

THE WORLD
IN MINIATURE;
EDITED BY
FREDERIC SHOBERL.

Windoostan,

CONTAINING
A DESCRIPTION OF THE RELIGION, MANNERS,
CUSTOMS, TRADES, ARTS, SCIENCES,
LITERATURE, DIVERSIONS, &c.

OF

The Hindoos.

ILLUSTRATED

*With Upwards of One Hundred Coloured
Engravings.*

IN SIX VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

The proper study of mankind's man.—POPE.

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lume some of those which by right belong to another: but when each division is complete, precise directions will be given for placing them in their proper situations.

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PREFACE.

THE Europeans have given the name of Hindoostan to that beautiful portion of Asia, which is commonly called the East Indies. According to the native geographers, Hindoostan Proper extends only from Thibet to the river Nerbudda, and consequently, comprehends about half of the Peninsula. All that lies to the south of this line they denominate Deccan. Following the practice of the European geographers, we shall apply, indiscrimi-

nately, the name of India or Hindoostan, to the whole region which is bounded on the east by the Gauges, on the west by the Indus, on the north by the mountains of Thibet and Tartary, and on the south by the ocean.

Nature seems to have taken delight in lavishing upon this beautiful country her most valuable gifts. Beneath a serene sky and an ever-brilliant sun, the soil produces exquisite species of fruit, and abundant harvests. Numberless rivers moderate the heat, and diffuse fertility over every part of the country. The

cotton-plant furnishes in profusion the material for the light garments adapted to the climate. The traveller, whether he journeys along the coast, or penetrates into the interior, is enchanted with a succession of scenery of superlative beauty.

It is not by these objects, however, that the mind of the philosophic observer is most powerfully struck. Immense cities, now too large for the reduced number of their inhabitants, and still adorned with the ruins of magnificent temples and tombs; and wonderful edifices, which have not even transmitted to us the names of

their founders, attest at once the ancient splendour and the present degradation of the people of Hindoostan. But amidst the ruins of these master-pieces of the arts, the manners and customs of the natives seem to have remained unchanged, and exhibit the same features under which they were portrayed by the Greeks, who visited India two thousand years ago.

Nature, in bestowing upon Hindoostan all that was calculated to tempt the rapacity of foreigners, whose country had not been favoured with the like advantages, seems to

have denied to the people of this highly-favoured region, the strength and courage to repel invaders: they have, therefore, been successively subdued by the Persians, the Moguls, and the Europeans. Their institutions have, no doubt, tended to facilitate the conquests of these nations. The voluntary penances to which certain devotees doom themselves for life, prove, at least, that the Hindoo is not deficient either in courage or fortitude: but the odious institution of castes, which has condemned the greatest part of the inhabitants of India to perpetual ab-

jection and misery, could not fail to degrade their souls, and stifle within them every feeling of love for a country which knew them not, or for a government which oppressed, instead of protecting them. When this institution was first established, it was natural to expect that it would be revolting to those classes of the people whom it so deeply humbled. To prevent the effects of their discontent, it was deemed necessary to enchain them by the terrors of religion. Hence all those superstitious practices which accompany the Hindoo from his cradle to his death.

The laws, manners, and customs, nay the useful arts themselves, are all subject to religion, which interferes with even the most indifferent actions of life: and as it was no doubt apprehended that despair would drive the Hindoo to seek a more comfortable life in a less genial clime, a religious injunction forbade him to pass the Indus.

Time, superstition, and the very necessity of dying in the caste and the profession in which he was born, have by degrees accustomed the Hindoo to his fate. Provided you leave him his usages and his supersti-

tions which time and habit have rendered essential to him, he cares not who is his master. Such is probably the cause of the little resistance experienced by the conquerors who have successively reduced this country.

Be that as it may, if we except some military tribes who have had the good sense to shake off the yoke of this law of castes, and have hitherto retained their independence, there is scarcely any part of Hindoostan but is now under foreign dominion: indeed, the whole of the peninsula, if not actually subject to

the British government, may be said to be under its influence.

With each new conquest, the number of foreigners settled in the country, was increased to such a degree as at length, perhaps, to exceed that of the original natives. Hence the difficulty of furnishing an accurate description of the people of India. A writer has, in fact, to treat not of a single nation, but of a great number of nations intermixed together. Under the same sovereign and in the same country, we find a nation of Mahometans, another of Christians, a third of Guebres, and

cent publications been consulted in the compilation of these volumes, but material assistance has also been derived from private sources, and chiefly from a collection in four folio volumes, containing coloured drawings of the Hindoo deities and of natives of all professions, executed by a Hindoo artist, for, and under the inspection of M. Leger, formerly governor of Pondicherry, and now in the possession of M. Nepveu, bookseller of Paris. Seven eighths of the plates which illustrate this work are engraved from those designs, and great part of the expla-

nations relative to the trades of the Hindoos which accompany them, have been introduced into these volumes.

The first treats of the religion, the religious opinions and sects of the Hindoos.

The second and the greater part of the third are occupied with the first caste, or caste of the Bramins, and whatever is connected with them, such as the religious ceremonies, marriages, funerals, laws and superstitions.

The latter part of the third volume is devoted to the second caste,

or the caste of the rajahs and the military, and consequently embraces all that relates to government, armies, encampments, &c.

The fourth and half of the fifth volume treat of the third and fourth castes, and describe the trades and professions followed by the persons belonging to those castes.

The second part of the fifth volume and the sixth comprize matters that could not be introduced with propriety in this division, such as the languages of Hindoostan, the fine arts, the sciences, the popular di-

versions, and a notice of some of the most remarkable objects in natural history.

Curious and interesting as the investigation of the manners of so extraordinary a people as the Hindoos must be of itself on many accounts, still the interest and curiosity which it is calculated to excite, cannot but be greatly heightened by the present close connection between their country and Great Britain. We say the *present* connection, for we shall not lay particular stress on the notion, suggested however by a gentleman, eminently qualified by his pursuits,

to pronounce an opinion on the subject, that our island was the cradle of the religion and mythology of the Hindoos. Their *Puranas* indeed speak of the *sacred isles in the west*, which are the holy land of the Hindoos, and of which *Sweta-dhwipa*, or the *White Island*, is the principal and the most famous. There the fundamental and mysterious transactions of the history of their religion, in its rise and progress, are recorded to have taken place. This White Island, this holy land in the west, is so intimately connected with their religion and mythology, that the one

cannot be separated from the other. Major Wilford, who has ably discussed this curious subject in the *Asiatic Researches*, expresses his conviction, founded on mature consideration, that the White Island is no other than England, and that the Sacred Isles of the Hindoos are the British islands.

There are not wanting numerous coincidences which favour this notion of that profound orientalist. In every northern country, and in almost every system of worship, signs of the Hindoo religion may be discovered; and there is a strong resemblance

between many of the Hindoo festivals and the old feasts in England. The like affinity is perceptible between the Sanscrit and the languages of Europe, both ancient and modern, and among others to that which is the mother of the English.

Leaving this field to the cultivation of the professed antiquary, we are content to direct our view to the interesting spectacle of an Indian empire, containing seventy millions of native subjects to the British sceptre. It has been the fashion, we know, to reprobate the exteution of British dominion in the East, and to

stigmatize it as acquired by perfidy and retained by cruelty and oppression. This outcry, so long and so industriously kept up, has at length subsided, and the prejudices which gave rise to it are discarded by all but those who are resolutely bent on reviling every measure that is sanctioned by the government of their country. They deplore with tenderest sympathy the fall of every faithless tyrant and petty usurper, unmindful of the important benefits received by humanity from the change.

The Hindoo character is a most

extraordinary compound of gentleness and ferocity, kindness and utter insensibility to the strongest feelings of nature. The man who would shrink with horror from the destruction of an animal or an insect, has no scruple to take away his own life, or the lives even of those who are most closely connected with him by blood. Hence suicide and murder are crimes of common occurrence in Hindoostan. The immolation of widows, the systematic destruction of female infants, and the sacrifice of numbers of wretched victims at the shrine of superstition, are practices

which prove the power of religion to reconcile the human mind to the greatest enormities. This prodigality of life has received an important check from the British government in India; and if it has not yet abolished all these customs as it has done that of infanticide, we are convinced that this is owing to the difficulty of devising means to accomplish so desirable an end, without revolting the natives by its interference. At any rate we have already the satisfaction of knowing that many thousand lives are annually saved through the efforts of British humanity.

The security of person and property is an advantage enjoyed by the natives of British India, in a degree unknown under any other eastern government. Of this the Hindoos themselves are so sensible, that many of them who had fled from the tyranny of their native rulers, have been known to return to their respective countries as soon as the latter became subject to the British dominion, under which they can peaceably pursue their professions and the practices enjoined by their religion. The natural results of this security and indulgence are an increase of population, and an agricultural and com-

mercial prosperity never attained by those provinces under their former sovereigns.

When we farther consider the establishment of the College of Calcutta, for the study of the native languages and literature of India; the ardour with which these are cultivated by many of our countrymen in the east, as is abundantly attested by the Asiatic Researches, and other publications; when we moreover reflect on the zeal which is manifested in the establishment of missions and the preparation of translations of the sacred Scriptures, in the different dia-

lects of the vast peninsula of Hindoostan, we cannot help viewing in the events which have placed so large a portion of it in British hands, the dawn of an era brought about by Providence, for the purpose of conferring the blessings of civil and religious liberty on the hitherto enslaved Hindoos, of communicating to them the light of genuine science, and thus producing an immense accession to the mass of human happiness.

HINDOOSTAN

En Miniature.

RELIGION OF THE HINDOOS.

THE Hindoos are not idolaters, as it has been so often asserted: they acknowledge in reality but one Supreme Being, though they pay the same kind of worship to the images of their gods as the Roman Catholics do to those of the Virgin Mary and the Saints. The vulgar, indeed, ignorant and stupid as they are all over the world, without investigating either their actions or their creed,

give themselves up to the most extravagant superstitions.

The deities of the Hindoos are but the ministers and favourites of the Supreme Being, emanations of his essence, who appear under various forms to destroy, punish or amend the wicked; and to encourage, protect, and reward, the good. Some will not admit of these emanations from the divinity; maintaining that the gods were but mortals, whom the Supreme Being endued with qualities superior to those of other men. Be this as it may, so much is certain, that we find among the Hindoos the most sublime ideas of a Sovereign Ruler of the universe, coupled with the most absurd and ridiculous notions respect-

ing the inferior deities, to whom, according to their theology, the sole incomprehensible God has committed the government of all created things.

Parabrama is the supreme, eternal, infinite, almighty being, who created all that exists. The Hindoos have had the good sense not to dishonour him by any fable, or to represent him under any form.

Absorbed in the contemplation of himself, he resolved, say their sacred books, to communicate his perfections to beings susceptible of feeling and of happiness. These beings were not then in existence: the eternal willed it, and they were. He first created three celestial beings, or spirits of a superior or-

der—Brama, Vishnu, and Sheeva ; afterwards, Moissassour, and the whole host of angels and celestial spirits, on whom he imposed no other law than that of adoring their creator. After a certain time, part of the heavenly host, misled by the wicked counsels of Moissassour, rebelled against the creator. God punished them by everlasting banishment from his presence, and condemned them to eternal torment : but after another space of time, at the intercession of Brama, Vishnu, and Sheeva, God permitted the rebel angels to be placed in a state of probation, in which they might have an opportunity of deserving his pardon. To this end he created the visible universe, composed

of fifteen globes of purification, of which our earth is the middlemost. The seven inferior globes are destined for the penance and punishment, and the seven superior for the purification of the penitent angels. God then created and placed upon the earth ninety-nine different kinds of mortal bodies, the last and most noble of which are the *Ghoij*, or cow, and *Murd*, man, to be successively animated by these spirits, who were destined to suffer physical and moral evils proportioned to their past disobedience. Such as shall persist in rebellion or misbehave in the last form, shall be again sent back to *onderah*, or the lowest globe, to begin their penance anew, and to pass again through the ninety-nine

transmigrations. Those, on the contrary, who shall go through the fifteen globes, performing penance and obeying the divine precepts, shall be restored to their original state of felicity. The faithful angels have obtained permission to descend into the same regions of penance, to watch over their fallen fellows, and to preserve them from the snares of Moissassour and the other ringleaders of rebellion.

Such is the origin of the multitude of gods and goddesses, demi-gods, and demi-goddesses, differing in rank and power, and subordinate in a thousand ways to one another. Some dwell in the stars, the air, the sea, the woods, the rivers, and all other created things,

like the naiads, fauns, satyrs, dryads, hamadryads, &c. with which the Greeks peopled all nature; while others form companies of celestial musicians, nymphs, dæmons, furies, &c.

All these spirits are comprized in the denominations of *deva* or *deouta*, good genii, and *deitti*, evil genii. The *deouta* are almost always at war with the *deitti*: the former are peculiarly devoted to Vishnu, the latter to Sheeva. In the battles which they fight with one another, both are liable to wounds and even to death; but their respective *gurus*, who are their spiritual directors and physicians, restore them to life.

The number of *deouta* amounts to

thirty *crores*, or three hundred millions; that of the *deitti*, to eighty *crores*, or eight hundred millions. The Hindoos have composed the courts of their principal divinities upon the plan of those of their princes. They have their messengers, pages, singers, dancing-girls, doctors, poets, buffoons, &c.

The *racchusa* and the *dinava* are two species of *deitti* more mischievous than the rest. They are giants, dæmons, who devour man and beast: they assume all sorts of hideous shapes, and can make themselves invisible. For the purpose of appeasing their wrath, small chapels are erected, and sacrifices are sometimes offered to them.

The *deouta* and the *deitti* can like-

wise take various shapes at pleasure : they transform themselves into men, beasts, pygmies, and enormous giants, whose heads touch the stars, and whose feet descend to the abyss of hell. The imagination of the Orientals is much warmer and bolder than ours. The poets and sculptors, who borrow so largely from the mythology and the metamorphoses of the gods of Greece and Rome, would be exceedingly puzzled to bring the fictions of the nations of the east within the compass of their art.

Brama, Vishnu, and Sheeva, form the Indian trinity, called *Trimurti*, or, correctly speaking, it is the Supreme Being himself, under the triple character of

creator, preserver, and destroyer. (*See the Frontispiece*). They are sometimes designated by the three letters A. U. M. the first two of which are sounded like a long o, so that altogether they are pronounced like *ome*; a mystic word, on which the pious Hindoo frequently meditates in silence, but which, out of respect, he never suffers to escape his lips.

Almost all nations have exaggerated their own antiquity, with a view to augment their importance: it may reasonably be supposed that the Hindoos, whose imagination has no curb, are not in this point behind any other people. They are profuse of years and ages to form a single day of their Brama.

They believe that the Supreme Being has fixed four ages, or *youg*, for the course of penance and purification of the fallen spirits. These ages they term *satia*, *treta*, *duapara*, and *cali*.

The *satia*, or golden age, lasted three millions two hundred thousand years. The Bramins, the first of the four castes into which Brama has divided mankind, were then in possession of the authority, and there was nothing on earth but innocence and virtue. Human life extended to one hundred thousand years.

The *treta*, or silver age, lasted two millions four hundred thousand years. The Khattries, or second caste, then had the preponderance: vice was intro-

duced into the world, but as yet it formed only one-fourth of its composition, the other three-fourths consisting of virtues. Men began to degenerate, and the duration of their life was reduced to sixty thousand years.

In the *duapara*, the third, or copper age, the Vaisya, or third caste, had the rule. Vices and virtues were then in equal proportion; and human life was abridged to one thousand years. This third age lasted one million six hundred thousand years.

In the fourth, or the present age of the world, called *cali* or *cali-young*, the Sooders, the fourth and last caste, predominate: the proportion of vices is three-fourths, and that of virtues one-

fourth only. The life of man is reduced to one hundred years; and it is the good alone, whose number is very small, that attain this age. The torrent of vice which inundates the earth, has, from a fatal necessity, produced a multitude of actions unknown to preceding ages; and when the last fourth of virtues shall be annihilated, Vishnu will put an end to the corruption of mankind, by destroying the human race and the terrestrial globe. The *cali-youg* will last one hundred thousand years, of which five thousand are already past.

Authors differ respecting this chronology, either because they have been instructed by Bramins, who were not well informed, or because the Bramins

themselves calculate differently in the different parts of India; or because there may be a variety of opinions on this point: but yet almost all of them think alike on the subject of the antiquity of the world; for those who diminish the duration of one age, increase that of another in proportion. A learned Bramin laughed, on being told, that we Europeans reckon only about six thousand years since the creation of the world, and, pointing to an old man with a long white beard, asked, if it was possible to believe that he was born but the preceding day.

The Hindoos call the whole of their four ages a *divine age*; a thousand divine ages form a *calpa*, or one of Bra-

ma's days, who, during that period, successively invested fourteen *menus*, or holy spirits, with the sovereignty of the earth. The *menu* transmits his empire to his posterity for seventy-one divine ages, and this period is called *manawantara*, and as fourteen *manawantara* make but nine hundred and ninety-four divine ages, there remain six, which are the twilight of Brahma's day. Thirty of these days form his month; twelve of these months one of his years; and one hundred of these years the duration of his existence. The Hindoos assert that fifty of these years have already elapsed, so that we are in the first day of the first month of the fifty-first year of Brahma's age, and

in the twenty-eighth divine age of the seventh *manwantara*. The first three human ages of this age, and five thousand years of the fourth are past. The Hindoos therefore calculate that it is 131,400,007,205,000 years since the birth of Brama, or the beginning of the world.

The first *menu* in the present day of Brama, was surnamed Sawayambhava, or son of him who exists of himself. To him is attributed the institution of the religious and civil duties that are still observed among the Hindoos. Hence some idea may be formed of the prodigious antiquity ascribed by the Hindoos to these institutions.

We know little more than the names

of the five *menus* who succeeded the first; but the Hindoo works give many particulars concerning the life and posterity of the seventh *menu*, who is called *Vaivaswata*, or child of the sun. He had ten sons, and was attended by seven *richeys*, or holy persons.

During the reign of this *menu*, the earth was inundated, and the whole human race destroyed by a deluge, with the exception of this religious prince, and the seven *richeys* and their wives, who took refuge in an ark. *Vaivaswata's* children were not born till after the deluge.

The seventh *menu* is considered as the ancestor of the whole human race, for the seven *richeys* who were preserved

with him in the ark, do not appear to have had human progeny. His posterity are divided into two great branches, called the *children of the sun*, after his reputed father, and the *children of the moon*, from the father of the husband of his daughter Ila ; for the moon is a male deity with the Hindoos.

The male descendants, in a direct line, of these two families, are supposed to have reigned in the cities of Oude and Vitora, till the thousandth year of the present age, when the solar and lunar dynasties became extinct. The *menu* reigned in person during the last golden age : for the Hindoos, deeming it wrong to place a sacred personage in times of impurity, assert that the

menu reigns only in the golden age of each divine age ; and that he disappears in the three other ages, and does not return till the golden age of the succeeding divine age.

According to the *puranas*, or Indian books which treat of the creation and of the history of the gods and heroes of antiquity, fifty-five princes of the solar, and forty-five of the lunar race, governed the world during the second, or silver age. Twenty-nine princes of the first, and twenty-four of the second race, reigned during the third, or copper age : and lastly, they reckon thirty generations of each of the two families during the first thousand years of the *cali-youg*, or the present age.

Since that period, which is the epoch of the accession of Pradyota to the kingdom of Magadha, or Behar, the foundation of which dates from the beginning of the *cali-youg*; a regular chronology records the number of years of each dynasty, to the destruction of the original government of the Hindoos: but this belongs to the history of India, which is foreign to our present subject.

BRAMA.

Bramu, Birmah, or Brouma, is one of the three persons of the Indian trinity, or rather the Supreme Being under the attribute of *Creator*. Brama, the progenitor of all rational beings, sprung from a golden egg, sparkling like a thousand suns, which was hatched by the motion imparted to the waters by the Supreme Being. Brama separated the heavens from the earth, and placed amid the subtle ether the eight points of the universe and the receptacle of the waters. He had five heads before Vairevert, one of Shceeva's sons, cut off one

of them. He is delineated floating on a leaf of the lotus, a plant revered in India. The Bramins relate, that the fifteen worlds which compose the universe were each produced by a part of Brama's body. At the moment of our birth, he imprints in our heads, in characters which cannot be effaced, all that we shall do, and all that is to happen to us in life. It is not in our power, nor in that of Brama himself, to prevent what is written from being fulfilled. Brama divided the Hindoos into the four castes or tribes mentioned in the preceding chapter, and which will be further noticed hereafter.

Brama, considered as God the Creator, has, however, neither temple, nor wor-

ship, nor devotees : the Bramins alone, on account of their origin, address their prayers to him every morning.

It was pride that deprived Brama of the *poojuh*, as the ceremony which the Hindoos are obliged to perform every morning, in honour of their gods, is called. Brama imagined himself equal to Sheeva, because he possessed the power of creating, and therefore insisted on the pre-eminence over Vishnu. The latter was enraged at his presumption, and a dreadful conflict ensued. The stars fell from the firmament, the *andons* (the visible heavens) burst, and the earth trembled. The *decerkels*, or *deoutus*, demi-gods, filled with consternation, implored the Lord to support them ; and God appeared

before the combatants, in the form of a pillar of fire which had no end. At this sight their fury subsided, and they agreed, that he who should find the top of the pillar, should enjoy the pre-eminence over the other. Vishnu assumed the form of a wild boar, dug holes in the ground with his tusks, and penetrated to *pandulon*, hell. He proceeded a thousand *cadons* in the twinkling of an eye. Brama, in the shape of a bird, soared towards the summit, flying two thousand *cadons* in a moment. In this way the one continued descending and the other ascending for one hundred thousand years, but yet their search proved fruitless. At length, having exhausted their strength, they

reflected on their imprudence, and recognized the Lord. But as Brama attempted to cheat Vishnu, and to make him believe that he had discovered the top of the pillar, Sheeva decreed that he should never have any temples on earth.

Brama, according to the vulgar mythology, takes but little notice of human affairs. Identified with the sun, he is adored by the Bramins in the *gayatri*, the most sacred passage of the *vedas* (or sacred books), which is itself ranked among the gods, and to which offerings are made. One of the most important attributes of Brama is that of father of legislators; for it was his ten sons who diffused laws and the

sciences over the world. He is considered as the original author of the *vedas*, which are said to have issued from his four mouths ; though it was not till a later period, that is, about fourteen hundred years before Christ, that they were collected and arranged by Vyasa, the philosopher and poet. The laws which bear the name of Menu, the son of Brama, and the works of the other *risheys*, or holy persons, were also re-copied, or perhaps collected from tradition, long after the period when they are said to have been published by the sons of Brama.

Brama, the father of the legislators of India, has a considerable resemblance to the Jupiter of the Greek poets, the father of Minos, whose ce-

celebrated laws were published in the very same century that Vyasa collected the *Vedas*. Jupiter was worshipped as the sun, by the name of *Ansur* or *Axur*, and Brama is identified with that luminary. The most common form in which Brama is represented, is that of a man with four heads and four hands; and it is remarkable that the Lacedæmonians gave four heads to their Jupiter. Lastly, the title of Father of Gods and Men is equally applicable to Brama and Jupiter.

Brama is delineated holding in one hand a ring, the emblem of immortality; in another, fire, to represent force; and with the other two, writing on *olles*, or palm-leaves, the emblem of legis-

lative power. (*See the annexed engraving.*)

Brama's wife, or *sacti*, is Saraswadi, the goddess of literature and the arts. She is considered sometimes as the daughter, at others, as the sister of Brama; and by the name of Brahani, she is one of the eight primary mothers of the earth, wives of the governors of the eight parts of the world.* In one of the sacred books she is introduced speaking of herself, nearly in the terms of the famous inscription on the statue of Isis: *I am all that has been or shall be.*

* These are: 1. *Indra*, governor of the east; 2. *Agnee*, of the south-east; 3. *Yama*, of the south; 4. *Nyruta*, of the south-west; 5. *Varuna*, of the west; 6. *Pavan*, of the north-west; 7. *Cuvera*, of the north; 8. *Iswara*, of the north-east.

The goose, the emblem of vigilance, is consecrated to her, and she is frequently represented borne by that bird, holding a book in one hand, and playing on the *vina* , or Indian lyre, with the other. She is sometimes seen in the train of Brahma, when, seated on a lotus, he holds the *vedas* in one hand, and consecrates the instruments for sacrifice with the three others.

SHEEVA.

Sheeva is the deity who seems to have obtained the most general worship. In his attributes, he has sometimes a resemblance to Brama, at others, to Vishnu, and frequently to the sun. The double character of destroyer and restorer, peculiar to him, has analogy with the operations of nature, which annihilates nothing, but which, under the appearance of destruction, merely changes the forms of bodies. His names are too numerous to be mentioned here: the principal are *Rudra*, *Irora*, and *Muhadewa*. Under the name

of Rudra, he is cruel and takes delight in sanguinary sacrifices; under that of Ixora, he is absolute lord of all things; under that of Mahadeva, or great god, he is adored on all the mountains of India; and he has also numerous votaries in the plains. His worship very much resembles that of Osiris in Egypt, and of Dionysus, or the Indian Bacchus, at Athens; and it is remarkable, that one of the thousand and eight incarnations of Sheeva was *Dev Naush*, and one of his names *Baghis*. We leave philologists to decide, whether Ixora and Osiris have the same signification: be this as it may, the resemblance of their attributes and worship afford reason to believe that they

are one and the same. The bull, vulgarly called *nundi*, is consecrated to Mahadeva, who is frequently represented riding on that animal ; and Apis, to which divine honours were paid in Egypt, as they are in India, to all animals of the bull species, was one of the types of Osiris.

Under the name of Rudra, Sheeva corresponds with the Stygian Jupiter, or Pluto ; and there is not a less curious resemblance between Sheeva and Jupiter. The name of *Triopthalmos*, given to the Grecian Jupiter, whose statue was found about the time of the Trojan war, with a third eye in the middle of the forehead, and that of *Trilochan*, by which Sheeva is usually

denominated, when he is represented with three eyes, have precisely the same signification. Under the name of *Cala*, or Time, he has also some resemblance to *Chronos*, or Saturn, who like him was supposed to be delighted with sacrifices of human victims.

Sheeva is one of the greatest deities of the Hindoos: some sects even assert that the other gods are subordinate to him, or merely his attributes. He is a particular favourite with the lowest classes of the people, and with the Saniassis, a religious order, who invoke him as their peculiar patron, by the name of Dourghati. He is sometimes represented with several heads; but in general only one is given to him

The number of his hands differs from four to thirty-two, and each holds a different weapon, as a sword, a club, a hatchet, &c. He is seated on a tiger's or elephant's skin, and wears round his neck a chaplet of human skulls. The river Ganges is seen issuing from the top of his head, where he laid it down to rest in descending from heaven to earth.

He resides on Mount Kailassa, which is composed of rocks, every fragment of which is a precious stone of inestimable value. There he is surrounded by celestial nymphs, while his wife Parvati, a goddess sprung from the mountain, sits by his side and participates in his pleasures and his honours.

Parvati is one of the most celebrated divinities in the legends of the Hindoos: she is the same as Maha-Cali, or the great goddess of time. Victims of all kinds, from man to the tortoise, are sacrificed to her in this character. It is she who punishes the wicked; and in this point, and also as the goddess of enchantments, she agrees with Proserpine, Diana of Tauris, or the triple Hecate.

Diana of Ephesus, who was represented with several breasts, was considered by the ancients as one and the same with Cybele and the earth. Parvati has also the name of Bhavani, or the female nature on earth, when she appears with the distinctive charac-

teristics of the Ephesian Diana: nevertheless, the particular name of the goddess of the earth is *Prithivi*, an inferior deity, who is often confounded with Bhavani. Cybele rides on a lion; so does Bhavani, though, in quality of Sheeva's wife, she is often seen accompanied by the bull. Diana, Ceres, and Cybele, are supposed to be the same as Isis, the wife of Osiris, and the name of Parvati, as the wife of Mahesa, or *Ivora*, is *Isa*.

