers. The Mahárájas, however, appear, upon the evidence, to have undoubtedly availed themselves of the existence of those impressions to gratify licentious propensities and a love of gain. These doctrines and practices are opposed to what we know of the original principles of the ancient Hindu religion, which are said to be found in the Vedas.”

The observations we have been induced to make result from the impressions we have received in treating the subject; and we feel confident that our readers will concur with us in denouncing the flagrant abuses we have pointed out, and help us to hold them up to the indignation of the world. We sincerely hope that this public exposure of gross social evils will tend to their ultimate and speedy abatement.

## CHAPTER IX.

## OPPRESSIVE EXACTIONS OF THE MAHARAJAS.

SINCE the Mahárájas exercise such unlimited spiritual authority over their adherents, it follows that they should possess considerable temporal influence and power. Great personal respect is paid to them; they are invited to sumptuous entertainments by their votaries, are constantly in the receipt of valuable and choice presents, are consulted upon most matters of importance, and their sway over society is consequently great. When a rumour reaches a town that a Maháráj is approaching, a large throng of his devoted followers go forth to meet him, and, forming themselves into a procession, he enters the town with great pomp and jubilation. The most influential and rich members of the sect think it no degradation to perform the most menial offices in his service.

Whoever displeases a Maháráj incurs the penalty of excommunication, which is thus carried into effect: The Maháráj presses the most influential persons belonging to the sect to interfere in the matter, and a meeting is convened, at which the conduct of the offending Vaishnava is discussed. As, in all such cases, the voice of the wealthy and powerful preponderates; and as these have already been privately solicited and won over by the Maháráj, the issue is never doubtful. The person who has incurred the displeasure of the Maháráj has no alternative but to endure all the pains and penalties of excommunication, or to make the most abject submission, and atone by the offer of costly bribes. Any one who resists the

imposition of a tax which the Maháráj desires to levy is punished in a lighter way, although one equally powerful in its consequences, for he is prohibited from worshipping the image, or the Maháráj, until he submit. It thus happens that even the rich and influential are often kept soliciting pardon, and fasting, at the door of the dwelling of the Maháráj, for they may not take even food or water until they have paid their adoration to the image and to the Maháráj, which they are not permitted to do until they have submitted to the imposition.

“After the Europeans and Pársis, the Gujarati community engross the largest portion of the commerce of Bombay. They include Bháttiás, Márwádis, Lowánás, and others. They may be characterised generally as a community of shopkeepers, and have always shown an instinctive aptitude for commerce. . . . By far the larger portion of this trading community acknowledge the Mahárájas for their spiritual guides. Our whole *Kapad Bazár*, cloth market, is almost exclusively monopolized by the devout Vaishnavas. They deal also very extensively in cotton, opium, sugar, spices, gold, silver, and in almost every important article of trade. The Mahárájas, taking advantage of the commercial character of their worshippers have secured to themselves a permanent source of income, by imposing a tax upon every article or commodity in which their votaries are trading. How such a tax came to be imposed upon them is easily learnt from a little brochure published ten years ago by the special authority of Jivanji Maháráj, which furnishes information regarding the amount and nature of the tax that goes to him. It appears from this that, in 1811, when Gokulnáthji Maháráj, the ancestor of Jivanji, came to Bombay, all the Vaishnavas of the island of Bombay, collecting in a body, requested His Holiness to settle permanently with his family ‘for the purification of their souls;’ offering, at the same time, to build a temple for him, and to



make arrangements to meet his expenses in connection with the temple. To secure permanency to his income, and that, too, in a way the least burdensome to his followers, the Mahá-ráj pitched upon articles of trade for taxation. Accordingly agreements were signed by Bháttíá, Baniá, and Lowáná merchants, in which they bound themselves to add to the price of every article they might buy or sell according to the following scale :—

ARTICLES.	AMOUNT OF TAXATION.
1. Silk, sugar, spices, metals, sack-cloth, cotton, and opium .....	} $\frac{1}{2}$ anna per every hundred rupees of sale effected.
2. Cloth, silk, cotton, and every other species .....	
3. Bills of exchange, drafts, etc. ...	{ 1 anna per every thousand rupees transaction.
4. Gold and silver specie .....	Ditto.
5. Bills and specie brokerage .....	Ditto.
6. Cloth brokerage .....	{ $\frac{1}{2}$ anna per every hundred rupees transaction.
7. Agency brokers .....	Ditto.
8. Brokers to European houses .....	Ditto.
9. Grain brokers .....	Ditto.
10. Pearls and jewels .....	Ditto.
11. Pearls and jewel brokerage .....	Ditto.
12. Insurance brokers .....	Ditto.
13. Muccadams .....	{ 8 annas per every hundred rupees of their income.
14. Every <i>patimar</i> laden with goods from Malabar, and consigned to a Vaishṇava .....	} Ra. $1\frac{1}{2}$ per vessel.
15. Every <i>padow</i> (native craft) from Rájápur, and of which the goods are consigned to a Vaishṇava ...	
16. Grain of all kinds .....	1 anna per candy.
17. Ghi (clarified butter).....	$\frac{1}{2}$ anna per maund.
18. Oil .....	$\frac{1}{2}$ anna per maund.
19. Rice .....	1 anna per "mudá."
20. Malabar cloth .....	{ 1 anna per every hundred rupees transaction.

ARTICLES.	AMOUNT OF TAXATION.
21. Dealers in gold .....	} Rs. 1½ per every hundred rupees' worth of gold bought for trade.
22. Cotton yarn .....	
23. Rope .....	} 1 rupee per every hundred rupees' worth of sale effected.
24. Iron .....	
25. Pepper, etc.....	1½ anna per cwt.

“It will be seen that there is not an important article of trade in which the Vaishnavas are engaged that has escaped the Maháráj's clutches. Small and inappreciable as the rate of *lágá* (tax) may appear on a superficial view, the proceeds of the whole, when collected together, amount to 50,000 rupees. This large sum goes every year to fill the coffers of Jivanji, the owner of the great temple in Bombay, and now one of the richest among the natives of our island.

“But this is not all. It is not enough that so much money goes to one Maháráj. Other high priests have come forward in succession to assert their several claims, and to have their need supplied by fresh impositions. For instance, there is a *lágá* on most of the other mentioned articles (the rate of which, however, is not the same as that of the first one), which goes to provide for the temple of Śri Náthji in Mewár. It would be tedious to mention the different rates on different articles. Suffice it to say that the proceeds of this second tax amount to 80,000 rupees a year, of which the tax on piece goods alone, which is one anna per every hundred rupees' worth of goods bought or sold, furnishes the important item of 42,000 rupees, Jivanji Maháráj deriving from this same source about 11,000 rupees. The *lágás* appear to have grown with the growth of the Mahárájas' number. Hardly two or three years pass but a fresh *lágá* is sure to be imposed. About three years ago Chimanlálji, Gopkeshji, and Lál Maniji Mahárájas imposed three *lágás* for their respective benefit on

some of the above-mentioned articles, from which they derive 12,000, 5,500, and 4,500 rupees respectively every year. The total amount of the six *lágás* we have now described is as follows:—

	RUPEES.
For Sri Náthji .....	80,000
„ Jivanji Maháráj .....	50,000
„ Chimanlálji ditto.....	12,000
„ Gopkeshji ditto .....	5,500
„ Lál Maniji .....	4,500
„ Bábu Bárjaji .....	10,000
	Rs. 162,000

“ Perhaps some of our readers will be surprised to find that a tax of one anna or half an anna on every hundred rupees should produce so large an amount. But the fact is that the rate of tax on every article is doubled, trebled, or quadrupled, as it passes from one merchant or shopkeeper to another, and from another to a third, and from a third to a fourth, and so on, for every Vaishṇava merchant pays his *lágá* for what he buys or sells.