Besides these characters, which she has in common with the deities of Greece, Parvati is Dourga, or active virtue: under this attribute she vanquished Moissassour, the dæmon of vice, and one of the rebel angels. This



DEITY.

conflict has been celebrated in songs and poems by all the Hindoo sects. It is represented in the annexed engraving, faithfully copied from an Indian painting; and the account given of it is as follows:—

When the angel Moissassour rebelled against the Supreme Being, he metamorphosed himself into a buffalo, and in that form made war for one hundred years on Indra and his celestial hosts, whom he defeated and drove out of heaven. Indra wandered a long time upon earth with his vanquished *deoutas*: at length, by the advice of Brahm, he solicited the assistance of Vishnu and Sheeva. These deities, commiserating his misfortune and exasperated against

Moissassour, exhaled from their mouths a flame, which was transformed into a goddess of incomparable beauty. This was Parvati, under the name of Dourga. Mounted on a tiger and her four hands armed with a sabre, a lance, a serpent, and a dagger, she proceeded against the usurper, pursued him in all the forms that he assumed to elude her wrath, and, at length, setting her foot upon his head, she cut it off with her sabre. From the trunk of the buffalo instantly sprung a human bust, bearing in one arm a sabre and in the other a buckler. This animal, half-buffalo and half-man, prepared for another attack on its conqueror: but Dourga, throwing the serpent she held



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in her hand round his neck, thrust her lance into his heart, and thus put an end to the combat. In commemoration of this victory the people of Bengal and the Mahrattas sacrifice a buffalo to Dourga.

Under the name of Maha-Cali, she is represented as hideously ugly, with teeth and nails of immoderate length, arms and whips in her eight hands, and a chaplet of skulls round her neck. By the appellation of Bhwani, she is less terrible, and her festival is held in spring. but Dourga is her favourite character. Her festival is solemnized in autumn, with great parade and rejoicing: her statues are then carried in procession to the nearest river or

lake, and thrown into the water. This practice originated in the belief that Dourga, after giving happiness and prosperity to India, retired into the Ganges, where she receives such as throw themselves in ; accordingly, those Hindoos who drown themselves in this sacred river are deemed most happy, and no pains are taken to prevent or to save them.

Padmala, and Camala, born of the Lotus, are likewise names of Parvati ; and here she is decidedly the Venus of the western mythologists ; she issued upon a flower from the foam of the sea, and was hailed as the goddess of beauty by the celestial powers, who gave her in marriage to Sheeva. She is the

mother of *Munnadin*, *Camdeo* or *Depuc*, the Cupid, and *Carticeya*, the Mars of India: and the peacock, which the former rides, is frequently placed beside her. Ganesa, the god of wisdom, is also reckoned one of her sons; and she is considered, equally with *Saraswadi*, as the patroness of the sciences. The miners, employed in extracting metals from the bosom of the earth, are also under her protection, and to her is ascribed the invention of stringed musical instruments. In this point she resembles *Minerva*, and as she is alike skilful in the arts of war and of peace, we have strong reason to believe that she is no other than that goddess. The statues of *Mercury* and *Minerva*,

placed together by the high-roads, had probably the same origin as those of Sheeva and Parvati, which are extremely common in India.

Parvati is particularly the goddess of women of the lower class, who invoke her on all occasions. She has likewise a sect of worshippers, called *Sactis*, who acknowledge no other deity. At the entrance of the temples of Sheeva and Parvati is always placed an ox with a tortoise at his feet. The Greeks, who adopted the forms and the details of the ancient mythologies, with the mystic signification of which they were not always acquainted, invented the fable of Chelone to explain the presence of the tortoise in the temples of Jupiter.

Sheeva had several sons : the first and most powerful is *Ganesa*, the god of wisdom, and who also presides over marriage. His statues, like those of the god *Terminus*, are placed by the side of roads and on the boundaries of townships and villages. He is adored, like *Pan*, under trees and in woods : and on the coast of *Coromandel* he is the object of a particular worship, under the name of *Polear*. At *Chinsura*, divine honours are paid to the incarnation of *Ganesa*, under the figure of the god of that country ; and he is universally venerated throughout *India*.

When a person proposes to build a house or any other edifice, the first thing he does is to sanctify the spot,

by strewing cow-dung and ashes over it ; and in the next place he never fails to erect upon it a statue of Ganesa. In short, the god of wisdom is the most popular of all the deities of India, and has the nearest resemblance to the *Lares*, or household gods, of the ancients. Hanooman shares this attribute with him among the lower classes of the Hindoos. Like the Janus of the Romans, Ganesa has two faces and sometimes four, to indicate that nothing escapes prudence, and that it views at once the past, the present, and the future. The pious Hindoos begin all sacrifices, religious ceremonies, and prayers, not excepting such as are addressed to the superior divinities, and



GANESA.
God of Wisdom.

all business of any importance, with an invocation to Ganesa. There are few books to which are not prefixed the words, *Hail Ganesa!*

One of the attributes of Ganesa, that of patron of literature, he has in common with the Apollo of the Greeks, though Crishna, one of the *avatars*, or incarnations of Vishnu, of which we shall treat presently, bears a closer resemblance to the god of Delphi. Ganesa is depicted with a body of prodigious size, an elephant's head, commonly with four hands, and sometimes, as we have observed, with four faces. The animal which accompanies him is usually the rat, the emblem of

foresight. The following story is related concerning it.

This rat was a giant, called Guedyemonga-Churin, on whom the gods had conferred immortality ; but he abused his power, and did much mischief to mankind, who implored the protection of Ganesa. The latter, pulling out one of his tusks, threw it with such force at Guedyemonga-Churin, that the tooth entered his stomach and overthrew him. The giant instantly transformed himself into a rat as large as a mountain, and ran up to attack Ganesa, who leaped upon his back, saying : “ Thou shalt henceforth carry me.”

Ganesa is frequently seen with Shee-

va and Parvati in the groves of Kailassa, where it is his employment to fan them with a *chamaru*, or fan made of feathers, while Narada plays on the *vina* (lyre) which is accompanied by the celestial choirs.

The Hindoos, when they adore Ganesa by the name of Polear, cross their arms, and strike themselves several blows with their closed fists on the temples ; then, still keeping their arms crossed, they lay hold of their ears and make three inclinations by bending the knee: after which they clasp their hands, strike their foreheads again, and address their prayers to the god. They entertain the highest veneration for him, place his image in all the tem-

ples, in the streets, the roads, the fields, and at the foot of trees, that every one may have opportunities of invoking him in case of need, and that travellers may be able to present their offerings to him before they pursue their route.

Sheeva's second son is *Supramanya* : his father produced him from the eye in the middle of his forehead, to destroy the giant Soura Parpina. The latter, by dint of penance, had obtained the government of the world and immortality ; but he became so wicked, that Sheeva was obliged to punish him. He sent against him *Supramanya*, who fought him in vain for two days , but at length he was fortunate enough to cut the giant in two. The two parts

turned, the one into a peacock and the other into a cock. Supramanya took the peacock to ride upon, and ordered the cock to keep near him on his car. Accordingly, in the temples consecrated to him, and in all those of Sheeva, in which he has always a small chapel, he is seen riding on a peacock, with six heads and twelve arms.

Supramanya is represented with four hands, two of which are armed with daggers, while a third holds a lance, and the fourth is empty. The peacock is at his feet.

Vairevert is the third son of Sheeva, who made him out of his breath, and commissioned him to punish the pride of the *deverkels* and penitents, and to

humble Brama, who esteemed himself the greatest of the gods. Vairevert tore off one of Brama's five heads; he killed the *deverhels* and the penitents, and caught their blood in Brama's skull. He afterwards restored them to life, and gave them humbler and purer hearts.

According to some Hindoos, it is Vairevert, who will come at the expiration of the four ages, at Sheeva's command, to destroy the world; but according to others, that office will be performed by Vishnu. Vairevert is represented with four arms, three eyes, and two projecting teeth in the shape of crescents. He wears, by way of necklace, a string of heads, which hang

down to his belly ; his girdle is composed of serpents ; his hair is of the colour of fire ; bells are attached to his feet, and in his hands he holds a *tidi*, a *choulon*, a cord, and the skull of Brama. Vairevert is represented riding on a dog : he has several temples, but is principally worshipped at Cashee, near the Ganges.

VISHNU.

Of all the gods of the Indian mythology, observes Mrs. Graham, (in her *Letters on India*,) I like *Vishnu* best: for besides being charged with the duty of our preservation, it cannot be denied that he is a very amiable deity. We do not find that he suffers himself to be hurried into those violent passions which dishonour the majesty of Sheeva, nor do we see that he resorts to unworthy artifices, like Indra, to give success to evil designs: but he is always ready to take upon himself the afflictions of humanity, for the purpose of



DEVI PRASAD
Second Son of Satya

relieving the wretched. It is he, who, by his kindly influence, prevents the effects of the rage of Mahadeva, and preserves the present order of the creation.

Jupiter, in his attribute of preserver, is the western prototype of Vishnu. Both preside over the rites of hospitality, and protect strangers; and the celestial eagle constantly accompanies one as well as the other. But Vishnu is also *Varuna*, or the god of the waters. Under this character he is armed with a trident, or sceptre with three prongs. Sir William Jones calls *Varuna* a form of *Sheeva*; but it seems more natural to consider him as Vishnu, who, by one of his names, *Narayan*, is

represented floating on the ocean upon a leaf, and sometimes on the great serpent, Maha Shesha. Sheeva and Vishnu frequently exchange their attributes, and even their arms : hence the former occasionally bears the trident which belongs to the latter.

When Vishnu is not represented sleeping on the ocean, he is depicted with four arms and sometimes more, an agreeable aspect and handsome figure. His colour is dark blue : he holds a lotus, the emblem of water, the *chakra*, or ornamented disk, and the *chank*, or conch ; he is, moreover, armed sometimes with the *agnesta*, or fiery dart, perhaps the lightning, and at others, with the trident. His

head is sometimes adorned with three tresses, the emblem of the Ganges, which, it is said, flows from Vishnu's feet over the head of Sheeva, and which is called Triveni. The three tresses may perhaps also represent the three great rivers, the Ganges, the Jumna, and the Saraswati; the latter of which, according to the Bramins, communicates with the two others by a subterraneous channel.

Vishnu is frequently borne upon the wings of *Garura*, or *Garuda*, who is commonly represented with a human body and the beak and wings of a hawk. Here we recognize the eagle of Jupiter and his companion, *Ganymede*. Vishnu's paradise is the *vaicondon*, where he

enjoys the company of his beloved *Lacshmi*, the exquisitely beautiful goddess of fortune and abundance, and one of his wives. She is also called *Sris*, which signifies prosperity, and *Camala*, born of the Lotus, and is considered as the mother of Manuadin. She is consequently the same as Parvati; and, indeed, it seems as if all the goddesses, as well as all the gods, might be reduced to a single deity, whose different attributes they merely represent. The names of the three great divinities, numerous as they may be, are all reducible to those of the sun, fire, and air, and these to that of a great deity, who is visibly represented in the creation by the sun; but in the vulgar mythology,

Sourya, the god of that luminary, is a personage of much less importance than any of those composing the great Trinity. He has nevertheless a numerous sect of worshippers, who have taken from his name the appellation of *Souras*. The sun, in his splendour, is no other, according to the *gayatri*, than truth and the supreme intelligence, which creates, governs, and animates the whole universe. The learned invoke him with particular veneration; but the only notion which the common people have of him, is derived from seeing his image drawn in a car by seven green coursers, and by a horse with seven heads, preceded by *Aroun*, who performs the office of leader, and in

whom we may recognize Aurora, and followed by the twelve *aditis*, or months, and thousands of genii singing his praises. Sourya is believed to have frequently descended from his car in human shape. Two of his sons, called *Aswinau*, are regarded as twins and represented like Castor and Pollux. They preside over medicine ; and they are the offspring of a nymph, who, in the form of a mare, was impregnated by the rays of the sun.

INFERIOR DEITIES OF THE HINDOOS.

Tchandra, the moon, is like the god *Lunus* of the ancient Italians, of the male sex. Fable relates, that the twenty-eight lunar stations into which the heavens are divided by the Hindoos, are each the abode of a wife of *Tchandra*, whom the god visits in turn. He is invoked with *Sourya* and the planets in all sacrifices. His car is drawn by an antelope, as that of *Diana* was by a stag. All the horned animals, the hare, and the rabbit, are under his special protection.

Yama, the god of death, and sovereign of *pandalon*, or hell, is also judge of the souls of the dead, which, at stated periods, repair in crowds to Yamapore, his dread abode, to receive sentence. Hence they either ascend to *suerga*, the first heaven, or are cast into *narac*, the region of serpents, or assume upon earth the form of some animal, unless, from the nature of their offences, they are doomed to reside some time in vegetables or even in mineral substances. The milky-way is the road by which the souls travel to Yamapore. *Yama* resembles *Pluto*, or rather, perhaps, *Minos*. One of his titles is *Dharma-raja*, king of justice; another, *Pitripeti*, lord of the patriarchs; and a third,

Sraddha-deva, god of funeral offerings. He is also *Cala*, or Time, though Sheeva is sometimes worshipped by that appellation. Yama is represented with a frightful face, mounted on a buffalo, and holding a stick in his hand.

The Hindoos say, that this god of death expired himself under the blows of Ixora, one of the names of Sheeva, from whom he attempted, in his sixteenth year, to steal away Marcandam, the ward of that deity. Men ceased for some time to be subject to death, and began to imagine themselves immortal: but the earth, overstocked with inhabitants, was no longer capable of supporting them, which occasioned extraordinary commotion and confusion. At

length, Ixora, at the solicitation of the gods, re-animated Yama, who sent one of his ministers to order all the aged to set out immediately for the other world. The messenger, having tumbled by the way, arrived with his head quite muddled with the fumes of wine, and not knowing what he was about, instead of addressing himself exclusively to the old, he intimated Yama's orders to all mankind, without distinction of age. A prodigious number of children, youths, adults, and aged persons, were soon seen perishing promiscuously. Since that time men have died at every age: till then their lives were all of equal length, and the number of years determined the moment of death.

The western mythologists have sometimes confounded Plutus with Pluto: but *Cuvera*, the god of wealth with the Hindoos, has no correspondence with Yama, unless it be supposed that the islands of gold, silver, and iron, which form part of the dominions of the latter, give the other a right to share his empire. *Cuvera*, moreover, is rather the genius who presides over wealth and metals, than a god: he has no altars, and it is to *Laeshmi*, the goddess of fortune, that devotees address their prayers for riches. *Cuvera* resides in the palace of *Alaca*, in the forest of *Chitaroutra*; he is drawn on a splendid car, surrounded by a great number of handsome nymphs, called *Yacshas*.

Yama and Cuvera are two of the protectors of the eight corners of the world: the former presiding over the south, the latter over the north.

Agnee, the god of fire, has usually three legs and four arms; he is represented surrounded with flames, and riding upon a ram: he is one of the protecting deities of the eight corners of the world, and governs the south-east portion. He has many different names, but is best known by that of *Agnee*.

Vishvacarman, god of artisans, is annually adored by all those who follow mechanical professions: the implements of the carpenters, masons, &c. are consecrated to him.

Carticeya, son of Parvati, is the

commander of the celestial armies ; he was born with six heads, and was nursed by the six *critikus* (*Piciades*) who each suckled one of his six mouths. These nurses were placed among the stars, at a great distance from their husbands, the *richeys* (the seven stars of the Great Bear,) to whom they had proved false. The seventh only, the faithful *Arundati*,* was permitted to remain with her husband, and to accompany him in his nocturnal revolution. *Carticeya* is also called *Scanda* ; he has six faces, as we have just observed, a mul-

* The Hindoos give this appellation to a small star, which is so near to the stars of the Great Bear, that it seems to touch them.

itude of eyes, and several hands armed with clubs, arrows and sabres ; he is represented riding on a peacock, or accompanied by that bird : he is of an irascible disposition, like his brother Mars, but his power is extremely limited : perhaps he is the same as Supramanya, Sheeva's second son, who, like him, has six heads, and is mounted on a peacock.

Cumdeo, or *Minnadin*, differs but little from the Cupid of the ancients. He is also called *Ununga*, or, without body ; and is the son of Vishnu and Laeshmi. Besides his bow and arrows, he carries a banner, on which is delineated a fish : his bow is a sugar-cane ; the cord is formed of bees ; the arrows



are of all sorts of flowers, ~~none~~ only is headed, but the point is covered with a honey-comb—an allegory equally just and ingenious, and which so correctly expresses the pleasures and the pangs produced at one and the same time by the wounds of love. Manmadin is represented, as in the annexed plate, riding on a parrot.

One day, when Vishnu, to deceive Sheeva, had assumed the figure of a beautiful young female, Manmadin discharged an arrow, which pierced the heart of the formidable deity, and inflamed it with love of the nymph. The latter fled, and at the moment when Sheeva had overtaken her, Vishnu resumed his proper form. Sheeva, en-

raged at the trick played upon him, with one flash of his eyes burned and consumed the imprudent Manuadin, who hence received the name of *Unungu*. He was restored to life by a shower of nectar, which the gods in pity poured upon him: but he remained without body and is the only Indian deity who is accounted incorporeal. Camdeo is particularly worshipped by females desirous of obtaining faithful lovers and good husbands. In the worship paid him by the Hindoos, obscene images, loose songs and indecent ideas are excluded: but yet they give him for a wife a goddess, named *Radi*, which signifies lewdness.

Paran, the god of the winds, is the

father of *Hanooman*, a deity with an ape's head, whose adventures are closely connected with those of the *avatara Rama*, (for which see the sixth incarnation of Vishnu); but in his attributes he nearly resembles Pan. Like the latter, Hanooman was the inventor of a particular kind of music; like him, he dwells in woods and forests, and is at the head of the rural deities. Pavan supports the north-west portion of the universe.

Nareda, one of the sons of Brama, presides over music in general, but his chief character is that of legislator. He is the messenger of the gods: the invention of the *vina*, or Indian guitar, is ascribed to him. His actions have

been celebrated by the poets, and form the subject of a *Purana*.

Indra is the most important deity, after the three great divinities composing the Indian trinity. In several of his attributes he resembles the European Jupiter. He is the sovereign of the firmament, and presides over the different phænomena of the atmosphere, as rain, thunder, &c. He is also the god of illusions and imposture; and as he is neither more chaste nor more constant than Jupiter, his metamorphoses had no other object than to deceive and seduce, like those of the father of gods and men, when he assumed the shape of a swan, a bull, a shower of gold, &c. His body, from the shoulders to the

waist, is studded with eyes, to denote his continual vigilance : hence he has been compared to Argus. He is the chief of the celestial spirits, who are innumerable, and who dwell in *suerga*, the first heaven of the Hindoos, and the abode of virtuous souls : he also rules over the spirits of the earth and sea. His favourite palace is in the forest of Nundana, where his wife, *Indrani*, participates in his pleasures and authority ; she is commonly represented seated by his side, on a beautiful elephant with three trunks, surrounded by a numerous train of *deoutas*. Indra is one of the governors of the eight corners of the world ; but though the part, which is especially under his direction, is the

east, his Olympus is the *Meru*, or north pole, which is allegorically described as a mountain of gold and precious stones.

Casyapa, the priest of the gods, and sometimes called their father, resides, unembarrassed by the arduous duty of governing either gods or men, in a valley, situated on the summit of a lofty mountain. In his mode of life and retirement he resembles Saturn, when he reigned, during the golden age, over *Latium*. *Casyapa* and his venerable wife are surrounded by sacred nymphs, lovely as the *houris* of Mahomet, and pure as the virgins of *Vesta*. At their court innocence, oppressed upon earth, finds rest and protection; and

a divine security preserves everlasting peace in their kindly shades, where Ganesa, the god of wisdom, is the most frequent and the most welcome visitor.

Manar Suami, a Hindoo deity, is not well known. Some suppose him to be Sheeva; but his priests recognize in him an incarnation of Supramanya, second son of that god. This doctrine is not generally received; and it is rejected by the Bramins. The temples of Manar Suami are very small, and stand in the fields. In general, colossal figures of brick are erected at the entrance; they represent seated *boudons*, who are said to be the guardians of the temple. Within them are seen,

representations of the son of Sheeva and twelve young damsels. These temples are frequented by the Hindoos of the inferior castes, who there perform their devotions; but they are never visited by the Bramins, because they hold this worship in contempt.

Mariatta, who is considered as the goddess of the small-pox, is also worshipped, according to Sonnerat, by people of the lowest class only. *Mariatta* was the wife of the penitent, *Chamada Guini*, and mother of *Parasurama*, who is no other than *Vishnu* in his eighth incarnation. This goddess had authority over the elements; but this power she could retain no longer than while her heart continued

to be pure. One day, going to a pond for water, and making it up according to custom into a ball to carry it home, she saw, on the surface of the water, figures of *granduers*, a species of sylphs of extraordinary beauty. These *granduers* fluttered over her head; she became enamoured of them; her heart was inflamed with desire; the ball which she held suddenly became liquid, and mixed again with the water of the pond. She could never afterwards carry any more home, without the assistance of a vessel. Chamada Guini hence discovered that his wife had ceased to be pure, and, in the excess of his rage, he ordered his son to drag her to the place of execution, and to cut off her

head. This command was obeyed ; but Parassurama grieved so much for the loss of his mother, that Chamada Guini told him to go and join her head again to her body, and to recite a prayer, which he taught him, in her ear, assuring him that she would then revive. The son hastened to follow these directions ; but, by a singular mistake, he joined the head of his mother to the body of a *purchi*, who had been executed for her crimes—a monstrous union, which combined in Mariatta the virtues of a goddess and the vices of a prostitute. The goddess, rendered impure by this mixture, was expelled from her habitation, and committed all sorts of cruelties. The *deverkets*, ob-

erving the ravages she was making, appeased her anger, by conferring on her the power of curing the small-pox, and promising that prayers should be offered to her on account of that disease.

INCARNATIONS OF VISHNU.

There is a part of the mythology of India, which seems to be blended with the history of that country, and of which, for this reason, we think it right to treat somewhat more circumstantially. It may be compared with that of the heroic ages of Greece. This part relates to the different *awatars* of Vishnu, or his incarnations and appearances on earth.

The first of these *awatars* has a reference to that general deluge, of which all nations have preserved some tradition. Vishnu, we are told, metamor-

phosed himself into a fish, to save king Sattiaviraden and his wife, during the deluge, which had been sent as a punishment for the crimes and wickedness of mankind. In this form, he acted as a rudder to the vessel which this king had constructed, and watched incessantly over his safety. After the waters had subsided, Sattiaviraden quitted his retreat, and set about re-peopling the world. In this incarnation, Vishnu is adored by the name of *Matsya Avatara*.

According to some, the object of this metamorphosis was to fish up the *vedas*, or sacred books, which a certain dæmon had stolen from those to whose

care they were committed, and hidden at the bottom of the sea.

The second incarnation is that of *Kourma*, or the tortoise. The gods and the giants, wishing to obtain immortality by eating *amourdon*, delicious butter, formed in one of the seven seas of the universe, which the Indians call sea of milk, transported, by Vishnu's advice, the mountain of Mandreguivi into that sea: they twisted round it the serpent Adissechen, and alternately pulling, some by his hundred heads, others by the tail, they made the mountain turn round in such a manner, as to agitate the sea and to convert it into butter: but they pulled with such

rapidity, that Adissechen, overcome with weakness, could no longer endure it. His body shuddered ; his hundred trembling mouths made the universe resound with hisses ; a torrent of flames burst from his eyes ; his hundred black pendent tongues palpitated, and vomited forth a deadly poison, which immediately spread all around. The gods and giants betook themselves to flight. Vishnu, bolder than the rest, took the poison, and with it rubbed his body, which became quite blue. It is in memory of this event, that this colour is given to his image in almost all the temples.

The gods and the giants, encouraged by Vishnu's example, fell to work

again. After they had laboured a thousand years, the mountain was on the point of sinking in the sea, when Vishnu, in the form of a tortoise, quickly placed himself beneath, and supported it. At length they saw the cow Camadenu, the horse with seven heads, and the elephant with three trunks, already mentioned, coming out of the sea of milk; also the tree *calpaga vrutcham*; Lacshmi, goddess of riches, wife of Vishnu; Saraswadi, goddess of the sciences and of harmony, married to Brama; Mondevi, goddess of discord and misery, whom nobody would have, and who is represented riding on an ass, and holding in her hand a banner, on which a raven is delineated; and,



lastly, Danouvandri, the physician, carrying a vessel full of *amourdon*, which the gods instantly seized, and greedily devoured, without leaving a morsel. The giants, disappointed in their expectations, dispersed over the earth, prevented mankind from paying worship to the gods, and strove to obtain adoration for themselves. Their insolence occasioned the subsequent incarnations of Vishnu, who endeavoured to destroy this race, so inimical to the gods. He is adored in this second metamorphosis, by the name of *Kourma Avatara*. The followers of Vishnu believe that this god, though omnipresent, resides more particularly in the *vaicondom*, his paradise, amidst the sea of milk, reclined,

in contemplative slumber, on the serpent Adissechen, which serves him for a throne: in this state he is called *Siranguan*. In all the temples of Vishnu is to be seen the figure of this god; but as the serpent on which he lies cannot be represented with his hundred heads, he is delineated with only five.

A giant, called Paladas, having rolled up the earth like a sheet of paper, carried it on his shoulders to the bottom of the sea. Vishnu, in the form of a man with a boar's head, attacked the giant, and ripped open his belly: he then plunged into the sea, to bring up the earth, which he seized with his tusks, and placed on the surface of the water, as it was before,



putting several mountains on it to keep it in equilibrium. In this third incarnation, Vishnu has the name of *Vara-guen*; but in the temple of Tirumaton, which is dedicated to this metamorphosis, he is adored by that of *Ludera-rague-Cerunal*.

The fourth and fifth incarnations of Vishnu, are probably connected with the ancient history of India, which is lost, and seem to refer to religious wars. It was to destroy the giant Erenien, that the god underwent his fourth incarnation. On this giant, Brama conferred the privilege, that he could not be killed either by gods, men, or beasts. Elated with this advantage, he commanded divine honours to be paid to

him throughout his kingdom. His son, Pragaladen, filled with the grace of Vishnu, was the only person who refused to adore him. Caresses, threats, and torments proved alike unavailing. "The god whom I worship," said he, undauntedly, "is omnipotent, full of goodness to those who adore him, but terrible to the wicked." "And where is this mighty god," replied the giant, "that I may wreak my vengeance on him?" Pragaladen answered, that he was every where, and that he filled all places with his divinity. "Shall I find him here?" cried the enraged Erenien, striking one of the pillars of his palace with his fist. At the same moment the pillar opened, and Vishnu, half man

and half lion, issued from it. Ereuien, who had never thought of such a figure, when he solicited the assurance that he should not be killed either by god, man, or beast, maintained an obstinate conflict with Vishnu, who, at length, tore open his body and drank his blood. Vishnu, in this transformation, has the name of *Narasema Avatara*. He is adored by this name in two celebrated temples, the one a league or two from Pondy, and the other on the coast of Orissa.

The fifth transformation of Vishnu, is into a dwarf Bramin, called *Varuna*; he is also named *Trivikera*, or the taker of three steps. The famous Bali, who is now one of the judges and mo-

narchs of *Pandalon*, or hell, obtained, by dint of penances, the sovereignty of the earth, sea, and heaven : but he abused his power to such a degree, that the *deutas* were apprehensive of losing their celestial abodes. They implored Brahma to deliver them from the tyranny of Bali ; but the latter had received a promise that no being should have power to dispossess him. Vishnu undertook to gain, by artifice, what no one could take from him by force. He appeared before him, in the form of a dwarf, and demanded as much ground as he could stride over at three steps, to build himself a hut upon. Bali laughed at the diminutive figure of the dwarf, and told him, that he

ought not to limit his request to such a trifle. The dwarf replied, that he was so small, that what he solicited would be sufficient for him. Bali granted what he desired, and, to ratify the donation, he took a little water in his mouth, and spirted it into the dwarf's hand. The latter immediately attained such prodigious dimensions, that he strode over the earth with the first step, over the ocean with the second, and with the third ascended to heaven, leaving Bali thunderstruck, with no other empire, than his portion of *Pandalon*, to govern. Fable adds, that Bali recognized Vishnu, adored him, and offered him his head ; but the god, satisfied with his submission, par-

doned and permitted him to revisit the earth every year, on the day of the full moon in November.

The sixth incarnation of Vishnu was not voluntary. Nareda-Mooni, a son of Brama, had fallen desperately in love with a young damsel of extraordinary beauty : he offered her his hand, which she rejected with disdain, adding, that she would never wed either man or god who was not equal to herself in beauty. Nareda-Mooni made Vishnu the confidant of his passion : the god, to trick him, promised to make him as beautiful as his mistress ; but on a body of the most exquisite form and proportions he placed the head of an ape. Nareda, conceiving himself cer-

tain of success, flew to the object of his desire. The gods followed, with the intention of diverting themselves at his expense, and were present at the interview, which convulsed them with laughter. Nareda ran to look at himself in a mirror; and, enraged at the trick that had been played him, he pronounced an imprecation, which obliged Vishnu to descend upon earth in human form, and the gods in that of apes. A malediction uttered by a Bramin, never fails to be fulfilled: and Vishnu was accordingly born by the name of *Rama*, son of Desaradeu, king of Ayodi, which is supposed to be Siam. At the age of fifteen years, he quitted his paternal abode, and became a peni-

tent, taking with him his wife Siday, and his brother Tatchumauen. He crossed the Ganges, and repaired to the mountain of Fitray Condon, where he had disciples, whom he instructed in the doctrine of the transmigration of souls: he then travelled through the deserts, and remained six years making proselytes. At length, he retired to the desert of Pangavadi, and there erected a hut, for the purpose of completing the term of his penance.

Rama was desirous of introducing his doctrine into Ceylon. Ravanen, king of that island, carried his pride to such a pitch, as to insist on being worshipped as a god. He thought himself too strong to have any thing to appre-

hend from Rama, and actually beat him several times, and took from him his wife Siday. Rama, however, gained over Ravanen's brother, and promised to place him on the throne. Rebuchaden, seduced by this promise, betrayed his brother; the victorious Rama gave him the crown of Ceylon, and having recovered Siday, returned to his father's dominions, and transmitted the royal authority to his two sons, Coussen and Caven.

In the temples dedicated to this incarnation, Vishnu is represented under the figure of a young man of a green colour, and of perfect beauty, holding a bow and arrows in his hand.

The history of Rama-Vishnu forms a

thick volume, which is full of excellent reflections. The Hindoos take such pleasure in reading it, that the followers of Sheeva learn it by heart.

In the seventh incarnation, also, Vishnu appeared as a man, by the name of *Balupatren*. Not knowing that he was a portion of Vishnu, he lived in solitude and penance, merely punishing, without ostentation, the wicked whom he met with. He cleared the earth of a great number of giants; the most remarkable of these, was *Vroutarassauran*, who, by his cruelties, had compelled mankind to adore him as a god. The author of an unpublished manuscript, mentioned in the preface, adds, that this is all the Hindoos of the coast

of Cormandel know of the history of Balapatren ; they merely conjecture, that one of the Puranas, which are not yet translated into the Tamul language, contains farther particulars of his life. He is represented holding a candle in one hand, and a plough-share in the other.

The story of the seventh incarnation of Vishnu is also thus related : A giant, named Cartasuciriargunen, who had a thousand arms, oppressed mankind by his cruelty and rapacity. Vishnu, a second time assumed the human shape and the name of Rama, and armed solely with a plough-share, he engaged the giant, killed him, and cut off his thousand arms : he then threw the bones

into a heap, and formed with them a mountain called Baldus.

In the eighth incarnation, Vishnu appeared under the name of *Parassurama*, to teach mankind to be virtuous, and to disdain the things of this world. Parassurama declared war against the kings of the race of the sun, defeated them, and gave their dominions to the Brahmins. The latter had the ingratitude to refuse him an asylum in the countries of which he had thus made them a present. Parassurama was, therefore, obliged to retire to the Ghauts, the foot of which was then washed by the ocean. He begged Varuna, the god of the sea, to withdraw his waters, and to leave him just room enough to dwell

upon, desiring no more space than a bow-shot. Varuna assented; but Narader, who witnessed his promise, represented to him his imprudence, assuring him, that it was Vishnu himself, and that he would send his arrow over all the seas, so that Varuna would not know whither to remove his waters. Varuna, deeply distressed because he could not recall his promise, summoned the god of death to his aid. The latter, in order to assist him, metamorphosed himself into a *kario* (white ant), crept in the night into Parassurama's chamber, and gnawed the cord of his bow half through, so as to leave it only just the strength requisite to keep it on the stretch. Parassurama, not suspecting

the trick, repaired in the morning to the sea-shore, applied an arrow to his bow, and pulled the string with all his might. The string snapped, and the arrow fell at a little distance. The ground which it cleared became instantaneously dry, and formed the tract which we call the coast of Malabar. Parassurama, recollecting the ingratitude of the Bramins, decreed that every Bramin who should die on that coast, should return upon earth in the form of an ass: hence, no Bramin has for a long time fixed his abode in this land of proscription.

According to the Malabar tradition, this god still lives on that coast, where he is depicted of a ferocious and terrific

countenance. On the coast of Coromandel he is represented of a green colour, with a pleasing physiognomy, holding a hatchet in one hand and a fan of palm leaves in the other.

In the ninth incarnation, Vishnu appeared as a shepherd, son of Devegni, sister to Canzen, king of Madurah. It had been predicted to this prince, that one of his sister's sons would deprive him of his throne and life; he therefore ordered all the children she should produce to be put to death. Seven had already perished through the tyrant's cruelty, but the eighth was Vishnu, by the name of *Krishna*. He could speak as soon as he was born, and commanded his mother to send him to Asawadah,

wife of Nandagoben, chief of the shepherds of Gocoulam, and to substitute in his stead a girl to whom that woman had just given birth. Canzen, incensed at the escape of his nephew, ordered all the male children in his kingdom to be put to death ; but Asswadah concealed Krishna with such care that he was not involved in the general massacre. She afterwards brought him up as her own son, and gave him *gopas* and *gopis*, shepherds and shepherdesses, for play-fellows : he chose nine of the latter for his favourites, and the poets and painters seldom represent him without this train. In his youth, he killed the serpent Calangam, who lived in the river Yomoudi. This monster was so poi-

sonous, that the wind which touched him or passed over his abode, spread destruction far and wide. Krishna leaped into the river to attack him. The serpent darted forward, enwreathed him in his long folds, and attempted to stifle him. Krishna had no great difficulty to extricate himself; he then seized the reptile by the tail and crushed his head with his feet. In commemoration of this event, Vishnu is represented in the temples dedicated to the ninth incarnation, with a Cobra di Capello twisted round his body and biting his feet. In another picture he is delineated dancing on the serpent Calangam. His worshippers usually have both pictures in their houses.

Krishna moreover delivered the earth from a great number of giants and monsters; he also rendered an important service to his friends, the shepherds of Madurah, by holding up the mountain of Goverdhana on the point of his little finger, to shelter them from the showers of stones which an incensed dæmon poured down upon them. He exterminated whole armies of giants, sent against him by his uncle Canzen to destroy him; and at length dispatched the tyrant himself, who could not escape his destiny. Krishna, after travelling over the world, performing numberless miracles, rewarding the good and chastising the wicked, was killed at his own desire by a hunter, that he might not

witness the fourth age, which was then beginning, and was to be worse than the preceding. His body was burned on a funeral pile, prepared by his command, on the sea-shore. This is considered as the most memorable and the most glorious of all Vishnu's incarnations. The particular adventures of Krishna have furnished the lyric and pastoral poetry of India with a most fertile theme. The beauty and affection of his wife Radha, the attachment of his companion Nanda, the peregrinations of the demi-god, and his numerous amours, are celebrated with enthusiasm by his worshippers, a considerable sect of whom, the Goelasthas, acknowledge no deity above him.

Great part of the history of Krishna has a striking resemblance to that of Hercules. The persecutions of his youth, his victories over different monsters, and the wars in which he was engaged, may be compared with the adventures of the Grecian hero. On the other hand, the pastoral life of Krishna Govindha resembles that which Apollo Nomion led among the shepherds of Arcadia. His surname *Cesara* (with beautiful hair) is perhaps the same as that of Phœbus, *with the golden locks*. Krishna, like Apollo, was the patron of music and song : he is frequently represented playing on the flute, while the nine *gopis* are dancing round him on Mount Goverdhana, the Parnassus of

the Hindoos. He is sometimes seen surrounded by twelve couple of dancers, emblematic of the twelve months, the youths representing the days when the moon does not shine, and the maidens those when she appears; while he himself denotes the sun or Sourya, as Apollo denoted that luminary by the name of Phœbus.

Like Vishnu in all his incarnations, Krishua is of a dark blue colour: a large bee, of the same hue, flies about his head: he is in brilliant attire, adorned with chaplets of flowers and jewels, and holds a lotus in his hand: sometimes he is seated on a throne, which is in the shape of that flower. When he is not represented with a human face, he

carries in his numerous hands the arms consecrated to Vishnu himself : in short, he has all the attributes of that divinity.

The tenth incarnation is yet to come ; it will take place at the expiration of the *Kali Youg*, in about ninety-five thousand years. The earth will then be inundated with wickedness. Vishnu will assume the human form and be born in the house of a Bramin : his name will be Calichi, and that of his horse, Bigeiscia. Calichi, armed with a scymetar, will traverse the whole earth and destroy its guilty inhabitants. “ The heavens will tumble down, the celestial orbs will be intermixed, the stars will stand still in their courses, the sun will lose his light, the universe

will revert into its original chaos, from which a new world will issue." Some assert that the tenth incarnation will be a horse, named Calichi, at least there exists an Indian painting in which Vishnu is represented in the form of a man with a horse's head.

Others believe that Sheeva, or one of his sons, is destined to destroy the world. This mission, in fact, does not seem consistent with the character of Vishnu; but, the theologians of India find as little difficulty in reconciling contradictions as those of most other countries. A Bramin, to whom this objection was mentioned, replied, that to annihilate one world for the purpose

of creating another, is not to destroy, but to preserve.

Such are the ten great incarnations of Vishnu. There are fourteen others which are generally admitted, but which are considered as less important, because it was only small portions of the god that became incarnate. The books make mention of more than a thousand metamorphoses of Vishnu ; but most of them are rejected as apocryphal. Lacshmi, Vishnu's wife, had also her incarnations, for the purpose of attending her husband on earth during his various transformations.

OF CERTAIN RELIGIOUS OPINIONS
OF THE HINDOOS,
AND
PARTICULARLY THE DOCTRINE
OF THE METEMPSYCHOSIS.

The Hindoos, though strongly attached to their own religion, not only never persecute the professors of any other, but do not even endeavour to make proselytes, believing that every virtuous man, whatever may be his religion, will be happy hereafter.

If the Hindoo princes allow not their subjects to forsake the faith of Brama for that of the Christians or Mahomet, it is rather from political

motives, than from a principle of religion. They regard it as particularly criminal in the great, and in the superior castes, whose example might be followed by others; but if any individual of a low caste embraces either of these religions, it is seldom that any notice is taken of the circumstance. It is also as impossible for a foreigner to procure initiation into the religion of Brama, as for a negro to change the colour of his skin, or a European to transform himself into a Hindoo.

The Hindoos permit neither foreigners nor persons belonging to the impure castes to enter their temples, or to witness their sacrifices, unless at a great distance. Scrupulously attentive

to all the ceremonies prescribed by their religion, they allow every one to hold what opinion of them he pleases : and objections never excite in them that warmth, which is manifested elsewhere, in discussions of this nature. They seem to think, on this point, like Tiberius, who left to the gods the business of avenging their own wrongs. They pay respect to all other religions, and would deem it a violation of their own, to disturb any person whatever in the exercise of his. As the Supreme Being has divided the human race into different nations, it appears perfectly natural to them, that each should have its own way of adoring him, as well as a language, climate,

and productions, peculiar to the country which it inhabits. "To degrade the religion and customs of another," says Jeswant Sing, rajah of Judpore, in a letter to Aurengzeb, "is to thwart the will and power of the Almighty, before whom Pagans and Mahometans are equal."

The Hindoos, in general, firmly believe in predictions, and the power of talismans, amulets, and charms, which most of them wear fastened round the arms, neck, and waist: and if you laugh at their credulity, they laugh, in their turn, at your ignorance, and are astonished that you should entertain the least doubt of effects which experience has so frequently confirmed.

They believe also in the existence of evil genii, who inhabit certain lakes, certain mountains, certain enchanted and sacred forests; and in the existence of dæmons of different kinds, who frequently take up their abode in human bodies. It is almost always in the bodies of women that these dæmons fix their residence, and the ceremonies employed to expel them out of these poor possessed creatures, are somewhat curious. The voice and the imposing look of the exorciser, the howling, leaps, and violent exertions of the sufferer, together with the shrieks and terror of the persons present, form a scene not unlike that exhibited at our exorcisms of old.

The universal belief of the *Hindoos*, in lucky, and unlucky days, is to them a source of great anxiety and suspense. Before they undertake a journey, they must consult the *Bramins*, who alone possess the book, which indicates the day and hour proper for their departure. When that hour arrives, neither rain nor storm could detain them; otherwise, they would perhaps have to wait several days longer, for an equally auspicious moment. But this is not all: if, on leaving his house, a person meets with any of the animals, which are deemed unfavourable omens, or certain birds that fly away in a particular direction, or other similar tokens, he must turn back and wait for a bet-

ter opportunity. The Bramins must, in like manner, be consulted previously to marriage, the building of a house, the sowing of the land, and in all, even the most unimportant circumstances of life. Half the days of the year, perhaps, are unlucky; and is it then astonishing, that, with such a belief, the Hindoos should be indolent and irresolute?

The Hindoos have also enchantments, which they deem irresistible, for exciting reciprocal passion in females of whom they are enamoured; they have others against secret snares, and the assaults of evil spirits; against their enemies, against envy and poison; others to render themselves invul-

nerable, to ensure victory in battle, to prolong their lives to a thousand years and more—in short, to overthrow all the laws of nature.

The Hindoos expiate slight and venial sins by means of pilgrimages, fasts, sacrifices, prayers and ablutions.

Pilgrimages are made to the rivers Ganges, Indus, Cavery, and Junna; to Benares and Jaggernaut, to the mountains of Tibet, and to other sacred places. The water of the Ganges is transported in sealed vessels to great distances from its banks. The devotees who carry it away, sell it at a price proportionate to the distance, or make presents of it to the rajahs, or other Hindoo princes, who never fail

to pay them handsomely for so valuable a gift.

Sometimes also pilgrimages are performed in consequence of a vow. It is very common to meet, on the high roads, whole families and caravans, repairing to some famous pagoda, to pay their thanksgiving to the deity, or to implore advice and relief for diseases of the soul and body.

People throng from all parts of India to the pagodas of Konjeveram, Trichinopoli, and Tanjore; that consecrated to Govinda, the god of health, at Tripeti, is also much frequented. When a Hindoo falls sick, he makes a vow to go in pilgrimage to the pagoda of Govinda. The pilgrim incessantly pro-

nounces the name of that idol during the whole journey.

Fasts generally precede any solemn festival. The Bramins observe them, and they prescribe a fast for the whole month of December, in commemoration of the victory won by Darma-rajah over Durgiodana.

The eleventh day after the new and full moon is a fast-day, but it is not universally kept: indeed, each individual holds particular fasts. Females fast in honour of Camdeo, the god of love, and on occasion of other festivals peculiar to themselves.

Prayers are recited in the pagodas. This act of devotion consists, according to the *Shaster*, one of the sacred books,

in repeating certain names of God, and explaining them at some length. The Hindoos have likewise processions, attended with singing and the sound of bells; it is at these processions that they offer sacrifices to idols.

They are persuaded that water removes contaminations of the soul as well as those of the body, and therefore use frequent ablutions. Any water is good, but more especially, that of the seven sacred rivers; and above all, the water of the Ganges. Ablutions are usually accompanied with prayers, repeated in a low tone: they consist in bathing in the Ganges, at the same time respectfully holding two or three straws, which are given for the purpose by aged

Bramins, and render the ablution more efficacious. People living at a distance from the Ganges, employ another kind of ablution, which is performed without going into the water. They pour water of the Ganges on the ground, over a space about as long as a man's body, lie down on it, and in this position repeat the customary prayers: they then kiss this ground, consecrated by the water of the sacred river, thirty times. During the whole of this ceremony, the right leg must be kept immoveable, which is rather a difficult point: with this exception the ablutions are an excellent institution, keeping up personal cleanliness, and contributing, especially in hot countries,

to the preservation of health. It was, no doubt, to prevent the people from neglecting, through indolence, so wholesome a practice, that the legislator of the Hindoos made it a religious duty.

The Coloran, which waters the Mysore, Madura, Tanjore, and Coromandel, is one of the rivers which the Hindoo devotees prefer for ablutions. The inhabitants of those parts await the swelling of the Coloran with as much impatience as is manifested by the people of Egypt, at the period of the inundation of the Nile. As soon as the water begins to flow into the different canals, formed for irrigating the land, they evince extreme joy. Hurrying to the river, they plunge into it,

in the persuasion, that this first water cleanses them from all sin, as it clears the canals from every kind of filth. In some places there are wretched passage-boats, in which they offer sacrifices, slaughtering a sheep at each extremity of the boat, and pouring the blood along its sides, to propitiate the god of the waters, by which they are, nevertheless, sometimes engulfed.

Every Hindoo who crosses the Indus, or Attock, is deemed perjured, and to have renounced the religion of Brama. It is also forbidden to pass the Caramansa, or accursed river. These prohibitions were undoubtedly designed to prevent emigration. The Bramins assert, that they only interdict the usual

ways of crossing rivers; and that if any person were to pass the Indus, or the Caramnasa, by leaping over, in an air-balloon, by some magical operation, or in any other unknown manner, he would not commit sin. The Bramins have a thousand subterfuges of this kind for all occasions. The Caramnasa may be forded in the dry season: nevertheless, when a Hindoo has to cross it, he pays a Musulman to carry him over, on his back, to the other bank, that his feet may not touch the accursed waters of that river; for the pious Hindoos believe, that the mere contact would deprive them of all the benefit of their long pilgrimages, and their religious austerities: and none, but

the inhabitants of the banks of the Carannasa are exempted from this effect.

The doctrine most generally received in Hindoostan, is that of the metempsychosis, or the perpetual transmigration of souls, from one body into another. According to this system, the souls of men, and those of brutes, are of the same nature, and both eternal; the difference of their functions proceeds solely from the difference of the organization of the bodies which they inhabit: the power is the same, the instrument alone differs.

The soul of the wicked, before it again animates a human body, passes into that of some animal, or even suc-

cessively into several animals, more or less mean, according as it has been more or less guilty. When it is polluted by atrocious crimes, it is doomed to abide for a long series of years, but not for ever, in a region of misery, or hell; for the Bramins shudder at the idea of our hell, that is, an everlasting punishment for transient faults, and deem it wholly incompatible with the justice and goodness of God. When these guilty souls have partly expiated their misdeeds in this place of torment, they begin a fresh series of transmigrations, first passing into plants, or even into stones, then into the eggs of disgusting insects, next into the bodies of less

mean animals, and so on till they again reanimate the human form.

The good are but few in number, and scarcely any individual is perfect. The souls of the good, after death, animate the bodies of men destined to enjoy honours, dignities, and wealth in this world; or, if they have nearly approached perfection, they are removed to the celestial abodes, where happiness is their portion; but this felicity is not eternal; for when they have enjoyed it for a time proportioned to their good actions, they return to earth in human form, there to earn a new period of celestial happiness, or if they misconduct themselves, to recommence a new

series of transmigrations. All the Bra-
mins agree respecting the principle of
this system, though they differ in opi-
nion on certain points.

According to some, the meteors,
vulgarly called falling stars, are the
souls of the *Deotas* descending to this
lower world, or those which, after
deserving heaven and enjoying celestial
felicity for a certain time, are sent back
to the earth, as we have just observed,
to reanimate human bodies; but, before
they can be born again in human shape,
they mingle with the elements, then
become herbs, plants, and fruit; and
still bound, as it were, in a state of
torpor and insensibility, they afterwards
circulate in the material substance of

the body till the moment of conception, when they burst their bonds and enter once more into the human form.

The metempsychosis furnishes the Hindoos with the means of explaining the reason, why some are fortunate and others unfortunate. Every good action, according to them, must be essentially rewarded, and every bad one necessarily punished. God would be unjust were he to dispense good and evil at random. If, therefore, one is born in a magnificent palace, to be honoured and respected, and to enjoy all the pleasures of life, while another is obliged to toil hard for a scanty subsistence, the reason is, because the latter is punished in this life for the sins committed by him in a

former life ; and the other, on the contrary, is rewarded for his good conduct in that preceding life. A sounder philosophy teaches us, that man may be happy in every condition in which Providence may place him : and yet, without adopting the absurd doctrine of fatalism, we cannot deny, that there are persons who seem doomed to misfortune, and whom an inevitable hand appears to persecute without intermission : while others, on the contrary, attain without exertion a pitch of prosperity surpassing their most sanguine expectations. The sight of prosperous wickedness is particularly distressing to the virtuous ; and with all our knowledge, we should be as much puzzled as the Hindoos to reconcile this

state of things with the goodness and justice of God, were it not for the cheering conviction of a future life.

The Hindoos believe moreover in predestination ; this idea causes them to endure, with stoic firmness, whatever may befall them ; and they console themselves under adversity in the persuasion, that every thing comes from God, and that the afflictions which they suffer in this world, in expiation of the sins they have committed in a former life, render them worthy of enjoying happiness in that which is to succeed.

The belief in the transmigration of souls excites in the Hindoos an abhorrence of animal food. The lower classes alone subsist upon the flesh of

animals ; but the pious Hindoo would be afraid, lest in killing an animal, or even crushing an insect, he might be taking the life of his father or one of his relations. We cannot help being struck with a strange inconsistency in this system ; for, since the souls of the dead pass into plants as well as animals, they ought to abstain alike from eating the one and the other.

The worshippers of Vishnu assert, that this deity illumines with a celestial light the souls of certain favourite devotees, and that he acquaints them with the various changes which have happened to them in the bodies they have animated. Some privileged spirits have even the power to quit their bodies

for a time, and to return to them at pleasure ; for which purpose it is sufficient to repeat a prayer called *mandiram*. The *Puranas*, or sacred books, record several instances of this kind, from among which father Bouchet, a Jesuit missionary, quotes the following :—

A prince prevailed upon a goddess to teach him the *mandiram* : unfortunately, the servant who was in attendance on him overheard the prayer, and learnt it by heart. One day, when the prince had disengaged his soul, after charging his faithless servant to take care of his body till his return, the latter thought fit to repeat the *mandiram*. His soul, instantaneously released from his body, hastened to ani-

mate that of the prince. The first thing the impostor did, was to cut off the head of his former body, that his master might not take a fancy to animate it. Thus the prince's soul was obliged to enter the body of a parrot, with which it returned to the palace. This story is current all over the east; and is to be found among the tales of the *Thousand and One days*. Pliny relates, in his *Natural History*, that a certain Hermotymus also possessed this admirable secret.

Did the doctrine of the metempsychosis originate in Egypt, and thence pass into India, and spread over the rest of Asia? or was it first taught by the Bramins, and received from them

by the Egyptian priests? Was Pythagoras the inventor of it, and did he communicate it to the Bramins when he visited India? or did both derive it from some anterior nation, now unknown, the existence of which M. Bailly has attempted to demonstrate? These questions have been frequently discussed, but will, perhaps, never be satisfactorily resolved. Be this as it may, if the metempsychosis is not of Indian origin, it must have been naturalized with great facility in Hindoostan. In that genial climate, where the soil produces, almost without culture, all that is necessary for the support of the inhabitants; where there is nothing to annoy them, excepting, perhaps, the

great heat, the intensity of which is, moreover, tempered by the winds, by the shade of large evergreen trees, and by the coolness diffused by numberless rivers and streams ; man has never had occasion to make war upon animals for a subsistence, and to spill blood.

Accordingly, it is a crime in India to kill and even to maltreat any animal: but independently of that universal benevolence which extends to all that breathes, there are animals which are more particularly the objects of the veneration of the Hindoos.

The cow is the most highly honoured : it is consecrated to all the gods generally, and whoever should presume to kill a cow, in a country subject to a

Hindoo prince, would be infallibly condemned to die. The Parias, who are the scum of all the castes, may alone eat the flesh of cows which have died naturally; but they are forbidden to kill them for the purposes of food.

An English soldier, who kept an inn, one day bought a very fat cow near Madras, and drove her home with the intention of killing her. Some Hindoos hastened to the colonel, and informed him that the butcher had, by mistake, sold a sow, which had for many years been kept and fed in their pagoda; and requested him to give orders for the restoration of the sacred animal, engaging to return the purchase-money. Fortunately, the cow was not yet

slaughtered : the colonel complied with their desire, and they led back the cow with loud demonstrations of joy to their temple.

The vulture is consecrated to Vishnu : it is called *garuda*, and the Hindoos, as soon as they perceive one, extend their hands towards it and pat their cheeks.

There are Bramins whose office it is to feed the vultures. One of these persons repairs to a spot, which is frequented by those birds, and calls them with a loud voice. Some of them are soon seen hovering over his head : he then throws into the air pieces of raw flesh, which the vultures catch before it falls. Though there may be eagles

and other birds flying about near the spot, none but the sacred vultures share in this distribution.

An English officer shot a vulture, not knowing the veneration paid to this bird by the Hindoos. A deputation immediately came to apply for the body of the bird, which was delivered to them and burned with great solemnity.

Brama is represented riding on the swan or the goose; and Sheeva is seated on the *mandi* or ox, which is consecrated to him. No sooner does a Hindoo perceive one of those animals, than he rises and begins to pray. The ape, with a whitish skin and a red face and beard, represents Hanooman. The elephant and a great number of other

animals also come in for a share of the veneration of the pious, either because some deity has appeared in their form, or received some service from them.

The Cobra di Capello, or hooded serpent, called on the coast of Malabar, *nalla-pamba*, is the object of a particular worship. Vishnu is frequently represented lying on this animal. The sudden appearance of one of these serpents is deemed sometimes a favourable, and at others, a sinister omen. It is the deity himself in this form, or at least a messenger from him, bringing rewards or punishments. Though this serpent is highly venomous, yet it is never killed, disturbed, or driven out

of the houses which it happens to enter. The most superstitious respect, caress, and adore it: they offer it milk and conduct it to the place to which it is accustomed to retire; they build a hut, or prepare a retreat for it, at the foot of some tree. The family with which one of these serpents takes up its abode, consider themselves lucky, and secure from poverty and misfortune: and if, as is but too frequently the case, any of its members is bitten, and falls a victim to his credulity, they merely say, that it is a punishment from God for some unknown sin. Father Tachard, the missionary, relates, that at Ganjam the women carry offerings of boiled rice, oil, milk, butter,

and flowers, to this serpent, under the idea of preserving their husbands and children from being bitten by it.