“ Upon whom does this burden of 162,000 rupees fall? It is certain that it does not fall upon the orthodox Vaishṇavas. It would be a different thing altogether were the taxes levied on the profit of his trade. The Bháttíá merchant is at liberty to spend what he pleases out of his profits. But it must be borne in mind that the *lágás*, or taxes of the Mahárájas, are levied upon articles of trade, and the burden therefore falls upon the community at large. The Vaishṇava merchant pays not a farthing. Let us see what he does. He buys, say piece goods in lump from European merchants, and puts such a price upon them as will cover not only his profits but all he has to pay in the shape of *lágás* to the Mahárájas. He has no fear of his goods being undersold, for his brother merchants, who are alike Vaishṇavas, are in similar circumstances. He is generally a retail as well as a wholesale dealer. Mer-

chants who buy goods from him, in paying the increased price (increased on account of the taxes), pay actually the taxes themselves; but they lose nothing, since they must sell their goods at a profit, however low. The consumers of the articles are the real payers of the Mahárájas' taxes. Thus Christians, Zoroástrians, Mahomedans, and the non-Vaishnava Hindus, are called upon to make this little contribution to the Mahárájas. Again, merchants from Arabia, Persia, or Zanzibar, on the coast of Africa, buy piece goods and other articles on a very extensive scale from the Bháttíá dealers; and they, too, pay for the Maháráj's imposition. These merchants, however, suffer nothing from it, for they charge it upon the price of the articles they sell to the people of Arabia, Persia, and Zanzibar, as the case may be. Foreign consumers, therefore, certainly, though unconsciously, come in for a share of the holy tax." \*

Thus the power and influence of the Mahárájas is collaterally aided by their wealth, which tends to increase the respect in which they are held, especially by the populace, with whom a poor priesthood is usually an object of ridicule or contempt.

Men holding society by the throat with so powerful a grasp as these Mahárájas, for the gratification of their evil passions and propensities, would be dangerous to society at large, were there not firm laws which impose limits upon their power. Of their misdeeds, so long as they are kept within the bounds of their sect, and are limited to such acts as affect only their devotees, the law takes no notice, for these are private wrongs of which the law takes no cognizance, if the individual who suffers chooses to submit to them. If, however, its protection be claimed it will vindicate its supremacy. The Mahárájas are careful not to attempt to exercise authority in such a manner as would bring them within the grasp of the law; but

\* *Times of India*, February 1, 1862.

the private wrongs they inflict are nevertheless of sufficiently grave a character to be held up to public censure. Although all-powerful within their own area and pale, their sacerdotal character does not exempt them from the castigation of intelligent opinion.

We purpose giving a few instances of their misconduct, which might not otherwise come clearly to the knowledge of the public.

“About twenty-seven years ago, when Sir Henry (then Colonel) Pottinger, was the Resident at Katchh, a Maháráj from Katchh spoiled the houses of the Vaishnavas of Sindh : this man had twenty-two Mussulman sepoys in his pay; and for disguise, we presume, he kept his beard like that of a Mussulman. After robbing the Vaishnavas of some villages between Luckpat and Tera, he started for Katchh Mándavi, the inhabitants of which communicated the intelligence to the Resident through Deván Lakhmidás, mehtá of that place. Upon this the Resident sent a military guard, and directed that the Maháráj should not be permitted to enter the town. Accordingly, when he came to within two miles of the place, he was informed that he would be punished if he remained within the boundaries of Katchh. Upon this the Maháráj immediately fled.”

“Another Maháráj (who died in Bombay about twelve years ago) went once to Katchh Mándavi. Here he found a person who had a claim against one Hansá Tilvánivállá. This claim was barred by law, and the man therefore made over the bond to the Maháráj, and told him so. The Maháráj immediately sent for Hansá Tilvánivállá and demanded the money from him. The poor man stated that he was not legally bound to pay the money, and that, besides, he was in impoverished circumstances, and could not. Hereupon, the Maháráj, without attending to what he had said, made him lie all day in the sun, and had a large stone placed on his breast.”

“In another case, about three years ago, a subscription list was set on foot by Chimanji Maháráj for the purpose of constructing a great temple. In that list many Vishnavas had willingly contributed large sums; but others, who had attached but small sums against their names, had a great deal of *sulum* (tyranny) practised upon them by the Maháráj. To extort large contributions from them, they were threatened with the closing of Chimanji’s temple against them. Some were actually confined in the temple. The same Maháráj threw one of his worshippers from a staircase of his house, and thereby inflicted great personal injury upon him.”

Authority has been exercised in other cases in a similar manner, for the purposes of extortion; but the personal injury inflicted in this case would have brought the Maháráj within reach of the law if the votary had chosen to claim its protection.

“In another case, Gokuleshadhishji Maháráj thought right to possess himself of the house of one Manikbái, widow of Kaliánji Okhai, late mukkadam to Messrs. Graham and Co. After confining her in his temple for some length of time, he forced her to deliver to him all the documents relating thereto, and extorted from her a writing to the effect that she had of her own free will made over the house to the Maháráj as a gift. Some time after, the widow sued the Maháráj in her Majesty’s Supreme Court, and when the case was about to come on, the Maháráj caused a private settlement to be made, he making over to her the deed of the house (worth about 12,000 rupees) and receiving from her 1,500 rupees in consideration.”

Here the religion of the votary did not shelter the attempted robbery; but it was a pity the action was compromised, as we have no doubt the Supreme Court would have strongly expressed itself upon the nefarious transaction. But we presume

the plaintiff was induced by caste reasons to forego the pursuit, and was content to recover her own even at a cost.

“Again (and as the last instance we shall adduce, and to which we shall have occasion to advert in a subsequent chapter), about five years ago all the Mahárájas of Bombay framed a document which became subsequently celebrated as the ‘Slavery Bond.’ In this slavery bond it was stated that no Vaishṇava should serve the Mahárájas with summons to appear in a court of justice; that a fund should be raised for the purpose of trying to get an act passed in the Legislative Council by which no Maháráj could be summoned before a court of justice; and if, during the interval, a Maháráj were served with a summons by an outside party, the Vaishṇavas should undergo any expense to put a stop to it; that, if any Vaishṇava wrote against the Mahárájas, he should be punished by his caste people.”

“The Vaishṇavas were not at all willing to sign such a rigorously framed document; but when, for eight days together, the Mahárájas closed the doors of their temples against them, and did not allow any Vaishṇava to see their faces, all the Vaishṇava *shets* signed the document. Some of the *shets* were altogether unwilling to do so, but they became afraid of the Mahárájas, and at last signed the ‘Slavery Bond.’”\*

The inference to be drawn from these instances is that the Mahárájas, if resisted in their tyranny, would be controlled; but while their infatuated votaries receive the dogma of the creed they follow, that these Mahárájas are the incarnations of Krishna, and adhere to the dedication of *tan*, *man*, and *dhan*, they must necessarily remain the victims of these artful, crafty, and dissolute priests.

\* A pamphlet on the Mahárájas.

## CHAPTER X.

## THE MAHARAJAS IN DIFFICULTIES.

It might have been foreseen that power such as that exercised by the Maharájas, resting on hereditary superstition of the most debasing character, and maintained by craft and cunning, must ultimately be overthrown. It was impossible that an authority having no other support could continue when the light of intelligence was thrown upon it. It must necessarily expire amidst the ridicule and scorn of those to whom its true character is shown. The impending fall of an illegitimate but long continued domination, arbitrary and tyrannous in its pressure on the consciences of men, is often accelerated by strange and unexpected circumstances. And thus it is with the power and influence of these Maharájas. The circumstances that have conduced to hasten the deserved overthrow of their monstrous tyranny may be summed up as follows :—

1. The religious disputes between them and the Brahmans.
2. Their objections to attend courts of justice.
3. The opinions of the press upon them and their deeds.
4. Their infatuated mistake in the endeavour to enforce the  
“ Slavery Bond.”

Let us first notice the religious disputes between them and the Brahmans.