Though the cow and the ox are more highly revered by the Hindoos than any other animals, they are nevertheless employed by them, as among us, in the most arduous labour; and they are equally beaten with whips or sticks, when idle or restive.

OF THE RELIGIOUS SECTS OF THE
HINDOOS,
AND
PRINCIPALLY OF THE SECT
OF BUDDHA.

The religion of the Hindoos has its sects like every other. They amount to more than eighty, all of which agree in the principal points: they never involve themselves in discussions, and live at peace with one another, and with the professors of other religions. The most remarkable of these sects are, those of the *right hand* and of the *left hand*, the Seiks, the Banians, and Buddhists.

The two sects, known by the denomi-

nation of the *right and left hand*, divide nearly the whole peninsula of India. These sectaries consider one of their hands as impure, and use it only for private ablutions. They have, for a very long period, contended for the pre-eminence of their respective sects, and their quarrels anciently occasioned sanguinary wars. Neither the marriage nor funeral processions of the Hindoos of one hand, are allowed to pass through the quarters inhabited by those of the other.

Nanac, founder of the sect of the Seiks, was born about the middle of the fifteenth century. Actuated by a desire to put an end to the bloody wars which the Mahometans

were continually making on his countrymen, he endeavoured to reconcile the *Vedas* with the *Koran*, by demonstrating that his nation acknowledged but one Supreme Being, and by exhorting the Hindeos to renounce the idolatry which had crept in among them, and to return to the pure worship of their ancestors. The consequence of this attempt was, that, instead of effecting a reconciliation between the two parties, he formed a third, which was destined to kindle the most destructive wars, in the very country which the humanity of its founder was solicitous to preserve from all dissension. After the death of Nanac, his adherents, consisting of persons of all ranks, and of all reli-

gions, attributed to their prophet, in their zeal for his memory, the power of performing miracles; so widely had they already deviated from his principles!

The Seiks continued to increase in number, and as it appears, in power, till their fourth *guru*, or spiritual chief, built Randaspore, now called Armit-sar, which is their sacred city. They were not allowed to enjoy unmolested tranquillity; and in less than one hundred and fifty years from the death of Nanac, the persecutions which this peaceful sect experienced from the Musulmans, converted it into an association of intrepid warriors. Half a century later, the repeated cruelties of

these same Mahometans, and the murder of Teg Bahader, the chief of the Seiks, raised up, in the person of his son, the *guru* Govinda, a new champion and legislator, who extended the innovations in the religion both of the Mahometans and the Hindoos far beyond the limits to which Nanac had confined himself. He abolished all the distinctions of castes, and gave to his subjects the equality of civil rights. To infuse into them military valour and enthusiasm, he caused them to assume the name of *Sindh*, or lion, and ordered them to go constantly armed. He also enjoined them to suffer their beards to grow, and proscribed the use of tobacco. He forbade women to burn them-

selves on the funeral piles of their husbands. These arrangements were designed to separate them from the neighbouring nations.

The sacred books of the Seiks comprize both their history and their laws. One of them, called the *Adi-grant*, was composed by Nanac, and his four immediate successors; the other, the *Dassama-padeha-ka-grant*, or the book of the tenth *guru*, is by Govinda. These books the Seiks read in public, in their religious assemblies. The form of government of these people, under their ten *gurus*, was a republic under a spiritual chief, who was afterwards invested with the military authority, when the Seiks changed their character of

peaceful sectaries for that of warlike enthusiasts.

Since the death of Govinda, their last *guru*, they scarcely acknowledge any chief, even in the field of battle; and but for a kind of authority assumed over them by the *acalis*, a tribe of mendicants dwelling round *Armitsar*, who claim the right of guarding that city, and convoking the national councils, there would not be a more free people on the face of the earth.

The *Banians*, whom some authors have erroneously confounded with the *Bramins*, belong to the caste of the *Vaissya*. They carry on all sorts of commercial professions, and especially those of bankers, brokers, and agents.

They are spread all over India, and are particularly numerous at Bombay, Surat, and in all the neighbouring provinces. They believe, like all the Hindoos, in the transmigration of souls; and carry superstition, in regard to the abstaining from killing animals, using them for food, and hurting them, to a greater length than the Bramins themselves. When a Bramin happens to crush an insect, he expiates his sin by ablutions and prayer; but the devout Banians are much more scrupulous and rigid. Some of them fasten a piece of thin stuff over the mouth, lest a fly should chance to enter and be swallowed by them: others carry along with them a little brush, with which they lightly

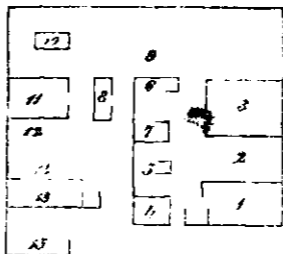
sweep the ground before they sit down, for fear of killing some insect. Many, for the same reason, keep their eyes fixed on the earth when they are walking. Some carry a small bag of sugar or flour, or a little pot of honey, and look for the nests of ants or other insects, to give them something to eat; others purchase the animals which their owners are about to slaughter, in order to save their lives. The European soldiers and sailors take advantage of this superstition, and pretend that they are going to kill some bird or other animal which they hold in their hands; when a Banian, who is passing, buys it of them and sets it at liberty.

These Banians have even founded at

Surat a hospital for sick, lame, and aged animals. This establishment covers a plain of about twenty-five acres, inclosed with walls, and containing houses to which the inmates retire to sleep and to shelter themselves from the weather. Carnivorous animals are not admitted. The birds are confined in cages, but the quadrupeds range about at liberty. It is asserted that some poor wretch is hired, from time to time, to lie among lice and other vermin, and to regale them with his blood: care is taken to bind him in such a manner that he cannot run away from the tormenting insects, or kill them in striving to rid himself of them.

This extraordinary hospital occupies

a space of about four hundred square rods, and forms a quadrangle. The following is a sketch of the ground-plan according to Anquetil du Perron:—



No. 1, is the lodging of the porter ; 2, is for sick camels and oxen ; 3, for sick apes ; in 4 there was a very aged land-tortoise, two feet and a half long, and one and a half high, a detestably

ugly creature, that could scarcely crawl. In 1775, Stavorinus found it still alive, though sixteen years before, at the period of Anquetil du Perron's visit, it was reported to be one hundred years old. It was fed with milk. When Stavorinus paid his second visit in 1777, it was dead. In No. 5, lived pigeons, and before ~~the~~ pigeon-house, cocks and hens; and in 6, rabbits. No. 7, was lattice-work, and 8, a house of two floors. In the open place marked 9, horned cattle and horses were grazing. No. 10, is a large tank or reservoir for water, which du Perron even terms a lake. In 11 and 12, live sick and infirm horned cattle and horses; and No. 13, is a distinct receptacle for such of those

animals as are afflicted with incurable diseases or complaints. No. 14, is lattice-work, and 15, is the remarkable apartment for those delectable insects, fleas, bugs, and lice. The French traveller asserts, that these vermin were fed with flour, sugar, and rice; but Ovington's statement of the hiring of poor wretches to supply them with a meal, seems more probable.

This hospital is supported by the charitable contributions of the Banians and some other Hindoos, who, for this purpose, impose a small annual tax on the profits which they derive from their professions. When a Banian has committed any trivial fault, the Bramins exact from him a fine for the benefit of

this hospital. The produce of these fines and contributions, amount, it is said, to the sum of six thousand rupees per annum, which is expended in hay, milk, grass, corn, and other necessaries for the institution.

The religion of Buddha now prevails chiefly in the island of Ceylon, and on the opposite coast of Siam and Pegu. It was long predominant in the Dekkan; but the Bramins have found means to banish it from Hindoostan. It is not exactly known to what country this reformer belonged. To judge from his statues and portraits, which are to be met with in different parts of India, and represent him with curly hair, and different features from those of the

Hindoos, we should take him for a foreigner. In the famous pagoda of Jaggernaut, he is represented, we are told, without head, hands, and feet, and with two eyes in the middle of his belly. Buddha appeared at the beginning of the *kali-youg* : he forbade the sacrifices of human victims, called *naramedha*, and of oxen and horses, called *gamedha* and *astamedha*, which were held on certain occasions, and were enjoined by the *Vedas*. He taught, that it is a horrid and impious action to inflict death, in any way and on any occasion whatever.

Some of the Bramins are of opinion, that Buddha is the same as Vishnu, who actually appeared by this name in one

of his numerous incarnations. A circumstance which seems to give some weight to this opinion is, that in this incarnation, Vishnu, like Buddha, prohibited the effusion of blood in sacrifices.

An ancient inscription, found in a cavern near Islamabad, and a translation of which is given in the *Asiatic Researches*, relates, that when Buddha descended from the region of souls, and assumed the human form in the womb of Mahamajah, wife of Sutadanna, rajah of Cailas, the body of that princess became a clear and transparent crystal, through which the divine infant, beautiful as a flower, might be seen kneeling and resting on his

two hands. After a pregnancy of ten months and ten days, the queen was desirous of visiting her father, and, having obtained permission from the rajah, her husband, she set out with a retinue suitable to her rank. One day, while walking and gathering flowers in a garden, near the road, she was suddenly seized with the pains of childbirth. The trees bowed down their branches to cover her with their foliage, and to afford her a support while she brought forth the divine infant. Brahma hastened in person to the spot with a vessel of gold, into which he put the child. He delivered him to Indra, who consigned him to the care of a young female, but the child, slipping from the

arms of this nurse, ran seven steps. Mahamaja then took him up and carried him to her palace. The Bramins, who flocked from all parts to see him, cast his nativity. The boy grew up, was named Sachia, and married Vasatara, daughter of Chinhidan. One day, after certain mysteries had been revealed to him, he resolved to quit his dominions. He set out, taking with him only one slave and a horse. Having crossed the Ganges, he arrived at Boucali, and there ordered his slave to return with the horse. The inscription adds, that he adopted the mode of life of the mendicants, and that Brahma himself, Indra, Naga, the king

of serpents, and the tutelary deities of the eight corners of the world, came to pay him homage and to serve him.

RELIGION OF BUDDHA.

The priests of Buddha style themselves *Rahan*; others call them *Talapins*. They acknowledge no other gods; according to them, all other religions are false, and theirs is the only one by means of which men can be saved: but yet they never persecute any individual for his religious opinions. One of the maxims of the worshippers of Buddha, or as he is also named, *Gaudama*, is this:—It is easy to extract with the nails, or with the *megnap* (nippers) a thorn that has run into the foot; but it is a very difficult task to

eradicate the doctrines of false gods from the heart of man."

Gaudama was at first human, like three other gods who preceded him in this world, Chauchasam, Gonugom and Gaspa. At the age of thirty-five years, he became a god, preached his law forty-five years, for the purpose of carrying salvation to all men; and at the age of eighty, ascended to *niebau*, or heaven. The five commandments of the law of Gaudama are the following:—

1. Thou shalt not kill any living animal, from the insect to the human being;
2. Thou shalt not steal;
3. Thou shalt not commit adultery;

4. Thou shalt not lie ;

5. Thou shalt not drink wine, or any other intoxicating liquor.

There are ten sins divided into three classes : the first comprehends murder, theft, adultery ; the second, lying, discord, hatred, useless words ; and the third, covetousness, envy, idolatry. There are also good works, the principal of which consists in giving alms to the talapoins.

The Buddhists believe, that the present world was preceded, and will be followed by another, and so on to all eternity. They attribute an incalculable number of years to the duration of a world and the interval which separates it from the next.

Human life has not always had and will not always have its present duration. The first inhabitants of the earth lived a number of years surpassing human imagination ; but life became shorter in proportion as the vices of men increased. There was a time when it did not exceed ten years. Those who then lived were sensible that it was necessary to be better than their forefathers ; and in proportion as their vices diminished, life was prolonged successively to twenty, thirty, forty, fifty, sixty, seventy, eighty, ninety, one hundred, a thousand, ten thousand years. This diminution and augmentation of human life are to occur four times in each world before it is destroyed.

The different worlds are destroyed in three different ways, by fire, water, or wind. A thousand years before the destruction is to commence, a *nat*, or genius, descends from the celestial abodes: dressed in mourning, with solemn look and dishevelled hair, he wanders through towns and country, proclaiming to mankind their approaching dissolution. When the world is to perish by fire, not a drop of rain falls for one hundred thousand years. Men and beasts perish; the sun and moon are darkened and disappear. Their places are occupied by two suns, one of which is always above the horizon, so that there is no night, and the heat becomes so intense, that the lakes and

rivulets are dried up. A third sun soon makes its appearance, then a fourth, a fifth, a sixth, a seventh, which dry up the rivers and seas. Our earth, and all the other inhabited spheres, the abodes of the *nats*, take fire and are dissolved and consumed.

When a world is to be destroyed by water, gentle rains begin to fall; these increase by degrees, and at length become so prodigious, that the whole universe is dissolved by them.

Lastly, when wind is to be the agent of its destruction, one hundred thousand years after the *nat* has announced the fatal event, the wind begins to blow and gradually increases in violence. It first raises the dust and sand, and as

It becomes stronger, it hurls enormous rocks and tops of mountains into the air. Lastly, the whole earth, and all the other worlds, as well as the habitations of the *nats*, are carried away, reduced to powder, and dispersed in the immensity of space.

Out of sixty-four worlds which are destroyed, fifty-six perish by fire, seven by water, and one by wind.

A new universe is formed by means of a heavy rain, resembling that which caused the destruction of the former. This immense mass of water fills the space which was occupied by the destroyed world, and it is gradually condensed and rendered solid by the wind. On the surface appears a first crust, on

which the genii fix their abode. The condensation continues, and from another crust are formed our earth, and one million ten thousand other similar worlds; lastly, the sun, moon, and stars. The genii assume the human form and inhabit the new world.

The Buddhists hold the doctrine of the metempsychosis, but their creed is somewhat different on this point from that of the Hindoos. The soul dies with the body, and from their dissolution is formed a new being, which, according as it has lived well or ill in its former state, becomes a man, a brute, or a *nat*. It again dies to be reanimated in another form, and so on, till, by a life of perfect purity, it attains the state

of *nieba*, or the blessed, in which it has no farther change to apprehend.

The *nats*, or genii, are divided into six classes. Their number is infinite. Some reside in the planets and the fixed stars : others in the earth, the waters, the mountains, and the woods. Some, under the superintendence of their chiefs, preside over the elements, govern the winds, the clouds, and rain ; others record, in a golden book, the good and bad actions of men, and render an account of them to their supreme chief. All of them have the power of changing their forms at pleasure, like the *deouta* of the Hindoos, to whom they bear a close resemblance.

In the centre of a large rock, Sila-

Putavi, in the bowels of a spacious island, situated opposite to the southern slope of Mount Mienmo, (the *Meru* of the Hindoos) is the *niria*, or hell. It consists of eight large hells, which lead to forty thousand smaller. At the gates of the former are seated the judges and their assistants, all appointed from among the *nuts*. Each hell has its particular name and punishments. The nature and duration of the punishment are proportioned to the heinousness of the crime. Conquerors, ministers who oppress the people, debauchees, drunkards, rogues, those who use false weights, plunderers of temples, poisoners, incendiaries, such as kill animals and sell their flesh, and magistrates who ac-

cept bribes, need but open the catechism of Buddha: they will find in it to what hell they will be consigned, and the nature and duration of the punishment that will there be inflicted on them for their guilt.

TALAPOINS.

The *talapoins*, or *rahans*, are, as we have observed, the priests of Buddha. They resemble the regular monks of catholic countries, and live, like them, in convents. The great and the opulent deem it a duty to found convents of this kind, which they place under the direction of a *zara*, or superior. These *zaras* enjoy a degree of consideration, proportioned to the wealth of their convents, and the number of the *rahans* under their authority. The greatest

and most important of the *zaras*, has the title of *zarado*: he is sumptuously lodged, attended by a numerous retinue, and no other person but the king is treated with such profound respect as he.

The talapoins are allowed to adorn their convents with pictures and gilding, and enjoy many other privileges. They display great simplicity in their dress and manners. Dr. Buchanan, who had the honour to visit a *zarado*, informs us, that in his dress there was nothing to distinguish him from the multitude, which lay prostrate at his feet. He adds, that, some years before, this *zarado*, being at Rangoun, went, like the other *rahans*, bare-

foot from door to door, collecting the rice that was given him by way of alms. This was, perhaps, no great effort of humility, for, wherever he went, the streets were covered with carpets, the people threw themselves at his feet, imploring his benediction, and the women hurried out of his way, such imperfect creatures being unworthy to appear in the presence of so holy a personage.

In the countries where the religion of Buddha prevails, it is rare to meet with a pauper. Near the convents there are, in general, tolerably good, nay sometimes, very handsome houses, built by pious persons for the accommodation of strangers and travellers. Any indi-

vidual whatever may pass the night there : he is sure to experience a kind reception from the *rahans*, and to want for nothing.

A criminal, who has the good fortune to be touched by a *rahan*, on the way to execution, obtains his pardon. The *rahans* frequently avail themselves of this privilege. They devote part of their time to the instruction of youth ; teaching boys to read and write, and initiating them in the knowledge possessed by the nation, particularly what relates to religion, history, and the laws, as well as the means of providing for their own subsistence, and relieving the unfortunate.

It is said, that in ancient times there

were convents of women; that such of them as dedicated themselves to a monastic life, entered in their youth into the priesthood, and continued till death to observe celibacy and the other rules of the *rahans*. These convents have been suppressed; some aged females, however, still perform a kind of sacerdotal office: they shave the head, dress in white, attend in the temples and at funeral ceremonies, and are, in some respect, servants to the *rahans*; but they never reside in the convent. In the libraries of the *rahans* are likewise to be found books, which treat of the manner of admitting females into holy orders, and of the rules of conduct which they ought to follow.

When a young man devotes himself to the service of Buddha, his admission is celebrated with great parade, and numerous ceremonies. Valuable offerings are presented to the *rahans*. The young candidate, dressed in velvet, richly laced with gold, is led about in procession for several days. Drums, hautboys, troops of musicians and dancers, young damsels, attired in muslin, embroidered with gold and silver, his relatives and their servants, the public functionaries, &c. compose the procession. When all the ceremonies are finished, he is conducted into the assembly of the *rahans*; his hair is cut off; he is stripped of his rich

garments, and clothed in the yellow dress of the convent; and he renounces his family, his relations, and the world.

OF THE VEDAS, AND OTHER SACRED BOOKS.

The principal sacred books of the Hindoos, are the Vedas. They are four in number; the *Rij-Veda*, the *Yayour-Veda*, the *Sama-Veda*, and the *Atarrona-Veda*. The Vedas, according to the Bramins, are the source of all knowledge. They issued from the mouth of Brama, at the time of the creation of the world; and his sons, who are *richeys*, that is, demi-gods or prophets, spread them over the earth for the instruction of mankind. The reading of them is forbidden to

every caste excepting that of the Bramins. The latter may read them, with certain precautions, to the Khattries; but any Bramin who should dare profane them, by reading them to any other castes, would be ignominiously expelled for ever from his own, and degraded to one of the lowest classes of the people. It would also be a sin never to be forgiven, in an individual of any other caste to read them for the purpose of gratifying a guilty curiosity.

The Bramins have always concealed their sacred books with such care, from the knowledge of the vulgar and the profane, that the existence of the *Vedas* was long denied in Europe: all doubt on this point has, however, since

been removed by their translation into the English language.

Dow relates an anecdote illustrative of the extreme reluctance of the Bramins to reveal the mysteries of their religion.

Acbar, the most powerful Mogul emperor, had been brought up in the Mahometan religion. On arriving at years of maturity, he was desirous of choosing his own creed, and to this end resolved to make himself acquainted with the different religions of his empire. As the priests are fond of making proselytes, especially among the great, the heads of all the sects were eager to initiate him into the mysteries of their faith: the Bramins alone obstinately

refused to comply with his desire: entreaties, promises and threats, were unavailing, and it was necessary to have recourse to artifice. Achar secretly sent to Benares a Hindoo boy, named Fietzi, who was passed off for the son of a Bramin. As such he was adopted by a Bramin, who brought him up as his own child, taught him the Sanscrit, and instructed him in the mysteries of the religion of Brama. Achar was about to be made acquainted with them, when love rescued for a time the secrets to which the Bramins attached so much importance. Fietzi, having conceived a passion for the daughter of his preceptor, fell at his feet, and with a flood of tears confessed the part

he had been induced to act. The exasperated Bramin snatched the dagger from his girdle, and raised it to dispatch the wretched Fietzi; but, at length, moved by his contrition and his tears, he pardoned him and gave him the hand of his daughter, on condition that he would not translate the *Vedas*.

The *Rij-Veda* contains, it is said, astrology, astronomy, natural philosophy, and the history of the creation of matter and the formation of the world. The *Yayar-Veda* treats of the religious and moral duties; and contains hymns in praise of the Supreme Being, and of the inferior intelligences. The *Sama-Veda* teaches all that relates to reli-

gious rites and ceremonies, fasts, purifications, penances, pilgrimages, sacrifices, prayers, offerings, &c.

We have already seen in the account of the first incarnation of Vishnu, that, at the moment when the *Vedas* issued from the four mouths of Brama, a dæmon, called Scancashur, stole them away, and hid them at the bottom of the sea, but that Vishnu, transforming himself into a fish, went in search of them.

Another dæmon, named Aigrida, stole them a second time from Brama, and carried them with him all over the world. Vishnu overtook him, and recovered the *Vedas* after severely punishing the thief.

We have likewise seen that a philosopher, named Vyasa, who lived at the beginning of the *Kali-youg* (the present age) collected the *Vedas*, which were till then detached, and formed with them a body of doctrine, which he divided into four books. This was all the share he had in them according to the Hindoos, who positively insist that he was not their author.

The Hindoos have a great number of other books, such as the *Upa-Vedas*, a kind of commentary on the *Vedas*; the *Tantra*; the *Mantra*; the *Agama* and the *Nigama*, which teach the art of enchantments; the six *Vedanga*, the first three of which treat of grammar, and the other three of mathe-

matics, religious ceremonies, &c. lastly, the *Derma*, the *Dersana*, the *Upadersana*, the *Mimansa*, and many others, which, according to the Bramins, embrace the whole circle of divine and human knowledge, by the general name of *Sastra*, a term which signifies *science*, and more particularly the *science of religion*.

The *Puranas*, or sacred poems, which some attribute to the above-mentioned Vyasa, and others with greater probability to different authors, are eighteen in number.

Valmichi, the first Indian poet, is the author of an epic poem, intituled *Ramajama*, several cantos of which have been translated into Italian.

The *Maharabata* of Vyasa is another not less celebrated poem among the Hindoos. The subject of it is the war waged by Durgiodana, king of Astanapura, assisted by his ninety-nine brothers, against Judistira or Damagda, the reputed son of Pandu.

The Hindoos have also a great number of dramatic works. *Sacotala*, or the *Fatal Ring*, composed by the poet Calidas, a century before the birth of Christ, has been translated from the Sanscrit into English, by Sir William Jones. We shall take occasion to notice the literature and poetry of the Hindoos more at length in another place.

END OF VOL. I.

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THE WORLD

IN MINIATURE;

EDITED BY

FREDERIC SHOBERL.

Hindoostan,

CONTAINING

A DESCRIPTION OF THE RELIGION, MANNERS,
CUSTOMS, TRADES, ARTS, SCIENCES,
LITERATURE, DIVERSIONS, &c.

OF

The Hindoos.

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HINDOOSTAN

En Miniature.

MANNERS OF THE HINDOOS.

THE life of the lower classes of the Hindoos is a succession of the severest labours and complete idleness ; but still it is easy to perceive a vestige of that ingenuity, which, in the most remote ages, enabled this nation to distinguish itself by its progress in the arts and sciences.

The mild manners and peaceable disposition of the Hindoos are proverbial ;

and it is extremely rare to see any one, especially of the higher classes, hurried by passion into the slightest excess, either in word or deed. The females of the upper classes are now almost as reclusive as those of the Musulmans, who have introduced into India their jealous precautions against the infidelity of the sex: but we find from their ancient poets, that they formerly enjoyed perfect liberty, unshackled by any other restraints than what the laws of society and decorum impose upon women among civilized nations. Sacontala, the adopted daughter of a holy Bramin, and the heroine of an interesting drama, to which we shall, hereafter, have occasion to advert, received strangers, and

performed all the duties of hospitality towards them. When Dusmantha, a character of the same drama, was absent from his capital, his mother governed in his stead. Women were admitted as witnesses in the courts of justice, and when the accused was a female, their evidence was even received in preference. It is unnecessary to adduce further examples: all the Hindoo tales are filled with circumstances which attest the civilization of India in the remote ages, when the courts of that country were adorned with the charms of literature, and with that chivalrous gallantry, which, by exalting the women, perhaps above the rank for which nature designed them, softens the manners of

the men, and produces that politeness, which is the bond of society, and which the refined, but unrestricted intercourse of the two sexes, can alone maintain in a warlike nation.

The women of the inferior castes follow the same professions as their husbands; they carry burdens, cultivate the land, and are engaged in other equally laborious occupations.

The daily life of the Hindoos admits of but little variety, every action being, as it were, prescribed by law. The *puranas* contain the rules relative to the manner and time of eating: they also enumerate the places in which it is not lawful for a Hindoo to take his repast, and the persons whom he may allow to

eat with him. They are particularly strict in regard to the position which he must assume in sitting down, the quarter toward which he must turn, and the precautions he must take to avoid being touched by any thing impure. After washing his hands and feet, and rinsing his mouth with water, the Hindoo seats himself, on a stool or a cushion, before his plate, which is set on the ground, on a smooth spot that has been swept clean, and is of a square form, if for a Bramin ; triangular, if for a *khattry*, or person of the second caste ; circular, if for a *vaisya*, the third caste ; and in the shape of a crescent, if for a *sooder*, the fourth caste. He bows to the dish that is brought him, and lifts

up the plate in his left hand and blesses it. Before he begins eating, he turns his hand round the plate, or rather, he goes round it himself, in order to keep aloof from others; he then offers five pieces to Yama, the Pluto of the Hindoos; washes his mouth with a little water; offers five more morsels to the five senses; and having wetted his eyes, takes his meal in silence, helping himself with the fingers of his right hand.

Rice is the ordinary food of the natives of India: our wheaten bread is not used excepting in the European settlements, and the corn for it is obtained from Guzerat, Bengal, and other northern provinces. In Guzerat and other districts where rice is rare, a kind of

grain called *nili*, or *ginari*, is employed in its stead. The poor breakfast on *cangi*, which is a thick decoction of rice.

Curry is the most common dish: it is a kind of stew made in various ways with meat and fish. The castes, which are obliged to abstain from animal food, substitute fruit or culinary vegetables in their stead. The sauce coloured with saffron or cucumbers, is seasoned with all sorts of spices, and particularly with long pepper. Rice boiled in water is eaten with the curry.

At night they take nearly a similar kind of soup, which in the Malabar language is called *mulligitaony*.

These dishes are very highly seasoned with spices, which are considered

necessary for health, and are recommended by all intelligent physicians to Europeans, on their first arrival in the country.

Butter, milk, sugar, vegetables, roots, and fruit of all kinds, constitute, with rice, the whole diet of the Bramins, who would shudder with horror at the sight of our tables, covered with skeletons and carcasses, as they call them.

We are nevertheless assured, that there is among the Hindoos, a sect called Paramahansa, esteemed a high caste too, who devour the dead bodies which are found in great number in the Ganges. Moor, in his Hindoo Pantheon, relates, upon the most authentic information, that individuals of this disgust-

ing sect have been seen near Benares, floating down the river upon a corpse, and feeding upon it. They are said to consider the brain as the most delicious morsel. Mr. Forbes, also, in his *Oriental Memoirs*, asserts, as a well-known fact, that in some of the districts contiguous to Bengal, there is a tribe called *sheep-eaters*, who seize the animal, and actually devour it alive, wool, skin, flesh, and entrails !

The Hindoos, with some few exceptions, use neither chairs nor tables : they sit cross-legged on carpets, cushions, or rush mats ; they have neither knives, forks, nor table-cloths, and use nothing but their hands to eat with. Their victuals are put on large smooth banana-

leaves, curiously cut into the form of plates, and they have fresh ones for every meal.

In the higher castes, the women never eat with the men.

The Hindoos, and especially those of the superior castes, make marks upon the breast, arms, and forehead, with a whitish powder, composed of the ashes of cow-dung dried and burned, raspings of sandal-wood, saffron, &c. The worshippers of Vishnu have a red and yellow horizontal stripe on the forehead, those of Sheeva a vertical stripe. The Bramins furnish the powder employed for this purpose.

The wives of the Bramins keep collecting, as long as they live, great

quantities of cow-dung, which they dry and reduce to powder. They store it up till they die, and their bodies are completely covered with it on the pile on which they are burned.

The same material, diluted with water, is used in India for giving solidity to the floors of houses, which, for the wealthy in general, as well as for the poor, are made of stamped earth. This earth, being wetted with the diluted dung, becomes hard and solid.

The Hindoos are accustomed to rub the body, and especially the head, from time to time, with oil. This operation is deemed refreshing and wholesome, as it tends to check excessive perspiration: an hour or two afterwards they

never fail to wash and perfume themselves.

The manners of the Hindoos are mild, simple, and modest: there are, however, some exceptions. The Rajpoots, the Mahrattas, the Rohillas, &c. who inhabit the northern part of India, are bold, warlike people; the Polygars and the Maravis, in the Carnatic, are equally so. They frequently sally forth from their woods and mountains, and ravage the fertile plains around them, which were once their own, and in which the present possessors have not been able to establish themselves so firmly as to have nothing to dread from their incursions.

The Hindoos never ridicule the man-

ners and customs of other nations, how extraordinary soever they may appear to them: unalterably attached to their own usages, they respect those of others. They are prudent, polite, docile, obliging, in so far, at least, as they are allowed to be by their religion, which forbids all intercourse with foreigners, and even with their own countrymen of a different caste. They frequently tolerate and excuse in a stranger what they would severely punish in one of their own people. However cruel the despotism by which they are oppressed, however abject the poverty into which they are plunged, neither the scowl of revenge, nor sullen discontent is ever expressed in their placid countenances.

They are fond of conversation, pleasantry, and witticisms ; and take particular delight in listening to stories of warriors and heroes, fairies, enchantments, and metamorphoses of the gods ; and the more marvellous these stories are, and the more they resemble circumstances in their mythology, the more they relish them. The tone of their voices, especially in Malabar, is accentuated and singing, and they gesticulate a great deal when they speak.

Happy the people, exclaims a traveller, who are satisfied with a little rice for their food, a piece of linen for their garment, and a mat for a bed. It might be supposed that men who have so few wants would be strangers to

avarice; yet this is the strongest and most predominant passion among the Hindoos: it stifles the seeds of all their virtues. This thirst of gold is the more extraordinary, as they neither can nor know how to employ it: for in India it is a crime to be rich; despotism is never at a loss for pretexts to strip its unfortunate subjects, and for this reason, immoveable property is in less request than gold, jewels, and precious stones, which may be easily concealed or carried away. The opulent would be afraid of betraying their easy circumstances, if they were to expend any considerable sum in the embellishment of country-houses or gardens, in the improvement of their estates, or in

the erection of elegant and commodious habitations: they therefore covet wealth merely for the purpose of hiding and hoarding it.

The tardiness of the Hindoos in taking a resolution absolutely degenerates into a vice: they sometimes spend whole days in deliberating, when they ought to be acting; and they are perhaps still slower in executing than in resolving.

The scrupulous performance of promises is a virtue of which the people of India have not the least idea. When a European is bargaining with a Hindoo, he cannot help loosing his patience on finding the business deferred from day to day, always with fresh excuses and

fresh lies, for which the latter, instead of being in the least ashamed of them, is rather disposed to take credit to himself, because they serve to extricate him from some embarrassment or other. The European at first supposes that he has to deal with simple inexperienced people; but he soon discovers how egregiously he is mistaken.

The Italian author of *Letters on India* one day reproached a native of Malabar, a man of good understanding, and who knew something of the character of the different nations of Europe, with that habit of lying which disgraces his countrymen. "There is no nation," replied he calmly, "but has its defects. The Englishman, in his gloomy melancholy,

blows out his brains about a trifle ; the Portuguese stabs you almost in a joke ; the Frenchman is every moment drawing his sword ; and you Italiaus——” here he paused, recollecting that it was to one of this nation that he was speaking, and then proceeded:—“ you would not allow us poor Malays a bit of a lie, the only weapon that is left us.” This defence was not much amiss ; for, in general, if a Hindoo breaks his word, it is because it has been extorted from him, and it was impossible for him to keep it.

A great virtue, or rather a great vice of the Hindoos, is patience. To this quality they owe most of the wrongs they have suffered from the tyranny of

foreigners : if they have not strength to resist, they ought to know how to endure.

We are assured in numberless books that the Hindoos are an industrious nation ; but if the truth must be spoken, this industry consists rather in being content with little, than in judicious efforts to multiply the enjoyments of life. The arts have made but little progress among them : with the exception of cotton cloths and the beautiful Cashmere shawls, India furnishes Europe with scarcely any thing worth mentioning. The sciences are still farther behind-hand, and there is not perhaps a country on the face of the earth where a greater number of persons pass

their lives in doing nothing ; they frequently repeat these words of one of their authors : “ It is better to sit than to stand, to lie than to sit, to sleep than to wake, and death is preferable to all things.”

Nothing can equal the slowness of workmen who are hired by the day : it is necessary to be constantly overlooking and urging them. Their idleness excites the utmost impatience in the active European who employs them. The price of labour is in general moderate ; but the little work they get through makes it come very high. A European workman does more in one day than a Hindoo in two or three : but this is not all, for the latter, before

he sets about a job, never fails to apply for money on account, upon pretext that he is too poor to procure the implements or materials for which he has occasion. For the rest, they are extremely clever, and produce by dint of patience, with rude tools, what our most skilful workmen could not execute without the best instruments.

Filial piety is one of the most conspicuous virtues of the Hindoos: it is not rare to see children stint themselves of necessaries that their parents may not want for any thing. Such as have the means make offerings annually to the gods, and give alms to the poor, in memory of their deceased parents.

On the death of the father of a family,

the eldest son supplies the place of a parent to his brothers, and they pay him the submission and reverence which a father has a right to expect from his children : even his mother herself is in some measure subject to him, and can claim nothing more than a dower or allowance for her support. In short, we here find in almost all families what is too rarely met with among the most civilized nations, genuine affection, domestic union, and a real solicitude to be of service to one another. The greatest affront that can be offered to a Hindoo is to speak contemptuously of his parents, and especially of his mother. Those who have no children frequently adopt poor orphans.

The Hindoos of the superior castes are no strangers to the sentiment of honour. An Englishman having taken one of his servants of the caste of the Rajpoots, a-hunting with him, the latter let loose a dog at an improper time, at which his master was so enraged, that he struck him several blows with a stick. The Rajpoot receded a few steps, and looking at his master with astonishment rather than anger, he drew forth a dagger: "This," said he "should avenge my honour, but I cannot forget that I have eaten your bread." With these words he plunged the dagger into his heart and expired. It is remarked that a story precisely similar is related of an African negro, and the scene of

the catastrophe is laid in the West Indies.

The Hindoo women frequently accompany their husbands to battle, and perish by their side. Some, that they might not survive their dishonour, have dispatched themselves with their own hands; others have earnestly solicited their husbands to kill them, lest they should fall into the power of a victorious enemy: nay, the troops composing whole garrisons have cut one another's throats rather than surrender. In short, there are to be found among the Hindoos examples of fidelity, fortitude, and all the virtues which confer honour on humanity. We shall be disposed to forgive their vices if we but

pay attention to the source from which they flow. There are institutions, civil and religious, the baneful influence of which necessarily renders man deceitful, indolent, mischievous, and stupid. If the civil and religious system of the Hindoos were not so vicious, living as they do in a country blest with so genial a climate, where nature provides almost spontaneously for those wants which elsewhere rouse all the passions into commotion, they would, probably, be the most virtuous of mankind.

Dr. Tennant, a mild, unprejudiced observer of the Hindoos, a man of learning and piety, who made his researches among the people whom he

describes, thus pourtrays their situation:—

The Hindoo superstition makes no provision for the instruction of the great body of the people. The vedas, puranas, and other sacred books, contain, it is said, a copious system of the most unexceptionable morality; and from the specimens already translated, this must be in part admitted. But the canonical books of the Hindoos have always been regarded as a bequest too sacred to be committed to vulgar hands: to the far greater part of society they are strictly forbidden, and are doomed to remain, in the most emphatic sense, a dead letter. Nothing can equal the ignorance of the

great body of the people, on every subject relating to religion, morals, and literature. Few of them can explain the genealogy or attributes ascribed to their deities. They do not understand the meaning of the ceremonies they attend; and the nature and obligations of their duty they may obscurely feel, but are wholly incapable to describe. The inconvenience of ignorance so gross and universal is too obvious to require elucidation; it renders the mass of the people not only dupes to the artifices of priestcraft, but subjects them to the imposition of every charlatan who pretends to skill in any art or science whatever. The charms, incantations, and exorcisms that here make a part of the

medical art clearly show that the grossest impositions in other matters, as well as religion, may be turned to account among an uninformed multitude.

There is no end to the delusions of superstition, nor any bounds to the cruelties to which it can instigate people the most gentle and timid with which history has made us acquainted. Some are persuaded to regain their lost rank in society by precipitating themselves naked, from a great height, upon spikes or edged weapons ; others pierce their skin with a hot iron ; in short, cruelties too horrid for recital, and too extravagant to obtain belief, daily provoke our pity and indignation, amidst a people famed for humanity in every part of the

world. In almost every action of his life, the Hindoo is under the immediate influence of his superstition: his prayers and offerings to his gods; his purifications and ablutions in the river; his dressing and eating his victuals; the objects which he touches; the companions with whom he associates, are to him all intimately and equally connected with religion and the everlasting welfare of his soul. If there is any part of his conduct with which his religious ideas have no concern, it is his moral character. In doing justly, or loving mercy, he is apparently left to act as he pleases; but if in the most trivial action, he violates the rights of superstition, he is, in this life, deprived of all

the comforts of society, and in the next, condemned to animate the body of some noisome reptile, or contemptible animal.

The ignorance of the great body of the natives of India has shaded their character with a diffidence and timidity, which has not only rendered them the slaves of their own monarchs, or foreigners, in every age, but has degraded them, in some measure, to an inferior rank among human beings. From this condition, which has so often called forth the contempt of the brave, and the compassion of the wise, you in vain endeavour to raise them, while their intellects are chained down by the multiplied fetters of their degrading super-

stitution. The higher orders of the Bramins, whose duty it is to undertake this work, and who are perhaps alone able to effect it, are the least likely to make any such attempt, as the following anecdote will sufficiently demonstrate :—

An English gentleman, extremely fond of natural and experimental philosophy, being intimate with a liberal-minded Bramin, who had been educated at Benares, or some other celebrated college, they generally passed the morning together. The Bramin read English books, searched into the Encyclopædia, and profited by the best philosophical instruments. The gentleman, on receiving a valuable solar

microscope, as a present from Europe, showed it with rapture to his Hindoo friend, and in opposition to the scheme of the metempsychosis, discovered to him the innumerable animalculæ which must be devoured by the Bramins, with every fruit and vegetable they eat. After a full display of the wonders produced by the new apparatus, the Englishman, instead of seeing his friend delighted, observed him to be unusually thoughtful, and at length he silently withdrew. At his next visit he requested the gentleman to sell him the microscope: to this the latter objected, observing that it was a present from a friend in Europe, not to be replaced, and while in his possession, would af-

ford them mutual gratification. The Bramin offered him a very large sum of money, or any Indian commodity of equal value, in hopes of obtaining it, without effect: at last, overcome by incessant importunity, the gentleman presented him with the microscope. A gleam of joy flashed across the Bramin's countenance on obtaining possession of the object he had so ardently desired. They were then in a veranda overlooking the garden, with some kind of artificial rock-work, composed of flints and rough stones. The Bramin, grasping the instrument, descended with a quicker motion than is customary with his caste, into the garden, where he laid the microscope on the

lowest step of the veranda, and seizing a large stone, smashed it to pieces, before his astonished friend could prevent its destruction. He flew into a violent passion, and in his heat upbraided the Bramin with ingratitude, ignorance and fanaticism. As usual with his caste he bore it all patiently, and respectfully withdrew, saying, when he was cool he would pay him a visit and explain his reasons. A few days afterwards he returned, and after a polite, if not a welcome reception, he thus addressed his friend:—"Oh! that I had remained in that happy state of ignorance in which you first found me! yet will I confess, that as my knowledge increased, so did my pleasure,

until I beheld the last wonders of the microscope. From that moment I have been tormented by doubt, and perplexed by mystery: my mind, overwhelmed by chaotic confusion, knows not where to rest, nor how to extricate itself from such a maze. I am miserable, and so must continue to be, till I enter on another stage of existence. I am a solitary individual among a hundred millions of people, all educated in the same belief with myself, all happy in their ignorance! so may they ever remain! I shall keep the secret within my own bosom, where it will corrode my peace and break my rest; but I shall have some satisfaction in knowing that I alone feel those

pangs, which, had I not destroyed the instrument, might have been extensively communicated and rendered thousands miserable ! Forgive me, my valuable friend ; but bring hither no more implements of knowledge and destruction.”

Those polemical disputes in religion and politics, which in Europe sometimes disturb society, but which always awaken curiosity and invigorate the powers of intellect, are unheard-of in India. The Hindoo shelters himself from such turmoils in a total apathy or listlessness of thought, more resembling the stillness of the grave or annihilation itself, than the common efforts of a rational being.

The sciences of India and all the more liberal arts are at present, and always have been, confined to the great and the learned alone. The moral and theological knowledge possessed by a few in the higher ranks, for many ages, is as completely beyond the reach of the common people, as if it did not exist : of consequence it must prove of little service in promoting their interests. The same thing may be affirmed of every branch of knowledge. The portion possessed by nineteen in twenty of the whole community is comparatively nothing. To the power of habit and the influence of custom alone they are consigned for the direction of themselves. Reason, inert and feeble as in them it

must prove, has little share in what we justly regard as its peculiar province. In such circumstances, certainly no people can be more entitled to indulgence towards their weakness and errors; and there is, certainly, none who have stronger claims on our sympathy and tenderness. Britons now occupy the places of their native princes, and the blessings of protection, instruction, and encouragement in virtue which are there too frequently withheld, Providence has bestowed upon us as a sacred duty to dispense.

The reader will excuse the introduction of the following beautiful apostrophe on this subject, from the pen of Mr. C. Grant —

Britain, thy voice can bid the light descend;
On thee alone the eyes of Asia bend!
Let gentle arts awake at thy behest,
And science sooth the Hindoo's mournful
 breast.

In vain, has nature shed her gifts around,
For eye or ear, soft bloom or tuneful sound;
Fruits of all hues on ev'ry grove display'd,
And pour'd profuse the tamarind's gorgeous
 shade.

What joy to him can song or shade afford,
Outcast so abject, by himself abhorr'd?
While chained to dust half struggling, half
 resign'd,

Sinks to her fate the heaven-descended
 mind,

Disrob'd of all her lineaments sublime,
The daring hope, whose glance outmeasured
 time,

Warm passious to the voice of rapture
 strung,

And conscious thought that told her whence
 she sprung.

At Brama's stern decree, as ages roll,
New shapes of clay await the immortal soul;

Darkling condemn'd in forms obscene to
prowl,
And swell the melancholy midnight howl.
Be thine the task, his drooping eye to cheer,
And elevate his hopes beyond this sphere;
To brighter heavens than proud Someera
owns,
Though girt with Indra and his burning
thrones.
Then shall he recognize the beams of day,
And fling at once the four fold chain away;
Through every limb a sudden life shall
start,
And sudden pulses spring around his heart:
Then all the deaden'd energies shall rise,
And vindicate their title to the skies.

It is impossible, observes the philanthropic author of the *Oriental Memoirs*, to calculate the effects which may ultimately be produced by Asiatic researches, and the noble establishment of the college at Calcutta. From

the revival of science, learning, and true philosophy on the banks of the Ganges, we may expect to see the temples of Vishnu consecrated to the worship of Jehovah, and braiminical groves, now seminaries for astrology, geomancy and frivolous pursuits, become the seats of classic learning and liberal sentiments. The climate of India does not militate against patriotic virtue and manly attainments, although it may in some degree depress their energy. Art and science, nurtured in Asia, will, under the auspices of peace and liberty, resume their influence over the fertile regions of Hindoostan. Philosophy, religion, and virtue, attended by liberality, taste, and elegance, will re-

visit a favourite clime : poetry, music, painting, and sculpture, encouraged by the genius of Britain, may there strew the path of virtue with many a fragrant flower.

Under every form of oriental government, a horrid system of oppression pervades all classes of society, so that it is almost impossible, out of the British dominions, to find an Asiatic of any caste or tribe, who, like the English country gentleman, in the middle walk of life, enjoys his patrimonial inheritance surrounded by domestic happiness and rural pleasures. A system of oppression prevails from the throne to the zemindar. The following circumstance happened at Tattah, on the Indus,

the residence of the Mahometan prince of Scindy, who, like other oriental despots, permits his officers to amass wealth by every means in their power, and then obliges them to disgorge their plunder.

The collector of the customs at Tattah, was a Hindoo of family, wealth, and credit. Lulled into security from his interest at court, and suspecting no evil, he was surprised by a visit from the vizir, with a company of armed men, to demand his money, which, being secreted, no menaces could induce him to discover. A variety of tortures were inflicted to extort a confession: one was a sofa, with a platform of tight cordage in network, covered with a *chintz palampore*,

which concealed a bed of thorns placed under it. The collector, a corpulent Banian, was then stripped of his *jama*, or muslin robe, and ordered to lie down on the couch; the cords, bending with his weight, sunk on the bed of thorns; those long and piercing thorns of the *baubel*, or forest acacia, which being placed purposely with their points upwards, lacerated the wretched man, whether in motion or at rest. For two days and nights he bore the torture without revealing the secret: his tormentors, fearing he would die before their purpose was effected, had recourse to another mode of compulsion. When nature was nearly exhausted, they took him from the bed and supported him

on the floor, until his infant son, an only child, was brought into the room, and with him a bag containing a fierce cat, into which they put the child, and tied up the mouth of the sack. The agents of cruelty stood over them with bamboos, ready at a signal to beat the bag, and enrage the animal to destroy the child. This was too much for a father's heart; he produced his treasure, and on his recovery was sent for to court, invested with a robe of state, and exalted to a high situation in another province, there to accumulate more wealth, and to be again subject to the capricious cruelty of a needy despot.

Another act of tyranny sometimes practised by the Mahrattas, is called

the sheep-skin death. On this occasion the culprit is stripped naked, and a sheep being killed, the warm skin of the animal is immediately stretched to the utmost, and sewed tight over the prisoner's body. He is then conducted to the flat roof of the prison, and exposed to the fervour of a tropical sun; the skin, contracting by the heat, draws with it the flesh of the agonized wretch, until putrefaction, hunger, and thirst, terminate his sufferings.

The features of the Hindoos of both sexes, differ, in general, but little from those of Europeans. The different castes have, nevertheless, a peculiar physiognomy; and though it might not be an easy task to describe wherein this

difference consists, it does not escape the eye of the observer. In the same manner we distinguish, without difficulty, a German from a Frenchman, an Englishman from a Spaniard, and a Dutchman from an Italian.

The Hindoos are not inferior in stature to the Europeans, but they are more elegantly shaped, and more active, though at the same time less muscular and robust. This is usually attributed to the heat of the climate, but is owing also to other causes; such as a diet frequently unwholesome, and always insufficient; the premature intercourse of the sexes, and the neglect of exercise. So much at least is certain, that those Hindoos who follow labo-

rious occupations and live upon more substantial food are quite as hale and strong as Europeans; and some of them have been known to cut off the head of a buffalo with a single stroke of a scimeter.

But for their colour, the Hindoo women might vie in beauty with those of any European nation: they are surpassed by none in delicacy, just proportion, and regularity of features, and their eyes are the finest, perhaps, in the world. They possess, above all, an inexpressible charm, an air of infantine simplicity, and modest graces which forbid neither vivacity nor wit, and which the women of Europe would in vain attempt to imitate. Beauty, however, in Hindoostan, is a flower that fades

more speedily than in other countries: a female is marriageable at the age of ten or twelve years, and begins to be old at twenty or twenty-five.

The sex is held in perpetual dependence. According to the laws of Menu, the daughter is dependent on her father in childhood; on her husband as soon as she becomes a wife; on her sons after the death of her husband; on the near relations of her husband if she has no sons; if he has none, on her father's relatives; and lastly, on the sovereign, in default of paternal kinsmen.

All the natives of India marry, with the exception of a few fanatics, who devote themselves to celibacy. It is a duty prescribed by religion; it is one

of the most sacred and the most laudable actions of human life, and a title to the special protection of heaven. Celibacy, on the other hand, when it has not absolute necessity to plead in its excuse, is a disgraceful and infamous state, inasmuch as it is contrary to the design of nature and providence. The Hindoos think that it is the duty of every one who has received life to give it in his turn.

The Hindoo who proposes to marry, finds every one inclined to promote his design. The very laws allow him to have recourse to lies, if these can contribute to the success of the match which he has in view. The poorest, therefore, have no scruple to marry,

notwithstanding the despotism of the government. It is true that in this happy climate man has but few wants, and easily finds the means of satisfying them. The laws of marriage, moreover, are not very strict in most of the castes. If the husband is dissatisfied with his wife, he parts from her and seeks another: and the wife acts in the same manner in regard to her husband; not that a divorce can be obtained without reason, but the matter is not very closely inquired into, especially when both parties agree in soliciting it.

Polygamy is lawful in India, but it is rare excepting among the rich. The poor are content with one wife at a time; and when they have had male

children by them, they seldom part from them as long as they live. The Hindoos may marry their cousins, and the daughters of their sisters, but not those of their brothers. They have no scruple to marry several sisters at the same time, or to live publicly with them : but it is not lawful for two brothers to wed two sisters.

The Hindoo women employ themselves in their household concerns : they are good mothers, submissive and faithful wives. The ambition and extravagance which so often ruin European ladies and their families are unknown to them ; they give neither balls nor routs, neither parties nor entertainments. The poorest consider it as a

humiliating state and a real misfortune to have no family ; and they spare neither prayers to the gods, nor alms to the poor, nor offerings to the Bramins, to obtain children. Some are seen performing long journeys, with two or three little children, whom they lead by the hand or carry alternately on their backs, when they are tired.

The women are forbidden to read and write, the Hindoos being persuaded, that all the accomplishments which they might acquire would spoil that simplicity of manners which is requisite for domestic happiness. Hence none but courtezans aspire to a variety of talents and attainments : they are no strangers to literature and poetry, and music and

dancing are their favourite occupations. They form a distinct class, and are not doomed to infamy as among us. We shall have occasion to treat of them hereafter.

We are assured, that in the Carnatic, near Tinavelly, there is a tribe which is distinguished by an extraordinary custom: the women must not suffer themselves to be seen by any man, not even by their husbands, who never visit them but in the dark. They live shut up in apartments where they have no other company than females of the same tribe, and where they employ themselves in weaving mats and such-like occupations. Their sons are taken from them at the age of three or four years, and

are never afterwards suffered to see their mothers. When they are ill, they are attended exclusively by women of their own tribe; and after death their husbands sew them up in a sack before they are conveyed to the funeral pile. This tribe, which was never very numerous, is daily decreasing, so that it is now reduced to a few families.

In the Carnatic, and other provinces, we also find a small tribe, the members of which make a point of fasting on such days, when the sun is so obscured by clouds as not to be seen at least for a few moments. In the rainy season they must frequently be obliged to fast.

Among the Hindoos on the Malabar coast, and likewise in all the southern

part of the peninsula, there is another custom which is not less singular. When a young female becomes marriageable, the day on which she is promised, that of her marriage, and at the birth of a son, her female friends and relatives assemble at her house, and there, by way of expressing their joy, and acquainting her neighbours with the happy event, they all together set up, from time to time, a long howl, which would rather be taken for a cry of grief than for a demonstration of joy.

The passion of love and its excesses seem to be unknown to the Hindoos, though they form the subject of almost all their books. The facility with which

they gratify it does not allow it time to acquire intensity ; for neither the Hindoo girl, nor her parents, have the cruelty to keep a young man of their caste, who solicits her hand, long in suspense ; and one of a different caste never aspires to what he knows it is impossible for him to possess. They thus enjoy the pleasures of love without feeling any of its pangs.

A Hindoo never appears before a prince or grandee without carrying him some present, especially if he has a favour to solicit : this custom is of the highest antiquity, and prevails throughout all Asia. In Europe, when a sovereign travels, he commonly displays his liberality in donations to the lower

classes and the poor : a Hindoo prince, on the contrary, accepts the smallest gifts from the meanest of his subjects. These unfortunate wretches lay their presents in the most respectful manner at his feet, and think themselves amply remunerated in the opportunity they have enjoyed of obtaining so near a view of their oppressor.

When a Hindoo or Musulman enters the house of his superior or equal, he always leaves his shoes or slippers at the door. This part of the dress is considered as the basest ; and a blow with a slipper is, in Hindoostan, the most ignominious and the most unpardonable of affronts.

It is curious to observe the way in

which a Hindoo behaves, when he has a favour to solicit of a grandee of his own nation, or even of a European. He never proceeds directly toward his object, but beats a long time about the bush, talking of totally different matters from that which has brought him to you. He watches your looks, your motions and your words, to discover what humour you are in at the time, though he has taken good care to make inquiries on that point of your servants. If you are not in a good humour, he strives to divert your thoughts by degrees from the subject with which he supposes them to be engaged; and if he cannot prepare you to receive his application in a favourable manner, he

takes his leave without saying a word about it : but if he thinks the moment auspicious, after telling you several times that he has called for no other purpose than to inquire how you do, and talking a long while on indifferent subjects, he astonishes you by soliciting some favour, or by the mention of some business, of the utmost importance.

The Hindoos write on long palm-leaves prepared and dried for the purpose ; they use a style of iron, sometimes of gold or silver, of a more or less elegant shape, but always tipped with a steel point. They write with great ease and celerity, either standing, sitting or walking, and scarcely looking





MILLAR'S WORKS.



at the leaf which they are using. Their letters are neat and well formed, the lines straight, and the distances equal: but it is not possible to form a correct notion of their writing, unless from inspection. The annexed engraving represents a native of Malabar writing as he walks along. Their books, which are sometimes very bulky, are composed of similar leaves, and last as long as ours if any care be taken of them: they are not liable to injury from water.

The rajahs and princes of the south of Hindoostan, write letters and transmit orders on these palm-leaves, which are folded and sealed in a particular manner; but when they are writing

to persons of distinction they use paper like us. Paper is also used by the Hindoos and Musulmans, all over the north of the peninsula. With the exception of certain complimentary forms, the Hindoos in general are clear, brief, and precise in all they write.

A Hindoo will not scruple to employ any dishonest artifice to release himself from engagements into which he has entered; but he will never take advantage of any equivocal expression or informality in the written instrument by which he is bound: and as they have neither advocates, attorneys, nor notaries, they are strangers to all that disgraceful chicanery, to which flaws of this kind give rise among us.