In the year 1855, the Gujaráti Brahmans in Bombay, wishing to make the offering to Mahádeva, or Síva, of Chhapan-



bhoga (which means fifty-six kinds of consecrated food, and consists of as many different sorts of vegetables, grains, etc., and is very expensive from the quantity made), commenced a subscription for the purpose. This met with success, and the consecrated food was made and offered at the shrine of the idol, after which it was participated in by the Brahmans, and widely distributed.

The Mahárájas, seeking a pretext for disputing with the Brahmans, contended that what is consecrated to Śiva, is, according to the Hindu Śástras, *Śiva Nirmál* (which means holy to Śiva), and consequently ought not to have been partaken of by the Brahmans. The Brahmans in Bombay are, as a class, supported by begging; and throughout Gujارات and the adjacent parts, as well as at Bombay, they are wholly supported by Vaishnavas, it being customary for all sectarians, without exception, to present gifts to the Brahmans, whose sect is considered the chief. The object of the Mahárájas in originating this dispute was to acquire the supremacy, thus virtually held by the Brahmans. To effect this, the Mahárájas urged upon the Vaishnavas, and especially the Bháttíás, who were the chief supporters of the Brahmans, that, having committed this serious religious error of consuming the food consecrated to Śiva, they were unworthy of support and patronage, and urged that the customary gifts and supplies should be withheld from them. For a considerable time previous to this there had been much dissatisfaction among the Vaishnavas on account of the conduct and practices of the Mahárájas; and as the latter prosecuted with great vehemence the scheme for withholding the supplies to the Brahmans, the Vaishnavas thought it a favourable opportunity for obtaining some reform of the abuses they complained of, which consisted in the notorious adulterous intercourse of the Mahárájas with the females of their families (especially in the winter service at four o'clock in the morning), and the frequent ravishment of

girls of ten or eleven years of age. These atrocities had only been submitted to with any patience by the most infatuated and devoted of the Vaishnavas; for the Hindus generally set a high value on the chastity of their females, and the violation of it, as a point of doctrine, is severely reprehended as a sin in their ancient religious works. Profligacy is nowhere inculcated in the Sacred Books of the Hindus, and rests upon a corruption of symbolism from its true meaning, introduced by these infamous men to sanction their own misdeeds. Much dissatisfaction also grew out of the quarrels and disputes in families caused by the Mahárájas requiring the wives and daughters of the Vaishnavas to make them presents of ornaments and jewellery; for the females, being willing to gratify the cupidity of their priests, urged their unwilling husbands to consent. Another ground of complaint was the treatment of the females in the thronged crowds of the temple, where they were indecently abused. The Vaishnavas were also displeased on account of the large sums of money exacted from them in various ways, on pain of being exposed to the injury and annoyance which the Mahárájas always knew how to inflict on those who provoked their animosity. They were indignant that, in cases where private, commercial, family, or caste disputes were referred to the arbitration of the Maháráj, the dissatisfied party, against whom a decision had been given, because he had bribed the arbitrator less munificently than his opponent, was required to consent to the decision, under the penalty of incurring serious displeasure. These, however, were not the only grievances. The Mahárájas command the labour and services of their followers without giving them any remuneration, and even insist that, when busily occupied in their own ordinary avocations, they shall, when required, instantly quit them to obey the orders of the Mahárájas, by attending to the image of the idol, or wreathing its cradle, etc., with flowers. The practice of the guardian of

the temples beating the worshippers, to hasten their passage through the temples, was another subject of complaint.

A favourable opportunity seemed to have arrived for the redress of all these grievances, and the Vaishnavas collectively consented to the wishes of the Mahárájas in reference to the Brahmans, upon the condition that these abuses should be absolutely reformed. One influential person named Gopáldás Mádhavadás persisted in supporting the Brahmans in defiance of the Mahárájas; and two others, also of great weight in their different sects, named Rámbál Thákursidás and Sakhárám Laxmanji, supported the Brahmans. The Mahárájas yielded to the pressure put upon them, and consented to the demands made upon them, even to the minor reforms; but they required the respite of a year before carrying them out, and demanded complete secrecy, conceiving that if they yielded to immediate execution they would be tacitly admitting the existence of evils, and putting a weapon into the hands of their opponents—the Brahmans.

The dispute between the Mahárájas and the Brahmans, however, led to newspaper controversy, and caused much bad blood. The Baniás and Bháttiás, the most devoted followers of the Mahárájas, were commanded not to salute either of the three gentlemen who sided with the Brahmans, and otherwise to withhold the respect they had always been accustomed to show to them. The Brahmans, convinced that they were perfectly orthodox in what they had done, convened several meetings, to which they invited the Mahárájas to discuss the matter with them; but the Mahárájas, knowing the weakness of their cause, and conscious of their ignorance of Sanskrit, abstained from attending the meetings, or taking part in discussions which they were aware must end in their defeat and disgrace. To obtain, however, the victory in the eyes of their votaries, they assembled a meeting of their own, which was attended by a beggar Brahman, whom they had previously bribed.

This man, who represented that he was deputed by the entire body of his brethren, publicly humiliated himself by asking pardon of the Mahárájas in their name. The pardon sought was, of course, graciously granted, and the Mahárájas thought they were restored to the good opinion of their followers. But, unfortunately for them, the trick was exposed, and the public discussed, and the native newspapers commented upon it. This was a heavy blow to the Mahárájas. But, as they had not succeeded against the Brahmans, they did not carry out the reforms they had consented to, and the affair terminated almost where it commenced, to the disgust of all parties. The power of the Mahárájas was, however, shaken.

It was at this period, an opportunity being afforded by these disputes, that the *Satya Prakásha* (Light of Truth), a weekly newspaper, was first issued. It was published by the defendant in the Libel Case, and its object was the advocacy of social, educational, and religious reforms. In consequence of the excited state of public opinion at the time, the newspaper immediately obtained a wide circulation.

The second circumstance conducing to accelerate the overthrow of the power of the Mahárájas was their objection to attend courts of justice. The Mahárájas conceive that their dignity is lowered and their persons polluted by attending courts of justice; but the Supreme Court of Bombay required them to obey the summons of the law, on the occasion of an action being brought by Śrī Jivanji Maháráj against Ramdayál Motirám. The plaintiff's affidavit was to the following effect.—

“I, Śrī Jivanji Maháráj, the plaintiff above-named, solemnly affirm and declare that on or about the 2nd day of August instant, I was served with a subpoena from the above-named defendant to appear and give evidence on the trial of this cause; and I further say that I am the chief Maháráj of a very large section of the Hindu community, consisting of Bazías, Bháttíás, Bhansállis, Márwádís, Lowánás, Khatris, and other Hindu castes; and that it is contrary to the

religion of the said castes that I should appear in any public place, except our temple and in the houses of members of the said castes for religious and ceremonial purposes. I therefore say that I cannot attend personally in the Supreme Court to give evidence at the trial of this cause; but that, if I did so attend, *I should subject myself to the liability of being deposed from my office*; and I further say that I have very little personal knowledge of any of the matters in this action; but my *mehtás* (clerks), who are fully acquainted therewith, will attend in court with all books and documents relating to the issues. And I lastly say that my sole reason for not obeying the said subpoena is that given; and inasmuch as the defendant's advisers well knew that I could not attend, I verily believe they only caused the subpoena to be served in order to create annoyance and expense. If, however, the defendant think fit to do so, I am ready and willing to be examined at my own house and at my own expense."

The *Bombay Gazette* of August 12, 1856, says:—

"The application was opposed by the counsel on the other side, who contended that sufficient cause had not been shown to exempt Sri Jivanji Maháráj from the usage of the court. The Maháráj, the learned gentleman was informed, was in the habit of attending public places and visiting the houses of other natives. He once or twice took a sea trip in the steamer Phlox, travelled by railway along with low caste Hindus, inspected the Observatory, the Mint, the spinning machinery, equestrian exhibitions, native nautches, etc. etc. Surely if his person were not polluted by these things, much less would it be by attending the Supreme Court.