In Canara, Guzerat, and in the north in general, both sexes wear more clothing than in the south. This observation applies also to the principal European settlements, as Bombay, Madras, Calcutta, Goa, &c.

The costume of the women varies according to the castes. The most common dress consists of a long piece of white or coloured stuff, which is thrown over the right shoulder, and fastened about the waist. Sometimes the females cover themselves entirely with this robe, either to screen themselves from the eyes of the other sex, or from the rays of the sun.

In all parts of India, the women of every sect, and of all nations, wear

bracelets of vitrified earth of different colours, green, yellow, and black. Their fingers and toes are adorned with brass, silver, or gold rings; they also wear rings of the same metals, of delicate workmanship, round the ankles. Some idea may be formed of the antiquity of these ornaments from the statues of the gods and goddesses, which are almost always decorated with them. Some females wear ear-rings, and others have gold and silver rings suspended from the nose, but the latter ornament is confined almost exclusively to the dancing-girls.

One of the women represented in the annexed engraving, holds a large and small vessel for taking up water, and



THE END OF THE WORLD.

wears round her neck a gold ornament called *tuli*. Her hair is perfumed and tied up to the crown of the head. Her skin is stained with saffron, or some other yellow powder, the smell of which is agreeable to the Hindoos. The nails and toes are dyed red with the juice of an herb.

Greatly resembling the pastoral manners of the Mesopotamian damsels in the patriarchal days, the young women of Guzerat daily draw water from the public wells, and sometimes carry two or three earthen jars placed over each other on the head, which requiring perfect steadiness, gives them an erect and stately air. An English lady in India, whose great delight was

to illustrate the sacred volume, by a comparison with the modern manners and customs of the Hindoos, reading the interview between Abraham's servant and Rebecca at the gate of Nahor, to an intelligent native, when she came to that passage where the virgin went down to the well with her pitcher upon her shoulder, her attentive friend exclaimed: "Madam, that woman was of high caste." This he implied from the circumstance of her carrying the pitcher on her shoulder and not on her head. Some of the highest classes among the Bramins do the same.

The women of the inferior castes wear a short cotton garment, which in general covers only the upper part of

the body, and reaches no lower than the loins.

Females of the superior castes, whether married or not, never go abroad alone, and without being veiled from head to foot. If, however, they happen by any accident to be unveiled, and meet a European, they run as fast as they can to the first Indian house that has any appearance of respectability.

In the interior of the country in particular, the women are alarmed at the presence of Europeans. There the sight of a single European is sufficient to throw the whole population of a village into consternation. The fact is, that intoxicated soldiers and others have frequently committed outrages in

the attempt to carry off women, or to procure provisions by force.

In Malabar, men of the superior castes only have the privilege of wearing rings of gold and silver, of carrying an umbrella or a cane, and of having a style for writing fastened by their side. These distinctions are forbidden to the lower castes, which must not assume them without a special grant from the rajah, of whom they cannot be obtained but by money.

The distinctions formerly conferred by the Hindoo princes, and still conferred by them wherever they yet rule, consist in one or two gold bracelets round the wrist; in the right to be carried in a palanquin, and other similar

honours corresponding, in some measure, with the different orders of knighthood, instituted by the sovereigns of Europe.

The Hindoos manifest extreme veneration for their princes, whom they never approach but with demonstrations of the profoundest humility: hence we do not find it upon record that the blood of any Hindoo monarch was ever shed by his subjects; while the history of the Mahometan princes, who have reigned in India, is filled with treasons and atrocious murders, committed on their persons by their own subjects.

In Malabar, a rajah, on his accession, would not, out of respect, sit upon the same seat, sleep in the same bed, or

drink out of the same cup as his predecessor : every thing that has been used by the deceased prince is regarded as sacred, and not even touched.

MANNERS
OF THE OTHER INHABITANTS
OF HINDOOSTAN.

Hindoostan is peopled by a great number of foreigners, whom its delicious climate and fertile soil have attracted from all parts of the world. Some entered the country as conquerors, after expelling or putting to death the rightful sovereigns; others sought refuge there from persecution, or repaired thither to form commercial establishments. All carried with them their peculiar manners and customs, which the climate, time, and intercourse

with the natives have since modified in a thousand ways.

The Mahometans settled in Hindoostan are not strict observers of the precepts of their religion. Differing from their ancestors, who first invaded this country and deluged it with blood, they have not the fanatical rage for converting or persecuting those who are not believers in Mahomet. It seems as if the example of the Hindoos had taught them toleration, and the genial climate of India divested their character of a great part of its ancient ferocity. Most of them scruple not to drink spirituous liquors, and frequently intoxicate themselves with opium.

Tippoo Saib, sultan of Mysore, was

the only sovereign who, from a fanatic zeal for the religion of Mahomet, destroyed almost all the churches in his dominions, banished the priests, and transported a great number of Christians to Seringapatam, where he caused them to be circumcised. When he had reduced the coast of Malabar, which afterwards fell into the power of the English, he caused Hindus of every caste to be in like manner circumcised by force. This barbarous and impolitic interference diminished the population of his dominions and incensed the Hindoes, most of whom fled from their country, and sought refuge in the States of the rajahs of Travancore and Cochin, and in the English possessions. He

thought himself aggrieved, it is true, by some Catholic priests, who were accused of furnishing his enemies, the English, in time of war, with information collected by them respecting his dominions. He left most of the Hindoo temples standing; and afterwards adopting a more judicious policy, allowed the Bramins the free exercise of their religion.

The Musulmans are grave and reserved in speech and manners, polite and courteous, but false and addicted to flattery: and at home, they give themselves up to the indulgence of the most depraved appetites and to the most infamous vices.

They delight in ostentation and mag-

nificence ; and as they came from different countries, they value one another only according to their more or less illustrious origin. The various tribes disdain to ally themselves together by intermarriages. Few Mahometans engage in commercial pursuits, still fewer in agriculture or handicraft business ; these are, according to their ideas, degrading occupations ; almost all of them have inherited the fondness of their ancestors for war, but not their valour. This difference is ascribed to the climate of India · it ought rather to be charged to the account of the effeminate education which they there receive.

The Musulmans have partly retained in Hindoostan the loose ample garments which they wear in Turkey, in Egypt, and even in China. The opposite plate represents a Mahometan Indian officer : the only difference of any consequence is in the turban, which is not near so high

Most of the Mahometans in the interior have embraced the profession of arms : they are remarkable for their discipline and for their dexterity in the use of the sabre and the Malay dagger ; they are provided with a small buckler as an instrument of defence.

They are very expert riders, and extremely fond of horses, pretending to



judge of their qualities by a great number of signs, most of which are undoubtedly fallacious.

The first Mahometan empire founded in India was that of the Patans or Afghans, which lasted till the invasion of Tamerlane in 1398, and the name of which was scarcely known in Europe before the publication of the history of Ferishta, translated into English by Colonel Dow. Its limits varied with the abilities of its princes. Under weak and incapable monarchs, it was sometimes reduced almost to nothing, because the governors of its vast provinces elevated themselves into petty sovereigns: at other periods it extended from Bengal to Persia, and from the

Carnatic to the lofty mountains of Sevalic.

The first inroads of the Musulmans in India nearly resemble those of the Spaniards in America on its first discovery. These conquerors, filled with enthusiasm for the new religion of Mahomet, rased to the ground the temples of the Bramins, from which they carried off prodigious wealth: they broke in pieces a great number of gold and silver idols: and considering the Hindoos as idolaters, they persecuted, in order to convert them, massacred them, and had the barbarity to inflict on them the most cruel tortures. The ferocious Musulman, armed with sword and fire, spread destruction and con-

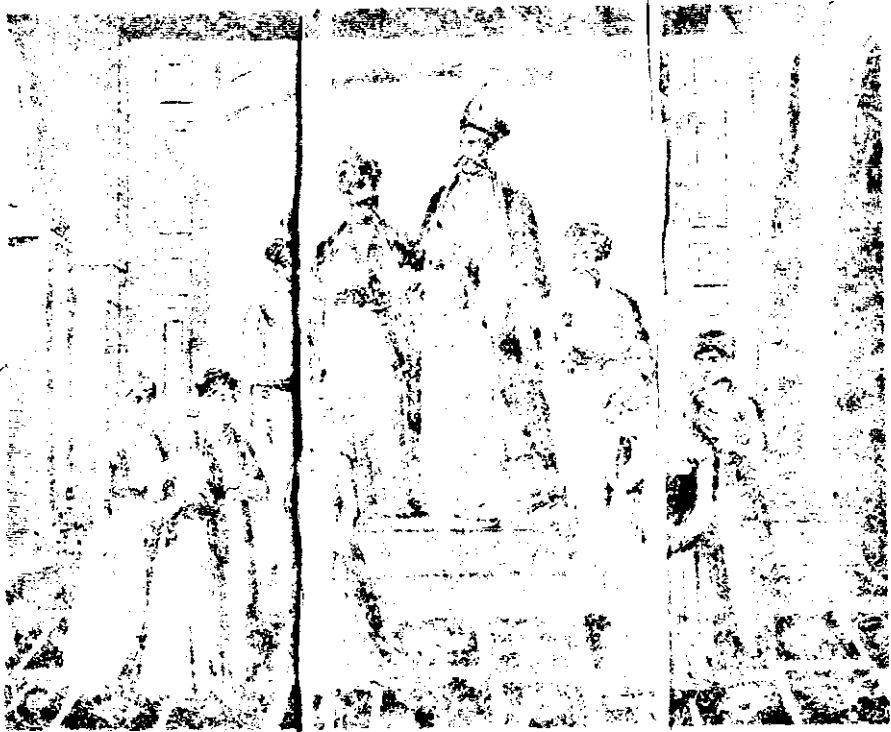
sternation in the name of Mahomet wherever he went, and endeavoured to sweep the name and memory of Buddha from the face of the earth. Some of the Hindoo sovereigns made a courageous and frequently successful resistance to these invasions of the Mahometans; others purchased with money a temporary peace of their enemies, or, struck with terror by their arms, endeavoured to appease their fury by valuable presents.

The splendour and magnificence of the courts of the Mahometan monarchs surpass all conception. Ferishta describes their thrones as glittering all over with gold and precious stones, surrounded by troops of dancing-girls,

comedians, musicians, mimics, in short, every thing that can minister to pleasure, luxury, and voluptuousness. It is asserted that the emperor Balin rarely went abroad without being preceded by a train of one hundred thousand persons.

The annexed plate will convey some idea of the magnificence of a wealthy Musulman at home. It represents Sujah ul Dowlah, nabob of Oude and visir to the great Mogul; his son Asuf ul Dowlah, who succeeded him; and his nine younger sons. The two principal figures are portraits of the persons whom they represent.

Mr Forbes has given a curious picture of the kind of magnificence affected





by Asuf, who succeeded his father on the throne of Oude. This nabob was fond of lavishing his treasures on gardens, palaces, horses, elephants, European guns, lustres, and mirrors. He expended annually about £200,000 in English manufactures. He had more than one hundred gardens, twenty palaces, one thousand two hundred elephants, three thousand five saddle horses, one thousand five hundred double-barrel guns, seventeen hundred superb lustres, thirty thousand shades of various forms and colours; seven hundred large mirrors, girandoles and clocks. Some of the latter were very curious, richly set with jewels, having figures in continual movement, and

playing tunes every hour ; two of these clocks only, cost him thirty thousand pounds. Without taste or judgment, he was extremely solicitous to possess all that was elegant and rare : he had instruments and machines of every art and science, but he knew none ; and his museum was so ridiculously arranged that a wooden cuckoo-clock was placed close to a superb time-piece which cost the price of a diadem ; and a valuable landscape of Claude Lorraine suspended near a board painted with ducks and drakes. He sometimes gave a dinner to ten or twelve persons, sitting at their ease in a carriage drawn by elephants. His jewels amounted to about eight millions sterling. Amidst

this precious treasure, he might be seen for several hours every day handling them as a child does his toys.

From the same source is derived the following description of the splendour with which this magnificent prince celebrated the wedding of his adopted son, Vizier Aly, which took place at Lucknow in 1795, and surpassed in expense any similar solemnity of modern times.

The nabob had his tents pitched in the plains near the city of Lucknow; among the number, were two remarkably large made of strong cotton cloth, lined with the finest English broad cloth, cut in stripes of different colours, with cords of silk and cotton. These two tents cost five lacs of rupees, or

about fifty thousand pounds sterling. They were each one hundred and twenty feet long, sixty broad, and the poles about sixty feet high; the walls of the tents were ten feet high, partly cut into lattice-work for the women of the nabob's seraglio, and those of the principal nobility to see through. His highness was covered with jewels to the amount of at least two millions sterling. The *shumceana* was illuminated by two hundred elegant girandoles from Europe, as many glass shades with wax candles, and several hundred flambeaux; the glare and reflection were dazzling to the sight. Under this extensive canopy, above a hundred dancing-girls, richly dressed, went through their elegant but

rather lascivious dances and motions, and sung some soft airs of the country, chiefly Persic and Hindoo-Persic.

The bridegroom was about thirteen years of age, the bride ten; both of a dark complexion and not handsome. The former was so absurdly loaded with jewels, that he could scarcely stagger under the precious weight.

From the *shumeeana* the company invited to this festivity proceeded on elephants, to an extensive and beautiful garden about a mile distant. The procession was grand beyond conception; it consisted of about twelve hundred elephants richly caparisoned, drawn up in a regular line like a regiment of soldiers. About one hundred elephants in the

centre had *houdas*, or castles covered with silver: in the midst of these, appeared the nabob, mounted on an uncommonly large elephant, within a *houda* covered with gold, richly set with precious stones. On his right hand was the British resident at the court of Lucknow, on his left the young bridegroom: the English gentlemen and ladies and the native nobility were intermixed on the right and left. On both sides of the road from the tents to the garden, was raised artificial scenery of bamboo-work, very high, representing bastions, arches, minarets and towers, covered with lights in glass lamps, which made a grand display. On each side of the proces-

sion, in front of the line of elephants, were dancing-girls superbly dressed, (on platforms supported and carried by bearers) who danced as the company went along. These platforms consisted of a hundred on each side of the procession, all covered with gold and silver cloths, with two girls and two musicians at each platform.

The ground from the tents to the garden, forming the road on which the procession moved, was inlaid with fireworks; at every step of the elephants the earth burst, and threw up artificial stars in the heavens, to emulate those created by the hand of Providence, besides innumerable rockets and many hundred wooden shells, that burst in

the air and shot forth a thousand fiery serpents. These, winding through the atmosphere, illuminated the sky, and, aided by the light of the bamboo scenery, turned a dark night into a bright day. The procession moved on very slowly, to give time for the fire-works inlaid in the ground to go off. The whole of this grand scene was farther lighted by above three thousand flambeaux carried by men hired for the occasion. Thus the company moved on in stately pomp to the garden, which, though only a mile off, they were two hours in reaching. On arriving at the garden gate about nine in the evening, they descended from the elephants, and entered the garden illuminated by in-

numerable transparent paper lamps or lanterns of various colours, suspended to the branches of the trees. In the centre of the garden was a large edifice to which the nabob and his guests ascended, and were introduced into a grand saloon, adorned with girandoles and pendent lustres of English manufacture, lighted with wax candles. Here they partook of an elegant and sumptuous collation of European and Indian dishes, with wines, fruits, and sweetmeats; at the same time, about a hundred dancing-girls sung their sprightly airs, and performed their native dances.

Thus passed the time till dawn, when the English visitors returned to their respective homes, delighted and won-

der-struck with the enchanting scene, which seemed to realize all the extravagance of oriental fiction. The affable nabob rightly observed with a little Asiatic vanity, that such a spectacle was never before seen in India, and never would be seen again. The whole expense of this marriage-feast, which was repeated for three successive nights in the same manner, was upwards of £300,000 sterling.

It may not be amiss to add, that Vizier Aly, whose early years were marked with such profuse magnificence, died in the year 1818, at Fort William, Calcutta, after a confinement there of above seventeen years in a kind of iron cage.

Most of the Mahometan emperors

crushed their subjects with the weight of insupportable taxes, took delight in spilling their blood, and frequently condemned them without inquiry to ignominious punishments; they were, in consequence, continually engaged in quelling insurrections, in punishing the rebellions of omrahs, nabobs, visirs, and generals. They had recourse to dissimulation, intrigue, the sword, poison, and any other means, to raise and maintain themselves upon a throne surrounded by a thousand dangers. Suspicious and alarms not completely stifled with blood sprung up again on all sides; prudence and courage generally proved insufficient, and severity was as little to be relied on as.

clemency. Most of these emperors were betrayed and hurled from the throne by their friends, their wives, their brothers, or their own children. Some of them were confined for life in a narrow prison; others had their ears cut off and their eyes put out, while some were even flayed alive.

Still, among all the scenes of perfidy, villany and atrocity, which we meet with on every page in their historians, we occasionally discover some bright examples of magnanimity, valour, generosity, fidelity, and all the virtues that are most honourable to human nature.

Several of these emperors had academies at their court, founded universi-

ties, applied themselves to the study of the belles-lettres, patronized and encouraged such as distinguished themselves in the arts and sciences, by loading them with wealth and honours, and thus collected around them philosophers, physicians, astronomers, historians, and especially poets, whom Ferishta terms great, noble, illustrious, flowers of genius, though not only their works, but also their very names are mostly unknown to Europeans.

The religious worship of the Mahometans in India differs from that established in the dominions of the Grand Signor.

The mosques, or Mahometan temples, are massive edifices, coated with plaster:

on the west side they have a piazza of five, seven, or nine arcades, and on each side minarets, or high slender towers, terminating in a point. In the centre of the interior is a kind of pulpit, in which is kept a copy of the Koran, and where an iman or fakeer reads aloud some chapter of that revered volume. The floor is usually covered with costly carpets, and lamps are continually burning under the arcades.

In front of the mosques there is always a spacious basin full of water, where the true believers perform their ablutions before and after divine service. Near this basin they leave their slippers, which they must not take with

them into the mosque. A European, before he enters the sacred edifice, must, in like manner, put off his shoes.

The grand mausoleums built in honour of princes or saints are always attended by a priest, who says prayers, or performs other ceremonies for the deceased. In the centre of the mausoleum is a large sarcophagus, containing the remains of the person for whom it was erected; and above hangs a lamp which is kept constantly burning. Splendid carpets are spread round the sarcophagus, and the sides of the monument are adorned with glass globes, gilt or silvered.

The cemeteries are almost always contiguous to the mosques. The graves

of the poor Musulmans are merely covered with a hillock of earth. After the funeral, the relatives of the deceased lay fragrant shrubs and garlands of flowers upon the grave: they visit them every year, and say long prayers before them.

The priests reside at the mosque, for the convenience of summoning the faithful to prayers at day-break, from the tops of the minarets: when they make a tremendous noise with wooden cymbals and metal basins, which they strike one against another.

One of the most remarkable festivals of the Mahometans in the East Indies is that of Hassan and Hosein, held in memory of the two sons of Ali the son-in-

law of the prophet, whom they revere as martyrs. This festival lasts nine days, during which, the people indulge in all kinds of extravagances. The young Mahometans make themselves a grotesque dress, bedizened with ribbons or pieces of gilt paper, like that of the London chimney-sweepers on May-day; and they are every where seen dancing with a stick in one hand, and a drawn sword in the other.

On the last day, there is a solemn procession, in which the standard of Mahomet is borne by an elephant; while Indians, mounted on the back of the animal, beat great kettle-drums. The Musulmans, by way of evincing

their devotion, intoxicate themselves with opium, which produces a temporary madness that frequently hurries them into criminal excesses.

On this occasion, at Arcot, the bazaar which faces the great mosque is illuminated ; and here and there are erected small theatres where puppet-shows and the magic lantern are exhibited. At certain distances are kindled bonfires, round which the crowd dance, shouting with all their might the names of Hassan and Hosein, and Mustapha Reiman. The Mahometan seapoys, or soldiers, do no duty while this festival lasts, a circumstance not without danger when the troops happen to be

at that time in the field, because the Mahometans cannot then be made to submit to any discipline.

The Musulmans on the coast of Coromandel follow the professions of tailors, beaters of cotton, dealers in perfumes, pearls, jewels, &c.

Among the foreign nations settled in India, we must not omit to notice the Parsees, Gaurs, or Guebres, descendants from the ancient Persians, and a small remnant of a once mighty nation. It is related that they left Persia, to the number of eighteen or twenty thousand, when Abubeker, in the seventh century of the christian era, laid waste their beautiful country with fire and sword, and forced the

inhabitants to abjure the religion of their forefathers, and to embrace Mahometanism. They first fled to the island of Ormus, and thence passed over into Guzerat, where the Hindoo sovereigns afforded them succour and protection, and permitted them to settle in the country and to retain the free exercise of their religion. They merely subjected them to certain conditions, one of which, for instance, was, that they should not kill, or eat the flesh of either cow or ox. The descendants of these refugees are still faithful to the contract made by their ancestors ; and in like manner, to gratify the Mahometan princes, who succeeded the Hindoo sovereigns, they abstain from eat-

peating, without cessation, the name of the god of his sect. When the fatal hour arrives, she adorns herself with her jewels, and puts on her most costly attire, as if she were going to a rejoicing. She is accompanied by her relatives and friends, and by the sound of drums and trumpets. The Bramins, meanwhile, exalt the imagination of the victim, by giving her a liquid in which opium is mixed, to drink: and as they draw near the fatal spot, they strive to strengthen her resolution by songs in which they extol her heroism.

The widow must not exhibit any signs of grief or despondency as she approaches the pile: her look must be calm and serene, and such as becomes

one who is certain that she is about to rejoin her husband in a happier life. It is affirmed that previously to the ceremony, the Bramins themselves, as well as her relatives and friends, endeavour to dissuade her from the sacrifice, but that her resolution once taken is sacred and inviolable.

The day of this self-immolation, is a glorious one for the family of the widow, as well as for her husband's, and for the Bramins, who, moreover, derive no trifling profit from the ceremony. Any person is allowed to witness the spectacle, but at a certain distance. The victim affectionately embraces her friends and relations, among whom she distributes part of her jewels and or-

naments; she comforts them, while they bless and entreat her to pray to God to grant them in like circumstances the fortitude which she manifests.

These victims, in general meet death with heroic firmness and constancy; convinced, that in thus burning themselves from pure conjugal attachment, they shall feel but little pain from the flames, and that by this sacrifice, they shall deliver their husbands from the torments of the next life, whatever may be the crimes committed by them in this.

Mr. Holwell gives an account of one, who, being told of the pain she must suffer, with a view to dissuade her from

her intention, put her finger into the fire and held it there for a considerable time: after which she put fire on the palm of her hand, laid incense upon it and fumigated the Bramins who were present.

Mr. Forbes mentions the case of a female whose husband had amply provided for her by will, and, contrary to the general custom of Hindoos, had made her totally independent of his family. All was of no avail; she persisted in her determination to accompany him to a better world, and suffered not the tears nor supplications of an aged mother and three helpless infants to change her purpose. The funeral pyre was erected on the banks of



dropping out to defile the fire while he reads the sacred books. The fire is fed with any dry wood.

In their public prayers much use is made of the consecrated water called *zor*, or *for*, which is supposed to be powerful in repelling demons, and to impart peculiar efficacy to the sacred rites.

The holy females who take care to keep up a fire before their habitations, and strictly observe the rites of their religion, are held in great veneration by the Parsees. The annexed engraving represents one of these women receiving a visit from a lady of her religion, accompanied by her son and daughter. The boy falls at the feet of

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the saint, while the mother presents her with some fruit. By her side, in the fore-ground, is a fire, on which pieces of various kinds of fragrant wood are burning.

The priests of the Parsees are called *Mobed*, and their patriarchs *Destur*. The dress of the *Mobed* resembles that of the other Parsees, excepting that their turban is white, while the latter confine themselves to no particular colour. They shave neither the chin nor the head, as the Parsees do. Their turban differs in shape from that of the Musulmans and Hindoos, inasmuch as it is pointed before.

The Parsees are well shaped and in general almost as fair as Europeans.

They have fine large black eyes, and aquiline noses. The women are also very fair; they are narrowly watched, and adultery in them is punished with death. The Parsees are cautious to keep the matter from the knowlege of the government, whether Mahometan or English, which would not fail to mitigate the sentence; but we are assured that they have secret means of carrying it into execution.

Marriages are concluded between families while the parties are still children; but they are not allowed to live together till both have attained the age of puberty. The Parsees marry but one wife, who must be of their own nation; those, however, who reside at

a distance from their principal establishments, are at liberty to keep concubines of foreign nations. Not a beggar is to be seen among them, because they relieve and assist one another with great zeal and charity. They all follow some profession or commercial pursuit; are obliging, civil, active, industrious, and in general faithful and honest: they are above all remarkably prudent, and anxious to live in harmony with all the world.

Their religion, resembling in this point that of Brama, admits no proselytes. Though strongly attached to their ancient doctrines and customs, they have nevertheless adopted several of the superstitions of the Hindoos.

Parsees are to be met with in all parts of Hindoostan: but their principal settlements, and if we may so express it, the nucleus of their little nation is in Guzerat, Surat and Bombay, and in the environs of those cities. It is said that their number amounts to one hundred thousand souls, and that, owing to their manufactures and industry, they are daily increasing. They possess handsome gardens, estates and villages. The wealthy ride in carriages similar to ours, and they frequently give magnificent entertainments to Europeans at their elegant country-houses.

Some of the largest vessels that are to be seen in the ports of Bombay and Surat belong to the Parsees. They

are built by themselves, and they have always new ones on the stocks, for they want neither materials nor skilful engineers. Their economical disposition does not prevent their being humane and charitable. One of them, during a time of scarcity at Bombay, fed daily upwards of two thousand persons ; and the instances of this sort are not rare. Jealous of the honour of their nation, they carefully smother any scandal that happens to arise among them ; and in short they may be said to form but one family.

They have a particular and superstitious affection for dogs, and they may frequently be seen walking on the glacis at Bombay, distributing cakes and

bread among all the aged, lame, infirm, or forsaken dogs they meet with.

Their reverence for the elements makes them careful in no manner to defile them. No impurity is allowed to be thrown either into the fire or into the water.

None of them follow the trade of smiths, though not prevented by any positive injunction: they never extinguish a light, nor do they enlist as seapoys, pretending that they dare not defile the fire by the use of fire-arms. In the great fire in Bombay in 1803, they stood for a long time idle, witnessing the progress of the flames; but when they found them continuing to spread, to the ruin of their houses and property, their interest got

the better of their scruples, and many of them wrought with great alacrity, both in procuring water and in helping to extinguish the fire. All other natives of the east, when about to take an oath, cast off their shoes or sandals; the Parsees alone put them on, so as in some measure to insulate themselves from the elements. Hence too they never bury the bodies of their dead, for fear of defiling the earth, but leave them to moulder away and to be consumed by the birds of prey. Their *dokmehs*, or places of sepulture, are round towers, having platforms or terraces near the top, sloping gently to the centre, in which is a round hole for receiving the bones and decayed

matter. On these the dead bodies are laid, exposed to the wind and rain, and to the birds of the air.

As it is supposed that the malignant spirits, ever watchful to injure mankind, are particularly eager to assail the soul at the moment of its separation from the body, the Parsees not only recite prayers and read their books near their dying friends, to keep the demons away, but are careful to have a dog close by, as they imagine that that animal, from its quick sight, will perceive, and by its barking, alarm and chase away the infernal assailant.

The dead body is dressed in clean but old clothes, and conveyed to the place of exposure on an iron bier; for wood

being the aliment of fire, it might, if of that material, be accidentally burned and the element of fire be thus defiled. They place meat and drink near the body for three days, as during that time the soul is supposed to hover round in hopes of being re-united to it. They watch the corpse, to see on which eye the vulture first seizes: if on the right eye, it is a fortunate sign. The dogs drive away the evil spirits, who, during that time are continually on the watch to carry off the soul to hell. If a dog takes a piece of bread from the mouth of the deceased, his happy state is considered as secure. He who touches the dead is impure for nine days. On the fourth day the soul ceases to linger

about the body, and goes to happiness or woe. Should any one revive after having been carried to the *dokmeh*, he is shunned by all, as having had commerce with impure spirits, till purified by the priest. But there is reason to imagine, that the popular superstition goes still farther, and that no return is now ever heard of.

When the fourth day has arrived, the angel *Seriosh* appears and carries the soul to the bridge of *Chinevad*, which extends from earth to heaven; the evil spirits attempt to bind and ruin it, the good angels protect it. The angel *Rashnerast* weighs its actions standing on the bridge; if the scale of good preponderates, the bridge, which in its natural

state is as narrow as a hair, widens, and the celestial dog that guards its farther extremity suffers the soul to proceed to heaven ; if the evil prevails, the soul is precipitated over the narrow bridge, into the gulfs of hell which open below.

The punishments of hell are described as very much resembling the vulgar notions of the christians on that subject. They are inflicted by scorching fire, by serpents, by devils gnawing and tormenting their victims, tearing some limb from limb, hanging others on hooks and hewing them to pieces alive. Besides heaven and hell, they have a middle state, where the souls of those whose good and evil actions are

equally balanced remain till the judgment.

The Parsee hell is not eternal. After the present, or the third period of three thousand years, in which the influence of Ormazd and Ahriman, the good and evil principle, are equally divided on earth, is past, commences the fourth period of three thousand years. This will belong exclusively to the latter: scourges of every kind, pestilence, contagion, hail, famine, war, will afflict the earth, and mankind will be reduced to the last degree of suffering and misery.

At the end of that period will be the resurrection, when Ormazd will be finally triumphant. Each element will then

give up what it holds of man, and two liquors, the *hom*, which is the juice of a particular shrub, and the milk of the bull, *heziosh*, will restore the whole human race to life. The angel *Sosiosh* will be their judge. The wicked will be punished for three days and three nights, into which period will be compressed an aggregate of suffering more painful than nine thousand years of torture. Their lamentations will rise from hell to Ormazd, who will deliver them. The blazing star *gursheer* will fall on the earth; the hills and mountains will melt with fervent heat, and all mankind will pass through the liquid boiling mass. The just will feel it only milk-warm; the wicked will endure excruciating

ating agony, but it will be the last of their sufferings.

Ahriman will cross the bridge of Chinavad, and return to hell; he will be burned and purified in boiling metals. Hell itself will undergo this purification; all its impurities will disappear. The mountains will be levelled, and earth will become a paradise. Nothing will wax old. Mankind will enjoy eternal pleasure, knowing and loving those friends and relations whom they loved on earth. Ahriman himself will be restored, and evil will disappear from the universe: though the popular opinion is, that this evil spirit and all his demons will be annihilated.

The Jews have more considerable

settlements and more stable habitations in India than in any country in Europe. Bombay has many thousands of inhabitants of that nation, who neither refuse to have communication with Musulmans nor to bear arms. Cashmere contains a numerous colony, supposed by Bernier to be descended from the refugees who fled to this country at the time of the Babylonish captivity. Part of the tribe of Manasseh is said to have settled here after wandering about for three years. Their number at that time, is computed at 20,000, and as they were kindly received by the Hindoos they increased to 80,000 families, and amassed such wealth that they purchased for themselves the small king-

dom of Cranganore, on the coast of Malabar, and there formed a separate republic, governed by two chiefs of their most distinguished families. Though they are now reduced to a comparatively very low state, yet they still possess their annals from the time of Nebuchadnezzar in the Hebrew language, of which the celebrated Van Rheedea has published a Dutch translation.

These are what are called the *white* Jews. A particular class of the Jews of this country, who keep themselves distinct from the others, are styled the *black* Jews. The latter are descended from the black slaves, whom the former purchased and initiated into their religion.

Paolino reckons that there are about 20,000 Jews on the Malabar coast alone, so that their number throughout all Hindoostan must be considerable.

The Armenians, considered in their mercantile character, form a valuable class of the population of this peninsula; as do likewise the Arabs, who, owing to the proximity of their native country, have long had commercial intercourse with Hindoostan. Paolino computes the number of Arabs settled in Malabar alone at 100,000.

There were Christians, and in no small number, in Hindoostan many centuries before the arrival of the Europeans in that country. The St. Thomé christians, as they are called, even

date their origin from the time of St. Thomas, the apostle; who, as they assert, on quitting Palestine, traversed Persia and arrived at Meliapore, commonly called St. Thomé, near Madras, where he received martyrdom at the hands of a Bramin. His bones were afterwards carried as relics to the mountain of St. Thomé, in the interior of the country, whither many devout christians of all sects still go on pilgrimage.

Whether this story be fabulous or not, Pennant informs us, that so early as the year 883, Alfred the Great, in consequence of a vow, sent a bishop first to Rome, and thence to India with alms for the christians of St. Thomas

or Meliapore; which shows, at least, that these must have been settled in Hindoostan, long anterior to the arrival of de Gama.

Their customs differ considerably from those of the Romish church, and this is likewise the case with the christians of Cranganore, on the opposite coast of Malabar. Gama, on his first arrival in the East Indies, found about 200,000 christians on that coast, who acknowledged not the pope, but the patriarch of Babylon alone as their spiritual head. They still continue to be very numerous; for Hyder Ali found, on the reduction of Badnore in Canara, 30,000 native christians who enjoyed important privileges. The pre-

sent number of the St. Thomé christians is computed at about 100,000 in Malabar.

The second report of the Calcutta Church Missionary Society, lately published, makes us acquainted with a sect of Hindoo deists, called Sauds, in the Upper Provinces. The founder of this sect flourished about the year 1600. Their only mode of public worship consists in chanting a hymn. They utterly reject and abhor all kinds of idolatry, and the Ganges is held by them in no greater veneration than by Christians; although the converts are made chiefly, if not entirely, from among the Hindoos, whom they resemble in outward

appearance. They are pure deists: their name for god is *Sutgur*, and *Saud*, the appellation of the sect, means servant of God.

The Sauds resemble the Quakers in their customs in a remarkable degree. Their dress is always white, and ornaments and gay apparel of every kind are strictly prohibited. They never make any obeisance or *sulam*. They will not take an oath, from which they are exempted in the courts of justice, their asseveration, as that of the Quakers, being considered equivalent.

The Sauds profess to abstain from all luxuries, such as tobacco, paun, opium, and wine. They never have *nauches*

or dancing. All attack on man or beast is forbidden; but in self-defence, resistance is allowable.

Industry is enjoined. The Sauds, like the Quakers, take great care of their poor and infirm people. To receive assistance out of their tribe, would be reckoned disgraceful and render the offender liable to excommunication. All parade of worship is forbidden. Secret prayer is commended; alms should be unostentatious, and they are not to be done, that they should be seen of men. The due regulation of the tongue is a principal duty.

The Sauds are an orderly and well-conducted people, and are chiefly engaged in trade. The principal seats

of the sect are Dehly, Agra, Jypoor, and Furrukhabad; but several of its members are scattered over the country. An annual meeting takes place at one or other of the above-mentioned cities, at which the concerns of the sect are settled.

OF THE HINDOO CASTES.

Brama divided the Hindoos into four principal castes. The first is that of the *Bramins*, the second that of the *Khattries*, comprehending the rajahs and the military; the third, that of the *Vaisya*, consisting of the husbandmen and tradesmen; and the fourth, that of the *Sooders*, or artisans and labourers of all kinds. This general division, however, is far from conveying any idea of the multitude of castes, classes, or tribes into which the Hindoos are divided: they are said to amount to nearly one hundred, and the

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distinctions which separate them are so numerous and so varied, that the Bramins themselves are sometimes puzzled to assign the different steps of this long ladder.

The Bramins sprung from the head, or according to some, from the mouth of Brama; the *Khattries* from his arms; the *Vaisya* from his belly; and the *Sooders* from his feet. Admitting this origin of the castes, who can doubt that the Bramin, as the offspring of the head, is of a nobler nature than the Sooder, who is descended from the foot only?

The second caste, or that of the *Khattries*, is also called *Rajpoot*, or caste of the rajahs. It is divided into

two classes, one descended from the sun and the other from the moon.

On the Malabar coast there is a caste called *Nairs*, who nearly resemble the *Khattries*. In ancient times there were neither Bramins nor *Khattries* in that country, and at the present day it contains but a small number of the latter, who are strangers in it: but the Bramins came thither from other parts of Hindoostan. The *Nairs*, though in fact of the caste of the *Sooders*, yet being from time immemorial in possession of the government of the country, have by degrees arrogated to themselves the rank of *Khattries*; and the Bramins, having been favourably received by them, seem to have winked at this usurpation.

The castes of the *Vaisya* and *Soothers* are subdivided into a multitude of other castes which have no communication with one another. Each individual is invariably confined to the profession or trade appropriated to the caste to which he belongs; the son always follows the profession of the father; at least there are but few exceptions to this rule, from which nothing but absolute necessity can authorize a deviation.

The *Parias*, of whom we shall treat elsewhere, are not a distinct caste, as has long been supposed, but the scum of all the castes.

These castes, even to the very lowest, have ridiculous distinctions among

themselves. The *coolee*, or porter, who carries a burden on his head, would refuse to take it on his back : in several countries, the dealer in corn must not sell oil ; and he who sells salt must not deal in vinegar, &c. This division into castes subjects the masters of houses to great expense, as the meanest domestic absolutely refuses to perform any office but that allotted to him by his caste.

The lower tribes of Hindoos are not so scrupulous as the higher about what they eat or touch, especially if they are not observed by others. Those domesticated with Europeans generally affect to be very scrupulous : an English table, therefore, covered with a variety

of food, is necessarily surrounded by a number of servants of different castes to attend the guests. At Baroche, Surat and Bombay, a Hindoo will not remove a dish that has been defiled with beef; a Mahometan cannot touch a plate polluted by pork, nor will a Parsee take one away on which is hare or rabbit. Mr. Forbes during his residence in India, never knew more than one Parsee servant who would snuff a candle, for fear of extinguishing the symbol of the deity he worships; nor would this man ever do it in the presence of another Parsee.

Such scruples are not confined to any particular caste; they more or less pervade every tribe in India, and are

cherished by the active soldier as well as the pious Bramin. In the *Ayeen Akbery*, we read of Narrain Doss, a principal chief in the Rahtore tribe, who lived with such austerity that his only food was grain which had passed through oxen and been separated from their dung—an aliment considered by the Bramins as the purest of all food.

A religious and civil law, not less ancient than invariable, has strictly forbidden any mixture of blood and intermarriages between the different castes, with scarcely any exceptions. Before the institution of this law, marriages of this kind were permitted, and thus the Hindoos account for that multitude of intermediate classes derived

from the four original castes; the lowest being descended from the higher castes by the mother only, for the husband raises or degrades his wife to his own level.

Every sentence which excludes a Hindoo is irrevocable: no expiations, no services, can reinstate him in the rights which he has lost: hence degradation is more dreaded than any other punishment by the Hindoos: it is a kind of outlawry which separates the culprit from his friends and relatives by an everlasting barrier. For the rest, the Hindoos are not liable to expulsion from their caste for believing or disbelieving certain articles of religion. A person loses his caste for neglecting

external rights and practices, for living or eating with one of an inferior caste ; for marrying or having an intimate connection with a person of such caste ; and lastly, for subsisting on prohibited food.

The two following anecdotes prove to what a length the Bramins carry their superstition in regard to castes.

A Bramin of Calcutta, afflicted with a painful disease, was carried by his desire to the banks of the Ganges, for the purpose of seeking in its waters the most blessed of deaths in the opinion of the Hindoos. A party of Englishmen passed in a boat near the spot where the Bramin was lying without signs of life, waiting for the flood to carry him away

into the sacred current. One of them, filled with compassion for the state of a man whom he supposed to have met with some accident, rowed to the place, hoisted the Bramin on board, recalled him to life by the unsparing administration of cordials, and conveyed him to Calcutta. The other Bramins immediately declared him infamous and degraded from his caste. In vain did the Englishman prove to them that he alone was to blame, since he had taken him up in a state of insensibility. He had drunk with a stranger—he had taken food at his hands, a crime for which, according to the Hindoo laws, he was to be deprived of all means of subsistence: he incurred the penalty of civil death, but the English

courts decreed, that the person who had saved his life should supply him with food. Abandoned by his family and friends—an object of scorn and indignity, the unfortunate Bramin led a miserable life for three years ; a fresh disease then renewed his desire of death, and his benefactor, whose purse was exhausted, was not very anxious to dissuade him from his design.

Another Bramin, being oppressed with thirst as he journeyed along, met a woman of low condition carrying a vessel full of water on her head. He asked her for some to drink, but, that he might not receive water from an impure hand, he formed a little channel on the ground ; the woman poured in the water at one.

end and the Bramin drank at the other. One of his caste, who happened to be passing at the time, witnessed the circumstance, and accused him before the council of the Bramins : the affair was investigated, and he narrowly escaped the sentence of exclusion from the caste.

The laws of Menu, however, have permitted the Bramin, who has no other means of preserving himself from starving, to receive the food that is offered him by any individual of a lower caste : an indulgence founded on the example of several *rickeys*, or saints, who made no scruple to accept such donations.

The Bramins, it is true, are not always so rigid. When the fault which has occasioned the exclusion of a Bramin

from his caste was involuntary, or a sufficient excuse can be made for it, they have devised a kind of regeneration for the purpose of reinstating him in his rights, from which they must derive considerable profit. It consists in causing the culprit to pass through a statue of gold, cast for the purpose, representing the feminine nature in the form of a woman or a cow. We shall subjoin two examples :—

The rajah of Travancore having, in time of war, caused some religious houses to be demolished, the Bramins, by way of giving him absolution for this sin, required that, after offering various sacrifices, he should pass through a golden cow, entering at the mouth and

coming out at the other extremity. The prince was weak enough to submit to this ridiculous ceremony, because the Bramins informed him that this was the only method of expiating his guilt and becoming regenerated. When the ceremony was over, the cow was broken in pieces and divided among the Bramins.

The second instance of this kind is extracted from the *Asiatic Researches*. The unfortunate rajah Raghu-Nath, commonly called Ragoba, sent two Bramins on an embassy to England: but they went no farther than Suez. On their return they were treated as degraded from their caste, because they had crossed the Indus, which neither the Bramins nor any other religious persons

are allowed to pass ; and because moreover, it was thought, that, in travelling through countries inhabited by impure tribes, they could not possibly observe all the rules prescribed in the sacred books. The Bramins were assembled from all parts of the province, and held many consultations on a point of such importance. All the authority of the rajah could not procure the absolution of the Bramins. The holy assembly, however, decreed, that in consideration of their personal character and the object of their journey, which had been undertaken solely for the good of their country, they might be regenerated. The Bramins, as before, divided among

themselves the golden cow that was cast for this second ceremony.

There is another mode of reinstating those who have lost their caste without being aware of it, or for very slight faults. It is less profitable to the Bramins, consisting in nothing more than drinking a liquid called *panciagawia*, and composed of cow's urine, cow-dung, diluted with fresh milk, butter and milk turned a little sour. In this manner the Bramins re-admitted into the bosom of the religion of Brama such Hindoos as had been compelled by Tippoo to embrace Mahometanism. The pious Hindoos are accustomed to take some of this drink once a year, to purify themselves

from the stains they may have contracted by not strictly performing the duties of the particular caste to which they belong.

The division of the different classes of society into distinct castes, which are not permitted either to intermarry or to hold any intercourse whatever with one another, seems in remote antiquity not to have belonged exclusively to the Hindoos; for it existed among the ancient Egyptians, and among the Israelites. At the present day, if we except certain customs still observed by the descendants of the Jewish nation, and some professions which are hereditary in China, the Hindoos are the only

people who have a complete system of this kind.

As this system, which is wholly artificial, could not be established till long after the wants of society had given rise to different professions, the legislator, in order to introduce the more easily a division so humiliating and so oppressive to certain classes, must have represented it as an ancient and divine institution, and thus have given it the double sanction of religion and of time. Hence it was supposed that Brama was its author; but, according to the Shaster, or sacred book, it was anterior to Brama, and existed in the first age, whereas Brama, according to the same book,

was not created till the beginning of the second age.

Be that as it may, this institution appears impolitic and unworthy of an enlightened legislator. It extinguishes all emulation, by depriving men of the hopes of rising to a state superior to that in which they were born, and is revolting to the principle of natural equality: it is as inconvenient as ridiculous in its consequences, and finally it breaks all the bonds of humanity. Wretched, indeed, is his situation who is overtaken by sickness, and has not about him servants or other persons of his own caste. He is abandoned to his fate by those of a superior caste, and dare not accept the assistance of those

belonging to an inferior—nay, rather than do this he would prefer being left to perish.

The difficulty, or more correctly speaking, the impossibility of performing all the duties and ceremonies of his caste, accustoms the religious Hindoo to fasting and a thousand other mortifications. Each caste is moreover so jealous of its peculiar prerogatives, that if an inferior caste were to presume to imitate another, even in matters of the most trifling import, the latter would move heaven and earth in defence of its rights, and an open rupture would infallibly ensue between the two rival castes.

It may appear extraordinary that no

person belonging to the degraded castes has ever opposed a doctrine which dooms them to perpetual misery and abjection: nothing can afford a stronger proof of the power of religion over the human mind. The Hindoo, accustomed from infancy to the assertion that God has placed him in the condition in which he was born, and in which he is to die, to punish him for the sins committed by him in a preceding life, resigns himself to what he is taught to consider as the will of the Almighty and a chastisement which he has deserved; nor does he ever conceive the idea of suspecting his priests of imposture.

It must not be imagined, however,

that the institution of castes is observed in its utmost rigour on the coast, where commerce, mutual interest, and the collision of opinions, continually tend to bring them together, to blend them, and to efface the line of demarcation by which they are separated. The manners and customs of the Hindoos in general have undergone more or less alteration, in the countries which have been or are at present subject to Mahometans or to Europeans. A Bramin residing at Madras, or at Calcutta, and having continual intercourse with Europeans, is not, in his own estimation, so sacred a personage, nor so scrupulously attached to the privileges of his caste, as the Bramin, who lives in the

interior of the country, where the inhabitants have but little communication with strangers. It is there only that the political and religious system of the Hindoos is preserved in all its purity; it is there that India is still what it probably was in the most remote ages.

It is said that once a year all distinction of castes ceases in the temple of Jaggernaut, and that on this day, destined to commemorate the primitive equality of mankind, the Bramin and the Paria eat together. As Vishnu is adored in this temple in his incarnation as Buddha, and as the latter taught new doctrines, it is possible that among other reforms, he endeavoured to abo-

lish the odious institution of castes, and that to accomplish his purpose he enjoined the celebration of this festival. Unfortunately Buddha did not succeed in his plans; and his philanthropic doctrines, which the Bramins strove to stifle in their birth, obtained, at least in the peninsula on this side of the Ganges, but a small number of followers.

Be this as it may, they boil, we are told on one fire, seven large vessels, or earthen pots full of rice, placed one upon another. When the rice in the uppermost vessel is done, they are all removed from the fire and broken; and every Hindoo, of whatever caste, takes his portion of the rice. The pilgrims carry

it away with them, as something sacred, and sell or give it to the devout in all parts of India.

Others, without mentioning the ceremony just described, merely assert, that on a certain day in the year, all the castes indiscriminately are permitted to enter the town of Jaggernaut, to walk about wherever they please, and to buy such things as they want in the public markets, which are abundantly supplied for the occasion. They deny, however, that persons of different castes eat together and treat one another like brothers.

This solemn festival which collects every year several hundred thousand

pilgrims, seems, in short, to have been instituted by the Bramins, merely to fleece even the very poorest of the Hindoos, who throng thither with the little money they possess: each presents his offering to the deity; and it is a glorious harvest for the Bramins.

These tricks are also played at other places by the Bramins, and even by Rajahs. At Cranganore, on the Malabar coast, for example, on the last day of a festival, which is held annually, the Rajah stands near the entrance of the pagoda, and persons of every caste, passing before him, are allowed, as a special favour, to touch with their hands the threshold of the temple, where they

leave their offering and retire. The Rajah then performs his ablutions, and secures the spoil.

At Palani, there is on a high mountain a pagoda or temple dedicated to Supramanya, with a numerous convent of Bramins. The devout flock thither with presents; the herdsman carrying milk, the husbandman the produce of his fields, and persons of all trades and professions making appropriate offerings. The god accepts them all, and as it is said, with his own hands. Persons of the inferior castes, who are not allowed to enter the temple, lay down their presents at a certain distance; but the arms of the god are long enough to reach them. As, however, among the

presents carried to the temple, there must be some that are of no use to the Bramins, there is no doubt that they send them secretly to be sold in the markets.

Supramanya is renowned for working miracles. There the trees never lose their leaves; the milk presented to the god never turns sour; and disgusting, troublesome and venomous insects dare not enter the sacred inclosure. It is no effort at all, say his devout worshippers, for a man to rip up his body or to cut his throat in honour of the deity; because the corpse instantaneously comes to life again, without retaining the slightest scar or mark of the wound.

The Bramins do not fail to publish, from time to time, various prophecies, miracles wrought by their god, and threatening denunciations of their oracles, in order to induce the people to appease the divine wrath by sacrifices and offerings. It would be impossible to relate, within the compass to which we are confined, all the insipid fables which they promulgate, not only to the common people, but to the great and to the rajahs themselves, and almost always with success.

*
OF THE BRAMINS.

The Bramins are the priests, the teachers of religion, the depositories of the sacred books. This caste is divided like the others, into several sects and classes, which must neither eat together, nor intermarry; and there is as little communication between the Bramins of different provinces, perhaps because those of each province consider themselves as superior to all the others.

They wear a scarf called, in Sanscrit, *Jagnia pavitra*, composed of twenty-seven cotton laces: it descends from the left shoulder over the breast and

back, and ties above the right hip; a small silver capsule hangs to the end of it. This scarf they never put off; even when they are at the point of death. If they lose it, or it happens to break, they must not eat or drink till they are in possession of another exactly like the former, which must be made with their own hands, and not by their wives or daughters, who have no right to this distinction.

This mark alone, however, is not sufficient to distinguish a Bramin at first sight, because persons of certain castes, such as smiths, goldsmiths and others, assume when they marry exactly the same kind of scarf, and wear it ever afterwards.

Though the principal duty of the Bramins is to instruct the people in all that relates to religion and morals, they are not excluded from the government of the state; they may become ministers, counsellors, chancellors, and ambassadors, and indeed it is generally from among them that persons are selected to fill those high offices: nay, even some of them, like certain bishops, cardinals and popes of old, follow the military profession, in despite of the precepts of their religion, which forbids them to bear arms. Others again, when obliged by necessity, engage in commercial and agricultural pursuits; but they must observe certain precautions to avoid polluting

themselves by the association with persons of inferior castes. Some learn the English language, and enter into the service of wealthy Europeans, as *dobashis* or house-stewards.

The Bramins and persons of the higher castes accompany their ablutions with numberless ceremonies. They must first take up water in the hand, in a certain manner, make it run between the thumb and fore-finger, or in some other way, according to the divinity in whose honour this libation is performed, throw it at three times with the fingers towards the East, then turn to another quarter of the heavens, washing the mouth before the body, by throwing water,

without raising the hand to it, and observe a thousand such rules to which they attach great importance. At the same time, they repeat the different names of Vishnu and Sheeva, and as they pronounce one or other of these names, they clap their fingers to their cheeks, behind their ears, on their shoulders, on the breast, or some other part of the body.

Nothing can be so tedious and tiresome as the adorations and prayers addressed by the Bramins to their numerous idols. The rajahs themselves, though they have to attend to many other important affairs, cannot spend less than seven or eight hours a day in these religious ceremonies, which are

attended with so many reverences, prostrations, and other fatiguing practices, that they are quite sufficient of themselves to tire the strongest man.

A religion which obliges its followers to spend the greatest part of their time in such frivolous ceremonies, must, of necessity, be most harassing and inconvenient. Nothing but pride can impart the perseverance requisite to go through them, by persuading those who submit to them that they are superior to the rest of mankind.

When a Bramin has received any thing directly from the hand of an European, or of a person belonging to a caste regarded as impure; if he has inadvertently touched such a person, or

if he has approached too near the habitation of a Paria, he is obliged to wash himself before he eats or drinks. A Bramin must wash at least thrice a day.

The Bramins of the south of Hindoostan are much more infatuated with their importance and dignity than those of the north: they start back at the sight of a Sooder or a European, with as much horror as they would from the approach or touch of a person infected with the plague. Those of the north do not manifest near so strong an aversion for the inferior castes; perhaps this may be owing to a relaxation in the religious principles and in the national manners in the northern parts of Hindoostan, which were earlier and

more frequently conquered; or, perhaps also, hypocrisy, pride, ignorance, and fanaticism, are more deeply rooted in the Bramins of the south than in those of the north.

The dress of the Bramins is a mere cloth, which they wash every day: they ought always to go with the head and bosom bare, yet some of them wear a long red cap. They shave the chin and head, merely leaving on the top of the latter a small tuft which they twist into the form of a knot.

Those Bramins who follow any other than the sacerdotal profession wear a turban and a long dress; but they may always be known by the marks which they retain on the forehead: and such of

them as are in the service of Europeans must, before they return to their own homes, strip off their garments, bathe and resume the dress of the Bramins.

The women have the same distinctive marks as their husbands. Their dress consists in a piece of cloth which wraps them up completely, and in a kind of close jacket: they are usually covered with jewels from head to foot; and they are very fond of small silver bells which make a strange tinkling when they walk.

The wives of the Bramins must say their prayers and bathe every morning. It is their duty to attend to the children: to cook the victuals, but they are never allowed to eat in the presence of their

husbands, or till they have finished ; and to fetch water, which must not be touched excepting by them. If a person of any other caste touches the vessel, the water must be thrown away and the vessel broken, if of earthenware, or purified by fire if of metal.

The Bramins have reserved the exclusive right of reading the *vedas* and other sacred poems. The Khattries may hear them read, but even this privilege is denied to the other castes, for whom particular books have been composed.

In the code of Menu it is directed, that if one of the Sooder caste reads the *vedas* to either of the other three tribes, or listens to them, heated oil,

wax, and melted tin, shall be poured into his ears and the orifice stopped up ; and that if a Sooder gets by heart the *vedas* he shall be put to death.

In the morning, the Bramin reads aloud in public the sacred text in the Sanscrit language ; but as there are very few who understand it, his auditory is very small. In the afternoon or evening, when he again reads in the customary language of the country, he has in general a numerous congregation. These meetings are held before houses, or in their fore-courts : the rich have distinct places, and the women of the house can neither see nor be seen but through a lattice-work of bamboo.

That the Bramins with all their professions of mildness, benevolence, and sanctity, can deliberately perpetrate the most sanguinary atrocities, there is abundant evidence. The following circumstance, related on the authority of the late Sir Charles Malet, happened during his embassy to the Mahratta court in 1791.