The Chief Justice (Sir William Yardley) with whose view of the case Sir Mathew Sausse entirely concurred, expressed himself very strongly against the expediency of exempting any individual, however high or dignified his station might be, from the usual process of the Court, saying that once an exception were made in favour of any person, there would be no end of applications of the same nature. The head of every petty sect and caste in the island would be calling himself a Maháráj, and demanding as a right that the Court should have him examined at his private residence."

The objection, which in a great measure was suggested by the fact that the Mahárájas feel it to be a degradation to sit lower than an European, whom they regard as only equal to the very lowest of their own caste, was thus defeated; and this defeat further tended to reduce their importance,

The opinions of the press upon the Mahárájas and their deeds have also tended to undermine their influence.

Owing to the circumstances just noticed, and the excited state of public feeling, the doctrines, worship, power, and influence, the ignorance and evil lives of the Mahárájas, became not only well known, but much talked of. The community was thoroughly aroused, and men began to think, to talk, and to act. The press, stimulated by this movement of society, gained courage to make its comments. There are about fifteen or sixteen Gujaráti papers printed in the vernacular idiom and three or four English local papers published at Bombay. All these made their comments, and severely censured the Mahárájas. The *Satya Prakash*, which was conducted by the defendant in the Libel Case (who was himself a Baniá, and follower of the Mahárájas, and familiar with all their mysteries and evil practices), frequently denounced and exposed their immorality and corruption. This, in the ferment which continued to exist, greatly shocked the feelings of the public, which had no conception of the existence of the enormities thus exposed. The Mahárájas themselves were peculiarly sensitive to the censure of this particular paper, knowing that it was conducted by one of their own followers, and they therefore instinctively apprehended that it would have a most prejudicial effect. The body of the Mahárájas consequently resorted to every available means to endeavour to silence the writer, by holding out considerable pecuniary inducements, proposed through the medium of some of their most influential votaries. But they were thoroughly frustrated in this object; for not only were comments published in the various newspapers, but pamphlets and handbills were freely circulated, all tending to the destruction of their influence.

Extracts of the comments so made, and which will give an idea of how much the subject occupied public attention, are given in the Appendix, No. 2.

The Slavery Bond was another means of undermining their influence.

In consequence of the excited state of the public mind, resulting from the perusal of the several pamphlets and hand-bills, and the censorious comments of the newspapers, an advertisement appeared in the *Satya Prakash* of the 25th of January, 1857, proposing for competition a prize essay upon the duties of Gurus (spiritual guides), and the rule of conduct of their female devotees. The object of the proposed essay was to show the line of conduct that ought to be pursued by the Mahárájas towards their female votaries, as well as how these were bound to act in return. Several essays were the result of this announcement, and one of them was crowned with approval. Whilst this was being printed for circulation, the Parsí editor of the *Chábak* newspaper wrote a series of articles in his issues of the 17th and 24th August, and 3rd September of 1858, advocating the cause of the Mahárájas, and criticising the conduct of the reforming party, no doubt stimulated to this by some interested motive. Some of this party he personally abused, and publicly named them; one of them, indignant at this proceeding, brought a civil action for damages, for it became well known that this editor had written at the instigation of a certain justice of the peace who strongly supported the cause of the Mahárájas, he being one of their most influential followers. This the editor himself made known through his journal of the 25th January, 1859; for, being cast in the action and disappointed in not receiving promised pecuniary assistance, he thus retaliated.

In justice to the *Chábak*, it is but proper to mention that the editor of this paper, before he was reduced to extremities, had advocated reform in the Parsí community, and had written ably and freely upon the subject, the *Chábak* then being one of the most popular and best vernacular papers in Bombay. Things unfortunately taking an adverse turn, he was

induced, by the hope of bettering his interest, to veer round ; but he was frustrated and disappointed. Whilst the action was pending in the Supreme Court, he was much pressed for money to make advances to his lawyers ; and, to overcome this difficulty, it was suggested to him to subpoena some of the Mahárájas as witnesses. The Mahárájas, on this, took every care to avoid the service of the subpoena, and at the same time they closed their temples against their followers. This occasioned much commotion and great confusion in the community of the Vaishnavas. When the temples were thus closed, the members of the sect, including the rich and influential, would not take their meals and water as enjoined by their religious duties, without first paying their adoration in the morning to the image of the idol and to the Maháráj. They were kept outside all day fasting. Upon the Vaishnavas entreating the Mahárájas to open their temples, they refused to do so unless all the leading men in the sect would subscribe their signature to the document of which the following is a translation :—

*“ To Bal-Krishnaji, greeting.*

“ Samvat, 1915, month of Poushsood 12 (Sunday, 16th January, 1859) in Bombay to wit:—We Vaishnavas, Bháttíás, and Vánias, and Lowánás, and Bhansális, and Márwádis, and Multánis, etc., (and) all conjointly, have made this agreement. Its object is to wit: that we must make arrangements in any way, by making a petition to the Government that our Gurus, all descendants of Gosáinji, should not attend the courts in case of any difficulty from Government or on being summoned. The fund subscribed by those who have framed this draft (agreement) for expenses that will be incurred by this, to be kept in some secure place. This business we all conjointly should conduct with Government, and (in this business) we should continue to join to the last, and spare nothing. Henceforth, if any Vaishnava publishes or causes to be published a defamation of our religion, to that person his own caste men must certainly give punishment. And no Vaishnava should summon the class of Mahárájas ; and if a member of another caste summon, then all the Vaishnavas conjointly must certainly make compromise about it.



This kind of agreement we all conjointly, with free faith, of our own will and accord have made. Every one must certainly conduct in this manner; any one acting contrary to the agreement is guilty of a crime against his religion and caste."

(Here follow the signatures).

"This document was signed by almost all the leading members of the Vaishṇava community, some of whom were her Majesty's Justices of the Peace and members of the Grand Jury. Its immediate object was to punish the editor of the *Satya Prakāsh* by excommunication, and to make an appeal in the Legislative Council to pass an act which would secure a permanent exemption for the Mahārājas from attendance in courts of justice."\*

This bond (a thorough "slavery bond," by the articles which thus stringently bound all who appended their names to it) the Mahārājas were eager to get subscribed by all the rich and influential Vaishṇavas without exception; and to fulfil the object of this bond it was further agreed:—

"1st. That a barrister of first-rate talents should be sent to England with a view to secure a permanent exemption for the Mahārājas from attending in courts of justice. For this purpose 60,000 rupees are to be subscribed among the Hindus.

"2nd. That all cases in which the Mahārājas happen to be one of the contending parties should be referred to arbitration.

"3rd. That persons criticising the doings of Mahārājas, even in a spirit of fairness, should be punished with excommunication." †

The Mahārājas put every scheme into operation to compass their designs: they acted upon the females, who, beating their breasts and imploring with tears, solicited their husbands to yield to the wishes of these priests. They thus created considerable disturbance in the domestic circles of their followers,

\* A pamphlet on the Mahārājas.

† *The Bombay Gazette*, January 26, 1856.

for it was not merely the willing whom they thus solicited, but even the unwilling, who were known to be the advocates of reform, whom they hoped to constrain by these strong and illegitimate measures. This was a period of severe trial to the editor of the *Satya Prakásh*, for the very friends who secretly approved and applauded the criticisms of his paper, subdued by these influences, appended their names to the "Slavery Bond." By this he was greatly perplexed, and for some time was at a loss to know what course to take, for he was fully conscious that those influential friends who had subscribed the "Slavery Bond" would be unable to assist him in caste matters. Calmly reflecting upon the line of action he should adopt, he saw that, if he yielded to the attempted tyranny of the Mahárájas, he would never again be able to put pen to paper in animadversion upon them, and that all the Vaishnavas would be subjected to the full force of this despotism, and remain the slaves of the Mahárájas. Having, therefore, made up his mind not to submit, he wrote an article strongly reprehending the several clauses of the document, and the whole body of the Vaishnavas became eagerly anxious for the next issue of the paper, to learn what the editor had said. We quote the translation of the *Satya Prakásh* in regard to the "Slavery Bond:"—

"The Mahárájas of the Hindus, having shut out their followers from Darshan, made them pass an important writing. The social and moral conditions of the Hindu followers of the Mahárájas is greatly dependent upon this writing. If, therefore, we omitted to bestow our own attention upon the document, we should at the same time be omitting to do what, as public writers, we ought to do. We consider it our bounden duty to lay our thoughts before our readers in an independent manner, and draw their attention to them. The following are the only principal articles inserted in that document :

"1. The people of each caste shall contribute what money the Mahárájas fix for their caste; and thus raising a large sum of fifty or sixty thousand rupees, send a learned and experienced barrister to England to get an act exempting the Mahárájas from the opera-

tion of a summons of a court of justice passed. If the above-mentioned sum be not sufficient, the Vaishnavas shall raise such other sum as may be required, and use their private means to the accomplishment of this undertaking.

"2. No Vaishnava from among the followers of the Mahárájas shall, for any cause or for any risk, issue a summons of a court of justice against a Maháráj.

"No Vaishnava from among the followers of the Mahárájas shall publish, either himself or through others, even a word tending to injure the Maháráj's feeling in any newspaper, pamphlet, or handbill. If any person infringe the second and third articles, their caste people shall inflict proper punishments upon them.

"4. If persons belonging to castes which do not believe in the Mahárájas issue summons against them, all the Vaishnavas shall combine, and come to an amicable settlement with the party or parties who summoned the Maháráj, submitting to the loss of any sum; and shall take such measures as shall not necessitate the attendance of a Maháráj at any tribunal or court of justice.

"The Mahárájas have taken a writing from their followers containing the above-mentioned four articles. It has been already signed by such Hindu Shetiás as . . . . and other Vaishnavas. Those who have not yet signed it are shut out by the Mahárájas from Darshan. It is reported that these will sign in a day or two.

"The fifth article which the Mahárájas had inserted in this writing, stated that no Vaishnava should buy or peruse such newspapers as contained anything likely to injure the Maháráj's feelings. But the Shetiás objected to this, and got it struck off. We publish below our own thoughts on each of the above-mentioned articles, and invite to them the attention of the Vaishnavas and other readers.

"About the first article. In this article the Mahárájas seek to claim exemption from the operation of a summons of a court of justice at an expense of the large sum of fifty or sixty thousand rupees. Those who are familiar with the technicalities of English law, and tactics of English politicians, will at once pronounce that the Mahárájas will fail in the accomplishment of their desire, and that this large sum of money will be thrown into the water. Any barrister or European will undertake to be the champion of the Mahárájas with great pleasure and thankfulness, in order to fill his own pocket, and enjoy for a short time the sweets of his native land. But we hope the Mahárájas, and the Shetiás, their followers, will consider well before they incur such a large expense. They must know

that, under the just and equitable sway of the English, every subject has a right to summons any person whatever to appear in a court of justice in order to preserve his rights and liberties. Never will the Mahárájas be exempt from the operations of this process. Even great officers, whose time is extremely valuable, whose one minute is sometimes equal to one month, are obliged, when necessary, to wait for a long time in a court of justice. In consideration of the value of their time, no act has been passed to excuse their attendance even for emergent business. It must, therefore, be fully considered upon what powerful grounds an act conferring such a privilege can be passed in favour of the Mahárájas, who spend a greater portion of their time in jollity and pleasure, and make no objection to see the dockyard and the Mint, and travel on railways. Let the petition be signed by the greatest number of persons, however respectable they may be, the English politicians will neither pay attention to the signatures nor to the persons who made those signatures. They will ponder over the request in the petition, and if they find that it is likely to tarnish the fair fame of English justice, they will in no case comply with it. We heartily wish that before this large sum of fifty or sixty thousand rupees is thrown into the water, the Gosáí Mahárájas and their principal followers may consider this matter fully and seriously. On our part we advise the Mahárájas and their leading followers, that, instead of throwing this large sum of fifty or sixty thousand rupees into the water, they should rather expend it on the Victoria Museum, by which means they would be expressing affectionate and loyal regard towards her gracious Majesty, and would be aiding an important undertaking. We suggest an easy and plain way, that would be universally liked, by which the Mahárájas might be exempted from appearing in a court of justice. If it is adopted, we confidently say that the Mahárájas will have no need to appear any day in any court. What plan is this? The Mahárájas should never interfere in any man's private quarrels and concerns; they should win the love and affectionate regard of their friends and followers by upright and moral behaviour; they should always aid such undertakings as will improve the cause of their country's progress; they should cease all money dealings with people of other castes; they should preach morality every day, and observe no distinction between their rich and poor followers. If they act in this manner, we confidently say that they will never have to appear in a court.

“About the second article. This article suggests that no Vaish-

navas shall for any cause summons a Maháráj to appear in a court of justice. We say, without fear of persecution, that this is hard and oppressive. If the Mahárájas do not interpose in a man's private concerns, and improperly wrong any Vaishnava, it is plain that no necessity would remain at all to take one's religious preceptor to a court of justice. Where, then, was the necessity of inserting such a hard clause. Any impartial thinker would at once honestly say that the Mahárájas extorted such a hard clause from their followers, simply that they might be free to interfere in one's private concerns and administer arbitrary justice. We say again, religious preachers and preceptors ought never to make their followers to pass such a hard writing to them. Who can be so imprudent and rash as to summon his religious preceptor to a court of justice without any cause? After such a writing, it appears clear how the Mahárájas intend to behave towards their followers, and how they wish their followers to behave towards them. We wish that the Mahárájas would look to their respectability and position, and annul this article at once.

"About the third article. This article suggests that no Vaishnava shall write a word tending to injure the feelings of the Mahárájas. With all due deference to the holy position of these religious preceptors, we beg leave to say that we feel this to be a harder and more oppressive article than the second. The English Government possesses such power and authority, that the native tyrants are too feeble to cope with and encounter it. Even this Government cannot peremptorily say to the newspapers, "Do not write anything that would injure our feelings." When even such a potent and powerful Government cannot pretend to wield such an authority, the Mahárájas, whose authority, when compared with the world, extends over but a handful of Vaishnavas, will never be allowed, in this just and equitable reign of the English, to exercise this hard and oppressive sway over the independent newspaper writers. The Mahárájas and their advisers have signally erred by inserting such a hard article. Had they exercised a little more discretion, they would never have thought of inserting this selfish article. We heartily wish that this paper may not have to say ill of the Mahárájas. But it is an error to suppose that this or any other newspaper will be backward in expressing just and proper thoughts, when they find that public interests are at stake. It is true that this, as well as other respectable newspapers, will always refrain, as they have done till this day, from publishing false slanders and ungrounded stories about the Mahárájas; but no editor, living

under the shadow and protection of the English Government, will draw his pen backwards in denouncing any unjust act tending to jeopardize the weal of thousands. None will fear to publish anything just and proper. We are sorry to say that the Mahárájas and their followers have, by thus shutting the mouths of editors, ruined their own cause.

“About the fourth article. This article suggests that, if persons who belong to castes which do not believe in the Mahárájas summon Mahárájas in a court of justice, all Vaishnavas shall combine, and at the cost of any sum come to an amicable settlement with them, or adopt such measures as will not necessitate the personal attendance of the Mahárájas to a court of justice. It appears that the Mahárájas and their followers have used no better discretion with regard to this than with the foregoing three articles. Any person who may have any money dispute about the Mahárájas will at once take advantage of this and issue a summons against them. Thus Vaishnavas will be forced by this article to come to an amicable settlement with all the Mahárájas' creditors. If this necessarily becomes frequent, and involves the expenditure of large sums, the Vaishnavas will find how feeble they are to bear the evils which they have themselves drawn upon their shoulders. These articles will then be annulled as a matter of course.

“Thoughts common to all the articles. It will be evident from this that not one of these four articles is just and harmless. Every one of them is as unjust and reprehensible as it is injurious to the social and private interests of all the Vaishnavas. We are glad to say that their leading followers would not consent to the fifth article, which relates to the buying of newspapers. Had this been retained, they would never have progressed. But the Mahárájas and their followers will never be able to impede the sounding western torrent of civilization which has begun to flow with all its might towards this country. Those who inserted these four articles may insert fifty more, but no tyrants or their slavish followers will have power to impede the mighty torrent of civilization. We are sure that the current of civilization and liberty will in a short time overspread the whole of Hindustan, check the force of the opponents of civilization, and break the chains of oppression.

“It will not fail to excite both wonder and sorrow in any man of good sense to see that the very Shetiás who have been the foremost among the reformers, and thoroughly understand the beauty which the English rule affords, should have, by signing such a hard docu-

ment, drawn the chains of despotism on their own hands. We wish, and pray to God that our wish may succeed, that these Shetiás may speedily look to their own respectability, to their own states in life, to the beauties of the benign and free government they are under, and boldly break off the shackles of despotism which they have worn. We have dwelt rather too long on the subject, and therefore we shall not say more, but conclude with the following prayer to God :

“O God! may the chain of despotism which the leading Shetiás, our companions in the cause of civilization, have worn round their necks, be quickly removed. O God! may the Shetiás who have temporarily lost their senses, and forgotten their respectability and position, recover their senses soon. O God! may the cloud of ignorance and doubt which has obscured the vision of our Shetiás be quickly dispelled, and may the faces of those who oppose civilization at once be covered with paleness. Amen.”\*

This article was followed by a succession of anonymous hand-bills, issued by various persons; and two prize essays were advertised in the *Satya Prakash*, one upon the “Slavery Bond,” and the other “Upon the Authority of the Mahárájas.” These several attacks had the desired effect. The Mahárájas and their followers speedily discovered that, if the editor were excommunicated, he would file an action and drag the Mahárájas to the bar of justice. The funds the worshippers had been asked to raise were not realized; for the subscribers, seeing the drift of events, waited with impatience to ascertain if the conditions of that article of the “Slavery Bond” which threatens with punishment any one writing against the Mahárájas would be carried out. The timidity of the Mahárájas hindered them from taking this course, and their neglect to pronounce sentence of excommunication encouraged the Vaishnavas to withhold their subscriptions. The notorious “Slavery Bond,” the object of which was to bind in still stronger fetters the patient Vaishnavas, thus fell to the ground, and the supreme Maháráj himself took flight from Bombay.

\* *The Satya Prakash*, January 22, 1856.

In the action brought against the editor of the *Chábak* by the Vaishnava whom he had so conspicuously denounced, the editor pleaded not guilty, and that what he had published was not libellous. The court overruled this plea, after examining the plaintiff's witnesses, affirming it to be libellous, and entered a decree, with costs, against the Parsee editor, who thereupon solicited the "gentleman" by whom he had been specially instigated, to assist him. He was grossly disappointed by his refusal, and therefore published in his paper the name of the individual, and all the circumstances connected with the affair. This poor Parsee editor, being unable to pay all the incidental costs, died broken-hearted, in very distressed circumstances.

In the process of this "Slavery Bond," and all its adjuncts, we observe a further declension of the power and influence of the Maharájas, to which the Libel Case, into the history of which we shall now enter, has given, we hope and expect, the fatal blow.



## CHAPTER XI.

## THE MAHÁRÁJ LIBEL CASE.

THE Mahárájas, being thus defeated in their attempts to prevent the public press from exposing their misdeeds, sought to attain their object by other means. Jadunáthji Brizratanji Maháráj, of Surat, upon arriving at Bombay in the middle of the year 1860, consulted with some of his followers with a view to ascertain whether an action for libel, brought by him against the publishers, could be prosecuted in his absence from the court, or whether, as plaintiff, his presence would be held to be necessary; for he wished to avoid appearing in a court of justice.

The editor of the *Satya Prakásh*, not being aware of the specific object of the Maháráj's visit to Bombay, but having heard that he had established a school at Surat, gave him a hearty welcome in his paper, and expressed a hope that he would render material assistance to the cause of education. This expectation seemed at first to be realised; for the Maháráj consented to be present at an exhibition of the Gujaráti girls' schools, and to distribute the prizes with his own hand, thus publicly expressing his approval of the education of females. The Mahárájas of Bombay, who had often been solicited to do the same thing, had always declined, and Jadunathji Brizratanji having accepted the invitation, the editor of the *Satya Prakásh* hailed it as a great victory in the cause of educational reform; for, owing to the populace being adverse to female education, the influence of the Maháráj's position gave it a strong and powerful support. The editor, unconscious and unsuspecting of the deception

intended to be practised, was thus induced to speak of the Maháráj in terms of eulogy ; but he soon discovered that the person whom he had praised was a wolf in sheep's clothing.

A friend of the editor, named Narmadá Shankar Lál-shankar, a Nágár Bráhmaṇ, and, who was not a follower of the Mahárájas, invited the Maháráj to hold a public discussion upon the subject of the re-marriage of Hindu widows, to which the Maháráj was opposed. The invitation was by means of hand-bills, dated the 15th of August, 1860. The Maháráj accepted the challenge, and the meeting was held six days after the issue of the hand-bills, at a place selected by himself, where a warm discussion took place. Many Shástras (religious books) were brought forward as authorities, and a large number of persons assembled to hear the discussions. The Maháráj, feeling that he could not maintain his position by argument, entered into a desultory discussion with his opponent, who is a celebrated Gujaráti poet, and asked him whether he believed the Hindu Shástras to be of divine inspiration, saying that, before going into the question of re-marriage, he must first know the poet's opinion upon this point. The gentleman replied that he could not believe all the reputed religious works to be of divine inspiration, as they contained incorporated works on grammar and other miscellaneous subjects which had no religious bearing whatever, and which, therefore, he rightly maintained, could not be divinely inspired. The discussion did not pass beyond this subject, and the meeting broke up.

The Maháráj, doubtless stung with shame on account of his failure in the discussion, insidiously gave his followers to understand that the principles of the reform party were adverse to the ancient religion of the Hindus. Upon this, the editor of the *Satya Prakash* took up the subject in the paper, and invited the Maháráj to discuss the matter through the medium of the press, and so give a wide circle of readers

the opportunity of judging for themselves in the matter. This discussion was carried on in several issues of the paper. The Maháráj replied to the arguments, and simultaneously issued a monthly magazine, under his patronage, called *Svadharmá Vardhak* and *Samshaya Chhekak* (meaning Promoter of our Religion and Destroyer of Doubt). In this magazine he carried on the discussion previously commenced; but not being able to give direct answers to questions put to him, he became annoyed, and charged his adversaries with entertaining heretical and mischievous dogmas and opinions. The question of re-marriage originally mooted having been transformed altogether into a religious question, the editor of *Satya Prakash* wrote the following article, which originated the Libel Case, and became the subject of the judicial inquiries which followed:—

*The Primitive Religion of the Hindus, and the present Heterodox Opinions.*

“In the Puráns and other Shástras of the Hindus, it is stated that in the Kali-yug there will arise false religions and heresies, and impostors and heretics will cause adverse persuasions and adverse religious systems to be established. According to the Hindu Shástras, five thousand years have now passed away since the commencement of the Kali-yug. From the Hindu Shástras themselves it is demonstrated that, during this period of five thousand years, as many new persuasions and religious systems as have arisen among the Hindus should all be considered spurious heresies. Now, four hundred years have not as yet elapsed since the birth of Vallabha, the progenitor of the Mahárájas. In the books of the Vaishnava persuasion it is written that the birth of Vallabháchárya took place on the 11th of Vaishak Vad, of Samvat 1535, the day of the week Sunday. Since this event three hundred and eighty-one years have elapsed to this day, and since the beginning of the Kali-yug five thousand years have passed. The sect of Vallabháchárya, then, originated within the Kali-yug itself. In the same way as the followers of Dádu, the followers of Sádhu, the Rámachári, the Rámánandi, the Shejanandi, and other sects arose, so the sect of

Vallabhacharya arose : all these sects have arisen in the Kali-yug ; therefore, according to the declarations of the Hindu Shástras, they must be heterodox.

“Jadunáthji Maháráj says, that in the same way as some one goes from the gates of the fort to proceed to Wálkeshwar, and some one to Bycullá, so exactly the original courses of the Veds and the Puráns, having gone forward, have diverged into different ways. What a deceitful proposition this is. Out of one religious system ten or fifteen byeways must not branch off. The course of religion and of morals must be one only. What necessity is there to quit the straight road by which to go to Wálkeshwar, and take the circuitous road of Bycullá? Each sectary has made every other sectary a heretic, and one has scattered dust upon the other ; what, then, is the necessity for acting thus? But we have already made known that, as regards the weapons with which the Maháráj has come forth to defend himself, those very weapons will oppose the Maháráj and annoy him. The Maháráj considers the Hindu Shástras as the work of God ; he cannot then assert that any particular statement of the Hindu Shástras is false. The said Maháráj cannot allege that the statement, that in the Kali-yug heretical opinions will arise, is false. Then, like several other sects, the sect of the Mahárájas has arisen in the Kali-yug ; consequently it is established by the Hindu Shástras that it is a false and heretical one.

“The sect of the Mahárájas is heretical, and one delusive to simple people : this is proved by the genuine books of the Veds, the Puráns, etc., according to what is intimated above. Not only this, but also from the works composed by the Mahárájas it is proved that the Mahárájas have raised up nothing but a new heresy and disorder. Behold, with regard to *Bramha Sambhanda*, how Gokulnáthji has amplified the original stanza, what a commentary he has made :—

तस्मादादौ स्वीपभोगात्पूर्वमेव सर्ववस्तुपदेन भार्यापुत्रादीनामपि  
समर्पणं कर्तव्यं । विवाहानंतरं स्वीपभोगे सर्वकार्ये सर्वकार्यनिमित्तं  
तत्कार्योपभोगिवस्तुसमर्पणं कार्यं । समर्पणं कृत्वा पश्चात्तानि तानि  
कार्याणि कर्तव्यानीत्यर्थः ॥ १ ॥

“Consequently, before he himself has enjoyed her, he should make over his own married wife (to the Maháráj), and he should also make over to him his sons and daughters. After having got

married, he should, before having himself enjoyed his wife, make an offering of her (to the Maháráj); after which he should apply her to his own use.' ”

“Alas ! what a heresy is this, what a sham is this, and what a delusion is this ! We ask Jadunáthji Maháráj in what Ved, in what Purána, in what Shástra, and in what law-book it is written that one's married wife should be made over to a Maháráj, or to a religious preceptor, before being enjoyed. Not only one's wife, but one's daughter also is to be made over ! Alas ! in writing this, our pen will not move on. We are seized with utter disgust and agitation. To render blind people who see with their eyes, and to throw dust in their eyes, and in the name of religion, and under the pretence of religion, to enjoy their tender maidens, wives, and daughters—than this what greater heresy and what greater deceit ? In the Kali-yug many other heresies and many sects have arisen besides that of Vallabháchárya ; but no other sectaries have ever perpetrated such shamelessness, subtlety, immodesty, rascality, and deceit, as have the sect of the Mahárájas. When we use such severe terms as these, our simple Hindu friends are wroth with us, and in consequence of that wrath of theirs, we have endured much, and have much to endure. But when, throwing dust in the eyes of simple people, the Mahárájas write in their books about enjoying the tender maidens, the people's wives, and daughters, and they enjoy them accordingly—great flames spring up within our breasts, our pen at once becomes heated and on fire, and we have to grieve over our Hindu friends, and over their weak powers of reflection.

“Jadunáthji Maháráj has commenced issuing a small work, stiyed ‘The Propagator of our own Religion.’ We ask him, In what way do you wish to effect the propagation of religion ? Your ancestors, having scattered dust in the eyes of simple people, made them blind. Do you wish to make them see ? or, taking a false pride in the upholding of your religion, do you wish to delude simple people still more ? Jadunáthji Maháráj ! should you wish to propagate or to spread abroad religion, then do you personally adopt a virtuous course of conduct, and admonish your other Mahárájas. As long as the preceptors of religion shall themselves appear to be immersed in the sea of licentiousness, for so long they shall not be competent to convey religious exhortation to others. Gokulnáthji having composed the commentary above-mentioned, has attached to your Vaisánava persuasion a great blot of ink. Let that be first removed.

Scorn the writer of the commentary. (Oh you) Mahárájas, acting up to that commentary, defile the wives and daughters of your devotees; desist from that, and destroy at once immorality such as that of the Rás Mandali. As long as you shall not do so, for so long you cannot give religious admonition, and propagate your own religious faith: do you be pleased to be assured of that."

This article was written on the 21st of October, 1860. The Maháráj maintained silence upon the subject, still carrying on the discussion of religious topics with the editor. On the 14th of the following May, however, seven months after the publication of the alleged libel, he filed an action of libel against both editor and printer.

The plaint was demurred to by defendant's counsel, and the case was argued under this bearing on the 2nd and 4th of July, 1861. Hereupon the plaintiff had to make certain amendments in the plaint, and the defendant then pleaded several pleas, on the 15th of August, 1861.

The first was a plea of not guilty, viz., that the article alluded to was not libellous; and the last plea was one of justification, viz., that what had been stated was true, both in letter and spirit. But this plea consisted of three portions—the first asserting that there were passages in the religious books of the Mahárájas which inculcated adulterous worship; the second, that the Mahárájas, as a body, committed adultery; and the third, that the plaintiff was not an exception to the general practice. The intermediate pleas were of inferior consequence.

When the pleas were filed by the defendant, the managers of the Maháráj's case knew from the nature of the pleas that the defendant was prepared to bring forward witnesses to corroborate the charges made. Upon this they communicated with the influential portion of the community, and made them aware of the danger that might result from the exposure that would necessarily take place in court. The leading men of the Bháttíá community convened a meeting

of their caste on the 6th of September, 1861, and resolved that none of the caste should give evidence against the Maháráj; and they further resolved, that whoever did so should be subjected to the pains and penalties included in the comprehensive term, "excommunication." This resolution was clearly illegal, amounting, in fact, to a conspiracy. Indeed, it gave rise to two accusations of conspiracy. The special charge was, having concerted measures to obstruct and defeat the ends of justice, by dissuading and preventing others from giving evidence in the Libel Case, in which they had been summoned as witnesses. The defendants in the case were Gokuldás Liládhar and eight others. These were all highly respectable persons, who had been led to do what they did by the instigation of the Maháráj; but they were convicted of the offence on evidence which left no doubt of their guilt, and sentenced—the two chief culprits, Gokuldás Liládhar and Lakmidás Dámji, to pay a fine of a thousand rupees each; and the other defendants to pay a fine of fifty rupees each. In inflicting these penalties, Sir Joseph Arnould observed that the law empowered him to accompany them with a sentence of hard labour, but that, considering all the circumstances of the case, and the very high character the defendants bore, he should only inflict a pecuniary penalty.

This was the end of an abortive attempt to defeat the ends of justice, and a well-merited punishment of the offenders who yielded too weakly to the urgency of their abettors.

This conspiracy, in the course of its being tried, in the first place in the police court, and subsequently in the Supreme Court, created a very great sensation amongst the population of Bombay, but especially in the religious community, the defendants being leading men, and having extensive native and European connections of a superior class. The first day, when the preliminary examination took place in the police

court, the defendant in the Maháráj's case, who was the prosecutor in this, was severely assaulted by the mob when he left the court, and, in consequence, solicited the protection of the magistrate. Had it not been for the energetic exertions of Mr. Forgett, the superintendent of the police, it is not improbable that he would have been killed by the populace. This excitement continued during the whole time that the case was pending, and threats of every kind were used, both against him and his witnesses, who, as well as himself, were obliged to seek the protection of the police.

The trial of the Maháráj Libel Case came on before the court on the 26th January, 1862. It was conducted by Mr. Bayley and Mr. Scoble, on behalf of the Maháráj, and by Mr. Anstey and Mr. Dunbar, on behalf of the defendant. The labours of Mr. Anstey in his client's defence exceed all praise. We should not be transgressing the limits of truth were we to ascribe the decision in the defendant's favour, in the greatest measure, to the very extensive legal attainments, the varied abilities, and the intense earnestness which this advocate brought to bear on the case. Those who attended the trial could bear witness to the skill and dexterity with which he turned the scales against the Maháráj, by arraying against him even the knotty points of Hindú theology; for, persuaded that his client's cause represented the truth and the right of free thought, as well as the liberty of speech, he spared no pains to study its complicated literature. The trial extended over forty days, but was before the Court only twenty-four days. In the Appendix will be found specimens of the evidence, and the entire judgment. About thirty witnesses were examined for the plaintiff, and thirty witnesses for the defendant, some of the latter of whom were learned and influential men.

Dr. Wilson's labours in this trial deserve special notice. He placed at the disposal of the defendant his rich and



multifarious stores of learning, which proved of surpassing value. Throughout the whole trial this learned missionary ably sustained the character which he fills in the estimation of the natives of India—that of a philanthropist.

Much credit is due to Drs. Bháu Dáji and Dhirajám Dalpatrá, for the disinterestedness of their evidence. They cast aside all consideration of self, when truth was to be established and morality to be vindicated.

The name of Lakhmidás Khimji, a leading member of the Bháttíá community, deserves honourable mention. Though nurtured from childhood in the filthy doctrines of the Vallabhácháryan faith, the moment the conviction flashed upon his mind that religion can never be a plea for immorality, he fearlessly lent his aid to the defendant, and gave, perhaps, the most damaging evidence against the Maháráj. Strenuous attempts were made to impeach his veracity, and impugn his evidence, on the ground of its intrinsic improbability. These efforts, however, proved fruitless, as he spoke the whole truth from his own personal knowledge.

It would be a very great omission if the name of Mr. Mathúrádás Lavji were passed over in silence. He furnished the sinews of war, so far as learning was concerned: his capacious mind and memory comprehends the whole range of vernacular literature, both ancient and modern; and to his vast attainments he adds a rare tact in moulding the minds of others to his own opinions, an intimate acquaintance with the turnings and windings of the human heart, and a steady force of character and decision, dangerous to his enemies, but valuable for the advancement of truth.

Not a little credit is due to Mr. Nánábhái Rustamji Rájiná, the printer and manager of the Union Press, for the honesty, integrity, and zeal with which he conducted himself throughout the case.

The names of the other following witnesses for the defence

also deserve notice for their evidence and their boldness in giving it. They are, viz., Messrs. Vishvanáth Náráyan Mandalik, Mangaldás Nathubháí, Khatási Makanji, Thakarsi Náránji, Ravji Sundardás, Dámodar Jethá, Narmdáshankas Lalshankar, Rámdás Bhánji, Káhdás Manchhárám, Káláshái Lalubháí, Chaturbhuj Wálji, and Tribhovandás Dwárkádás.

A further remarkable feature in the character of this trial is the complete exposure of the lives and practices of the Mahárájas, and of the moral and social conditions of Western India. The large mob that thronged the court daily, during the course of the trial, spreading themselves throughout all the apartments of this large hall of justice, attested to the profound interest which it excited in the different communities of Bombay. When the judgment was given, there were several of the most respectable persons of Bombay present. In the opinion of both the judges, the justification of the libel was proved to the very letter, and the Court stigmatized the plaintiff and his witnesses as unworthy of belief even on their oaths. With respect to the defendant's first plea of not guilty, the Chief Justice differed from the Puisne, holding that a public writer could not make an attack upon the conduct of an individual in his private capacity, although he might be depraved and an adulterer; and, besides that the defendant, having no previous knowledge of the plaintiff's misconduct, was not justified in publishing an attack upon him, although the allegations subsequently turned out to be true. The Puisne Judge, on the other hand, held that it was not an attack on the private character of the plaintiff, but on his public character as a Maháráj, or religious preceptor, and that the defendant was quite aware of the existing practices in the sect.

The verdict was entered by the Court in favour of the defendant on the main issue of justification, and with costs,

and for the plaintiff on the first plea of "not guilty," without costs.

The defendant incurred an expense of about 13,000 rupees in the action, out of which about 11,500 rupees were paid by the Maháráj, in addition to his own costs. The defendant, of course, incurred other private expenses incidental to the trial, as also in the trial of the Bháttíá Conspiracy, the expenses of which amounted to about 10,000 rupees.

The total expenses on both sides may be computed at about 60,000 rupees, of which about 50,000 rupees fell upon the Maháráj, that curiously being the identical sum for which he had sued the defendant as damages.

We cannot do better than terminate this portion of the subject with the close of the judgment of the learned Puisne Judge, Sir Joseph Arnould, who says in his admirable finding :—

"This trial has been spoken of as having involved a great waste of the public time. I cannot quite agree with that opinion. No doubt much time has been spent in hearing this cause, but I would fain hope it has not been all time wasted. It seems impossible that this matter should have been discussed thus openly before a population so intelligent as that of the natives of Western India, without producing its results. It has probably taught some to think; it must have led many to enquire. It is not a question of theology that has been before us; it is a question of morality. The principle for which the defendant and his witnesses have been contending is simply this, that what is morally wrong cannot be theologically right; that when practices which sap the very foundations of morality, which involve a violation of the eternal and immutable laws of Right, are established in the name and under the sanction of Religion, they ought, for the common welfare of society, and in the interest of humanity itself, to be publicly denounced and exposed. They have denounced—they have exposed them. At a risk and at a cost which we cannot adequately measure, these men have done determined battle against a foul and powerful delusion. They have dared to look custom and error boldly in the face, and proclaim before the world of their votaries that their

evil is not good, that their lie is not the truth. In thus doing, they have done bravely and well. It may be allowable to express a hope that what they have done will not have been in vain; that the seed they have sown will bear its fruit; that their courage and consistency will be rewarded by a steady increase in the number of those whom their words and their examples have quickened into thought, and animated to resistance, whose homes they have helped to cleanse from loathsome lewdness, and whose souls they have set free from a debasing bondage."

The history of the sect of Vallabháchárya, which has been here unfolded, reads like a chapter of romance. It is the history of a sect in which immorality is elevated to the rank of a *divine* law. The immutable distinctions of right and wrong, the sharp line of demarcation between virtue and vice, human personality and human responsibility, are lost and confounded in a system of theology which begins in lewdness and ends in the complete subversion of the first principles of our common nature. Such a system has, perhaps, no parallel in the annals of our race. Its effects can be more easily conceived than described. It has checked and arrested the healthy growth of all moral power. It has furnished its votaries with principles of action, which, if carried out in their integrity, must produce the dissolution of society; for it treats holiness of life as a crime, and proclaims to "the world of its votaries" that man becomes acceptable to his MAKER *in and through sin*.

It would be strange indeed if the discussions awakened by the trial should bring about no tangible result. The sect, though to all appearance powerful in organization, is in an unsettled state. While the old and bigoted cling with pertinacity to the dogmas of their childhood, the young and the educated detach themselves more and more from its contaminating influences. Assailed from without, and racked by internal dissensions, the Vallabhácháryan faith must, sooner or later, be superseded by a more rational form of worship. The obstacles in the way of a thorough revolution are great,

but not insurmountable. That the power of the Mahárájas for evil is not what it was fifteen years ago, is one sign of progress. Let us express a fervent hope that, by the combined exertions and the steady co-operation of all lovers of truth and moral purity, the Vallabhácháryans may emerge from the darkness of error and falsehood into the glorious light of day, and that the faith proclaimed by Vallabhá four hundred years ago may be crushed by the weight of its own enormities!

THE END.

APPENDIX,

CONTAINING

SPECIMENS OF THE EVIDENCE,

AND THE

JUDGMENT IN THE LIBEL CASE,

WITH

COMMENTS OF THE INDIAN PRESS.