Thirty-four men, of the caste of Telinga Bramins, having been confined in a *chokey* or close room, by the officers of the *cutwall*, the head magistrate of the police at Poonah, twenty-one were taken out dead the next morning, and the remaining thirteen were with difficulty restored to life. The popular clamour became violent

against the cutwall, who was a Gour Bramin, a native of Aurungabad, and whose office, in a city where the most rigorous police is established, necessarily rendered him an obnoxious character. The Peishwa, improperly yielding to the furious mob, delivered up the cutwall, who was tied backward on an elephant, and in that manner conveyed to a prison without the town, amid the scoffs and insults of the populace, while guards were sent to seize his family, dependents and property. The day following, the unhappy man was tied backward on a camel, and in that disgraceful manner re-conducted into the city, where he was made to alight, and his head having been pub-

licly shaved, he was again paraded as before, through the principal streets of Poonah; escorted by a strong guard, he was led to a spot about a mile from the city, and then ordered to dismount. One of his hands was then strongly fastened to a turban between twenty and thirty feet long, and the other end committed to some Hallalcores, the lowest outcasts of the Hindoo tribes, who contaminate all other castes by their touch. It was then made known to the Telinga Bramins, that the cut-wall was delivered up entirely to their disposal, either as a sacrifice to their vengeance, or an object for their mercy. Twelve Bramins of that tribe immediately attacked the fallen magistrate

with large stones. The Hallalcores, by straitening the turban, kept him running in a circle, pursued by his relentless murderers, who, by repeated blows, brought him to the ground, and finally dispatched him by a succession of large stones, thrown violently on his head and breast. Thus fell a Bramin, a foreigner, who for many years had been invested with the whole jurisprudence of the capital of the Mahratta empire; who had spent the emoluments of his office in building an elegant tank, or reservoir, for the ornament and convenience of the city, and for supplying it with water from a great distance, with a spirit of generosity and expense so far above the ability of the rich na-

tive Bramins, as to subject him to their envy and an ignominious death.

The following facts were communicated by Lord Teignmouth to the Asiatic Society of Calcutta.

In 1791 Soodishter Mier, a Bramin, the farmer of land paying revenue, was summoned to appear before a native officer, the deputy-collector of the district in which he resided. He positively refused to obey the summons, which was repeated without effect ; and after some time several people were deputed to enforce the process, by compelling his attendance. On their approaching the house, he cut off the head of his deceased son's widow and threw it out.

His first intention was to destroy his own wife ; but it was proved in evidence, that, upon his indication of it, his son's widow requested him to decapitate her, which he instantly did.

Another Bramin, Baloo Paundeh, was convicted in 1793, of the murder of his infant daughter. It appeared, from his own confession, that he had quarrelled with a man respecting a joint claim to a piece of ground, which was referred to arbitration and decided in Baloo's favour. He consequently repaired to the land and began to plough it, when he was interrupted by his opponent. " I became angry and enraged," said he at his forbidding me ; and bringing

my own little daughter, Ampunya, who was only a year and a half old, to the said field, I killed her with my sword."

A third instance is an act of matricide, perpetrated by Beechuk and Adher, two brothers, also Bramins, and zemindars, or proprietors of landed estates, the extent of which did not exceed eight acres. There had been a dispute among the zemindars respecting the revenues of the village, particularly with a person named Gowry; and the immediate cause which instigated the Bramins to murder their mother, was an act of violence, said to have been committed by the emissaries of Gowry, in entering their house during their absence at night, and carrying off forty rupees.

the property of the two brothers, from the apartments of their women. Beechuk first returned to his house, where his mother, his wife, and his sister-in-law related what had happened. He immediately conducted his mother to a neighbouring rivulet, where, being joined in the grey of the morning, by his brother, Adher, they called out aloud to the people of the village, that, although they would overlook the assault as an act which could not be remedied, the forty rupees must be returned. To this exclamation no answer was received, nor is it even certain that it was heard by any person. Beechuk, without further hesitation, drew his scimitar, and at one stroke severed his mother's head

from her body; with the professed view, as entertained and avowed, both by parent and son, that the mother's spirit, excited by the beating of a large drum during forty days, might for ever haunt, torment, and pursue to death Gowry and the others concerned with him. The last words which she pronounced were, that "she would blast Gowry and those connected with him."

It must not be imagined, that because the Hindoos do not admit of converts from other religions, they have no schisms and dissensions among themselves; or that the Bramins are so mild with those who differ from them in religious sentiment, as they have been represented. Dr. Buchanan, when speak-

ing of the sect called Jaina, in Mysore, says, that in a quarrel among the Bramins, the party which obtained the victory, caused the priests of the Jaina, with as many of their followers as were obstinate, to be ground to death in oil-mills; while the remainder, who were converted by this powerful mode of argument, received pardon from the offended Bramins. The same traveller farther observes, that the houses at Tonoru, where this cruelty took place, are roofed with tiles and covered with thorns, to prevent the monkeys from unroofing them; because those mischievous animals are very numerous, and to destroy them is reckoned a grievous sin. Those very persons who

applauded the Bramins for having ground the Jainas in an oil-mill, shudder with horror at the thought of killing a monkey !

OF VARIOUS CLASSES OF BRAMINS;
VIZ.
BRAMINS WHO TEACH THE DAYS,
PANDIDAPAPAN BRAMINS,
TATOIDIPAPAN BRAMINS,
AND
PAPANVAICHENAVEN BRAMINS.

The most learned of the Bramins annually compose calendars or almanacs, and send them to the principal provinces to such of their caste as are unable to compose them for themselves, who copy them for their use. In these almanacs are specified the eclipses, the phases of the moon, the festivals, the most important events that are to

happen in the course of the year, the lucky and unlucky days, and all the other absurdities ever invented for working upon the hopes and fears of credulous devotees. A great number of Bramins subsist on the produce of these almanacs, which they daily go and read to the opulent for money. The frontispiece to this volume represents one of these men, known by the appellation of Bramins who teach the days, or astronomers.

The Hindoos have cultivated astronomy from time immemorial, and had made, at a remote period, great progress in that science. At present, those who follow the profession of astronomers are in general extremely igno-

rant. They employ the ancient tables for their astronomical calculations and predictions ; but they know nothing of the principles upon which they are constructed. They seem, according to the expression of a celebrated French astronomer, to be mere machines made to calculate eclipses, which it is true, they foretel with tolerable accuracy, by means of methods which are perhaps five or six thousand years old, but of the rationale of which they are utterly ignorant. Their rules are in verse, and they recite them during their operations, calculating with cowries or blackmoors' teeth, a kind of shell which passes for money in India. This mode is prompt and expeditious; but in case

of mistake they are obliged to begin afresh, because they cannot revise what they have worked.

The year of the Hindoos consists of three hundred and sixty-five days, fifteen of their hours, thirty-one minutes and fifteen seconds. The day, which is reckoned from sun-rise to sun-rise, contains sixty hours, each hour sixty minutes, and each minute sixty seconds: it is divided into eight parts of seven hours and a half each.

The Bramins are acquainted with the sun-dial: they make use of it for drawing meridians, for fixing the site of their pagodas, and for ascertaining the latitudes of different towns, by a comparison of the length of the shadow with

the height of the instrument on the day of the equinox.

They place the earth in the centre of the universe, and reckon nine planets namely, the seven known from the remotest antiquity, and two invisible dragons which are the cause of eclipses. They believe also that the moon is farther distant from us than the sun; probably because her light is feebler and because she gives out no heat while that of the sun is so intense. The Bramins certainly have accurate notions respecting the phases of the moon: but the vulgar, who are immersed in the profoundest ignorance, imagine that the moon is filled with ambrosia, that the gods repair thither

to regale themselves with it, and that this is the cause of the diminution of her light. M. Bailly is of opinion, that a nation possessing such accurate methods for calculation, and ascribing phænomena to such absurd causes, must have received those methods from some other quarter, and has no claim to the invention of any thing but the absurdities. He therefore looks upon what is left to the Bramins of the ancient astronomy, rather as the wrecks than as the elements of a science.

The Pandidapapan is a Bramin in the service of a native prince, and who is usually sent by the latter in the quality of ambassador, to negotiate any important business. Several of them are

likewise employed by the English as interpreters, and some have no scruple to undertake a less honourable vocation, that of spies. One of these Bramins is represented in the annexed engraving.

By the profession which they follow, they are released from the functions of the priesthood; but their way of life is like that of the Bramin astronomers. At Madras, Bramins are employed by almost all the merchants as cashiers, and there is no instance of any of them having ever made free with the money entrusted to his care. A Pandidapapa, guilty of such a misdemeanor, would lose his caste; while, on the other hand, all the persons belonging to that





A. Sambodangwan B. 2211 6. 31.

caste would contribute to make good any deficiency in the funds committed to him by his employer. On this account they are preferred to all the other Hindoos for the situation of treasurers. They also keep the accounts of the higher castes of Malabars, who employ them as their men of business.

The Tatoidipapan Bramin is a follower of Sheeva. He performs all the religious services in the pagodas of that deity: he is obliged to subsist upon alms, to keep continually reciting some passage of the *vedas*, and to bathe at stated times. The Bramins who devote themselves to the service of Sheeva, are marked on the forehead with a patch made of cow-dung, burnt

at the pagoda, and having a kind of red seal in the middle. They likewise make several stripes with ashes on the arms, breast, and loins. Many of them offer sacrifices in their own houses; some tell fortunes; others live like monks in monasteries, built by princes and richly endowed. The wealthy are expected to support a certain number of other Bramins, according to their fortune.

The Papanvaichenaven is a Bramin of the sect of Vishnu, who performs the service in the temples of that god. The Bramins belonging to this sect make on the forehead two white stripes, which unite at the top of the nose, and a yellow one in the middle: they have



A. Payan, Reichensperger
Brasil.

A. Tarsidipepan
Brasil.

cows, some pieces of land, butter, cloth, sugar, salt, metal vessels, some pieces of gold, and necessaries for their subsistence.

The person of a Bramin is so sacred that none of them is liable to capital punishment, for any crime whatever. If one of them has deserved death, his eyes are put out, but his life is not taken away. To kill a Bramin is one of the five heinous sins for which there is scarcely any forgiveness; and the *vedas* enjoin any person by whom this crime has been committed, to go on pilgrimage for twelve years, soliciting alms, and carrying in his hand the skull of the Bramin, out of which he is obliged to eat and drink whatever is

given to him. At the expiration of that time, he must distribute a certain sum in alms, and build a temple to the god of the sect to which the Bramin belonged.

The Bramins have a right to kill their wives if they surprize them in the act of adultery; but the punishment which they commonly inflict for this offence is close confinement; and if they have an affection for them, they forgive them, and forget their fault. On occasion of this reconciliation, they give a grand entertainment, to which a large company of Bramins and their wives are invited, and the adulteress waits upon them at table.

admitted into the more perfect order of *Saniassees*. The *Vanaprastas*, if they are married, are at liberty to take their wives with them in their retirement, but they must abstain from all intercourse with them and observe the strictest continence. They live in forests, subsisting entirely on herbs and fruit, sleeping on the bare ground, and having no other shelter, even in the rainy season, than an open shed.

The *Saniassees* carry perfection, or rather fanaticism, to a still greater length. Among other extravagances they never cut their nails, which consequently are sometimes of prodigious length. They must never suffer their

thoughts to wander to worldly objects, but they must be continually absorbed in the contemplation of the divinity.

Every morning the Saniassée must carefully wash a stick called in Sanscrit *danda*. This stick has seven knots, representing the seven great *riches*; it is given to him by his *Guru*, with great solemnity on the day of his initiation, together with a piece of sacred cloth, and a copper vessel, termed in Sanscrit *caramandala*.

When the Saniassées have wholly disengaged themselves from the things of this world, they are called *Brahmanas*. They thenceforth remain motionless as a log of wood or a stone;

never eat unless food is put into their mouths by others ; neither do they wash any part of their bodies : and when they die, they are conveyed straightway to heaven without undergoing any farther transmigration. If, however, at this last moment, they still feel the least hankering after the things of this world, they will be born again, but not to hold a lower rank than that of kings or emperors. In the other case, after they have long enjoyed, in Indra's heaven, the reward of their holy life, they become liable to be born again upon earth. It is not till they have deserved to be identified with the Supreme Being that they are relieved

from the necessity of returning any more to the world, and put in possession of immutable and eternal felicity.

Persons belonging to other castes, such as the *Vaisyas* and *Sooders* may be *Vanaprastas* and *Saniassces*. Though subject to the same rules and laws as the Bramins initiated into those orders, they do not live with them, but form a kind of separate sect, having a superior of their own caste.

The institution of the orders of the *Vanaprastas* and *Saniassces* is of the highest antiquity; all that relates to their discipline being fixed by the laws of Menu. These laws specify the herbs, roots, and fruit, on which they are allowed to subsist and those which

they must not eat ; the offerings and sacrifices which they ought to make to fire, to the constellations, and to the gods ; the garments they should wear, which should be made of the skin of the black antelope, or the bark of a tree, &c. Among numberless trivial injunctions we meet with passages of truly stoic sublimity. “ In order to be happy,” says Menu to the Saniassee, “ live continually alone ; thus thou wilt not abandon any one and none will abandon thee. Wish not either to live or to die ; but calmly await the destiny decreed thee, as a slave waits for his wages. Never accept alms after having made a humble obeisance, for the Saniassee who receives it as the

price of an obeisance, though free before, becomes a slave."

In the Sanscrit writings, it is said, that a Saniassee or Yogee, who shall devote himself to a solitary religious life, shall wear no other clothing but what may be necessary to cover his nakedness, nor have any other worldly goods but a pitcher to drink out of; that he shall always meditate on the truths contained in the sacred writings, but never argue upon them; that his food shall be confined to rice and vegetables; that he shall eat but once a day, and then sparingly; that he shall look forward with desire to the separation of the soul from the body, be indifferent about heat or cold, or hun-

ger, or praise, or reproach, or any thing concerning this life; and that, unless he strictly follow these rules and subdue his passions, he will only be more criminal by embracing a state the duties of which he could not perform, and neglecting those he was born to observe.

OF THE YOGES AND FAKEERS.

There are in Hindoostan a great number of other penitents of different sects, called *Fakeers*, *Yoges*, *Tadins*, *Pandarons*, &c. who make a vow to live at the expense of the public, and travel about begging. The yoges and fakeers, who are often mistaken the one for the other, are both penitents and mendicants; but the former are Hindoos and the latter Musulmans: in other respects they resemble one another in cunning, hypocrisy, and impudence. They are often to be seen in the bazars, in the markets, and in all other public

places. Figure to yourself a fanatic stark naked, with the exception of a small piece of stuff, which is fastened round his middle, bedaubed all over with a whitish powder, his hair so twisted that it might be taken for Medusa's serpents, setting up from time to time the strangest howls, running like a madman, with a face proof against shame, red and wild-looking eyes, and you will have some idea of a fakeer. The wretches strive to surpass one another in extravagance; they try by all possible means to attract the notice of the multitude, some wounding themselves on the forehead, arms, or thighs, to excite the compassion of the charitable, of the other sex in particu-

lar, and to obtain alms from them. Others will lie on their backs, motionless in the streets, and there exposed on the scorching sand to the intense heat of the sun, sing hymns and affect to be totally indifferent to all that is passing about them, as if they were absorbed in profound meditation; but at the same time leering, to observe if any thing is thrown to them.

These filthy and lazy vagabonds sometimes assemble, according to Dow, in troops of eight or ten thousand, levying contributions wherever they go. The women have a particular veneration for them, and when they enter a house, the husband, from a religious motive or out of fear, respectfully withdraws, as cer-

tain husbands in Spain are said to do, on the arrival of the spiritual directors of their wives. The native governments, instead of punishing these scoundrels, who venture to pronounce threats in the name of heaven, tolerate and encourage their hypocrisy; and stupid devotees furnish themselves to feed them. Whoever embraces this lazy life is sure, if not to amass wealth, at least to be exempt from want.

It is related that Aurengzeb, who was viceroy of Decan before he ascended the imperial throne, being informed that the fakeers were accustomed to conceal in the folds and seams of their rags a great quantity of gold and precious stones, invited them all to a grand

entertainment. After dinner he ordered as many new dresses as there were guests to be brought, observing, it was but right that such men as they, who devoted themselves to the service of the deity, should be decently attired: he therefore requested them to strip off their old garments, and put on those which he had provided for them. The fakeers, in some embarrassment, alleged religious motives and numberless other pretexts for retaining their holy rags; but the prince was inflexible; they were obliged to obey, and their hypocrisy was fully exposed.

The yogees and fakeers, as well as all the other penitents, boast of possessing supernatural powers. some as-

sert that they have come down from heaven; that they live thousands of years without taking any sustenance, &c. So much is true, that certain fakcers neither eat nor drink in the presence of any person. Some assert that they can foretel future events; others pretend to be able to discover hidden treasures; and others again, that they can turn whatever they please into gold: and if you ask them how it happens, that, possessing such an extraordinary faculty, they still lead so miserable a life, they reply, that they have not been endowed with it for their own benefit, but to be serviceable to others; and that it would instantly cease, if they were to attempt to employ it for their per-

sonal advantage. They and their silly dupes are incessantly talking of their conversations with the deity, of apparitions, visions, and in short of every thing that the most barefaced imposture is capable of imagining, for the purpose of imposing on mankind.

The number of these fakeers is estimated at eight hundred thousand.

There is a class of these penitents, called *nanek-pounthis*, who wear but one mustachio and one shoe; they hold in their hands two sticks, which they strike one against another, repeating prayers, or abusing those who pass by.

The two fakeers whose portraits we give after drawings from life, were living at Benares in 1792. One of them

named Praoun Poury, was born at Canouge, and belonged to the caste of the Khattries or Rajpoots. At the age of nine years, he ran away from his father's house, and repaired to the town of Bedpoor, where he turned fakeer. Soon afterwards, he went to Allahabad, where a festival, which attracts a great concourse of pilgrims is annually held; and there, having heard the merit attached to the eighteen penances held forth in the Shasters to Hindoo devotees for the expiation of their sins highly extolled, he chose that which is termed *ordhbahu*, and which consists in holding the hands and arms continually crossed over the head. He himself admitted that this penance was at first

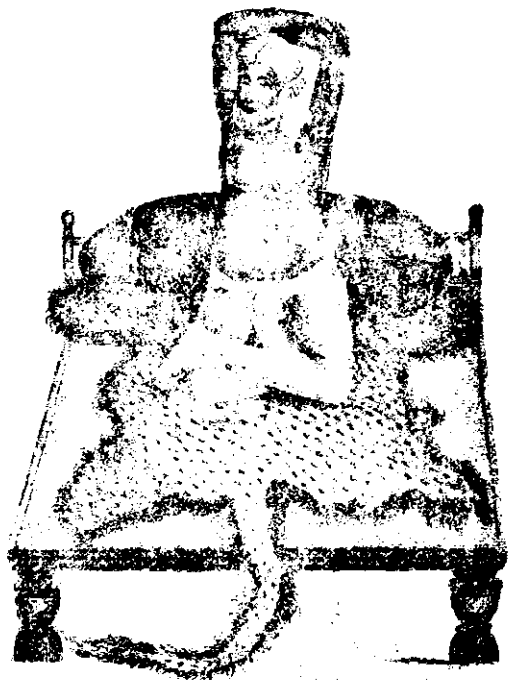
extremely painful, and declared that it is necessary for a person to prepare himself for it by long abstinence.

Praoun Poury afterwards travelled all over India, visiting all the celebrated pagodas, and attending all the religious ceremonies, without ever intermitting his voluntary penance. He traversed Persia and ~~part of~~ Russia, and even went to Moscow; but as the account of his peregrinations, inserted in the fifth volume of the *Asiatic Researches*, contains nothing very curious, we shall merely observe that, after pursuing this strolling life nearly forty years, he settled in a small village in the Carnatic. He retained, however, such a fondness for travelling, that he annually made

excursions into the neighbouring countries and sometimes extended them to Nepaul.

In the annexed plate Praoun Poury is represented in his usual posture, squatting cross-legged on a tiger's skin, with his arms crossed over his head.

The other fakeer was named Perhasanund. He was a Bramachari Bramin, and styled himself *Purram Soatuntre*, which signifies *enjoyment of one's self, independence*. At the age of ten years he embraced the contemplative life, and accustomed himself to lie upon thorns and flints. At twenty he left his father's house, to avoid the importunities of his parents, who wished him to marry, and devoted himself to a



MR. NAHIN PRATT'S TOWER.

wandering life. Like Praoun Poury, he wandered from place to place ; and at a village in Thibet, he determined to shut himself up in a *gaupha*, or cell, and there do penance for twelve years. During this incarceration, he was almost devoured by vermin ; and forty years afterwards declared that his skin still bore the marks of their ravages. At the end of a year his penance was interrupted by the rajah, who ordered the door of his cell to be broken open, and who, at his solicitation, allowed him to undergo the *ser-seja*, that is, to lie on a bedstead, the bottom of which is stuck full of iron spikes, in the manner represented in the opposite engraving. He never lay afterwards

on any other bed. To render his penance the more meritorious, he had logs of wood burned round his bed during the intense heat of summer: and in winter he had a pot perforated with small holes hung up over him, from which water kept continually dropping on his head. The late Mr. Duncan, who was governor of Bombay, and has given the history of this fakeer in the fifth volume of the *Asiatic Researches*, saw him at Benares after he had led this kind of life thirty-five years: and he was then in good health and spirits.

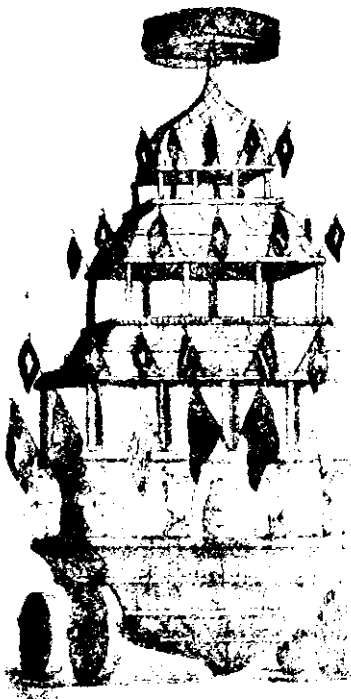


THE FAKER PERMANENT.

TADINS.

Persons of the inferior castes are allowed to enter into the orders of penitents, of whom we have yet to treat. They doubtless owe their origin to the pride of fanatics, ambitious to share the honour and veneration paid to the Bramins, and to which their birth prevented their aspiring.

The *Tadins*, who are devotees of the sect of Vishnu, belong to the caste of the Sooders. After spending part of their lives in penances from which the imagination recoils, and differing in no respect from those which the *Vanapras-*



Ter, or Sacred Chariot.

to have their heads chopped off by it, under the idea that this kind of death, is most agreeable to the deity.

These fanatics, whose gloomy imagination has disordered their brain, aspire by all these penances to an imaginary perfection. Some of them, really despising the wealth, honours and pleasures of this world, have in view only the glory and happiness which they promise themselves in a future life : but the greater number have no other object than to gratify their ardent thirst of riches and distinction. Under the appearance of humility they cloak the highest degree of arrogance and pride. When a superstitious rajah has occasion to consult them, he must repair

to their hut, because they would never condescend to wait upon him; well aware that this is the way to obtain respect and veneration and to overawe weak minds.

It must not be imagined, however, that the number of these fanatics is considerable: they are only met with occasionally. Some indeed, weary of solitude and cured for ever of their folly, quit their retirement and return to human society.

The opposite plate represents two Tadins and a Pandaron. One of the former has put into his mouth a padlock which passes through his tongue, and prevents him from moving his teeth, so that he cannot eat without extreme



As per Sa
Mandara.

Tadā
with a padicko. his is ash.

difficulty; the Pandaron has confined his neck in an iron grating; and the other Tadin is playing with fire.

The Tadins, having adopted for their peculiar festival that of fire, endeavour to persuade the people that that element can do them no injury: by way of proof they put a lighted lamp into their mouths, but quickly take it out again. It would be superfluous to enter into any explanation of this trick, which is not less cleverly performed by the fire-eaters of Europe.

The festival of fire lasts eighteen days, and is celebrated in the following manner. On the eighteenth day, hot ashes and burning charcoal are spread over the ground for the space

of forty feet. The penitents, who for the seventeen preceding days must lie upon the bare ground and submit to other abstinences, repair to the place, with their heads crowned with flowers, and their bodies daubed with cow-dung and marked with yellow stripes. M. Renouard de Sainte-Croix, who witnessed the celebration of this festival near Pondicherry, asserts, that the devotees, to the number of twenty or twenty-five, seemed impatient to rush upon the burning coals; nay, he adds, it was even necessary to repress their ardour in a rather uncivil manner, for it was with a rattan which was vigorously applied to their shoulders. The coals are stirred up from time to time,

while the statues of Darmarajah and his wife Debrodai, are carried in procession three times round the fire. The penitents then walk over the coals more or less rapidly according as they have more or less courage and devotion, some carrying their children, others heavy weapons, lances and glistening sabres.

When the ceremony is over, the people eagerly pick up some of the ashes for the purpose of daubing their foreheads with them, and scramble for the flowers which have crowned these voluntary martyrs. Those who are fortunate enough to obtain them, preserve them with the greatest care.

This ceremony is performed in honour of Debrodai, who is related to

have married five brothers, and to have annually left one and gone to another; but previously to this kind of divorce, she took great care to purify herself with fire. Such is the origin of this extraordinary festival, for which there is no fixed day: but it must not be held at any other time than in the first three months of the year.



PLATE 10. Portraits of the Sons of Shreeva.

PANDARONS.

The Pandarons are penitents of the sect of Sheeva, who are highly venerated in different parts of Hindoostan for the sanctity of their lives: there are several classes of them according to the penances to which they devote themselves.

They daub their faces, breasts and arms with cow-dung, and run about the streets begging alms, singing the praises of Sheeva, and carrying bunches of peacocks' feathers in their hands. They wear, in general, necklaces and bracelets of *outrachon* seeds, because

carry a cane, at the top of which is a cow, which they adore as the goddess of virtue, by the name of Amarvadere.

The Ariganda Paudaron, like the other penitents of the same sect, is subject to all the duties imposed by the particular worship of Sheeva. But it is not enough for him to sing the praises of that god, to solicit charity, and to wear a flame-coloured cloth; he inflicts on himself a more severe penance, confining his neck in an iron grating, a foot and a half square, which prevents him from sleeping. This heavy and unpleasant collar he is obliged to carry about with him as long as he lives. He, however, considers it as an ornament, and a title to the vene-

ration of the pious, and pride renders it light to him. On occasion of festivals, this Pandaron is sure to exhibit himself and to solicit alms at the doors of the pagodas; and, to excite the pity or attract the notice of passengers, he lights up lamps at the four corners of the grate which he wears about his neck, as represented in the plate, at page 219.

The Paeni-caori Pandaron is the bearer of the offerings made by the Hindoos to the temple of Paeni, dedicated to Supramanya. These offerings consist of money, sugar, honey, camphor, milk, butter, cocoa-nuts, &c. This penitent is usually dressed in yellow, and he carries the presents

suspended to a stick, to which he attaches an awning, nearly resembling that of a palanquin, to screen himself from the sun.



A Paganee, singing the history of Mariam.

POOJAREES.

The Poojarees are a kind of priests, who devote themselves to the service of Manar Suami and Mariatta, goddess of the small-pox. The votaries of Mariatta are Parias: the others may be of all classes excepting Parias. The latter sing in the streets the praises of Sheeva and Supramanya, and the Poojarees of Mariatta celebrate that goddess.

The Poojarees of Manar Suami are attended by several disciples, some with small drums, called *oudoukai*, which they beat with their fingers;

others with *chelinbans*, a sort of hollow rings of copper in which stones are inclosed. The Poojaree carries a box full of ashes of cow-dung, some of which he presents to those from whom he receives alms.

The Poojaree of Mariatta has nothing but a small bell. His wife generally accompanies him with castanets, and at the end of each verse that her husband sings she says *Amma*, or yes. Sometimes he carries with him pictures representing circumstances in the history of that goddess.

There is a very extraordinary mode of paying honour to Mariatta, called *Mariatta cotam*, of which the annexed engraving will afford an idea. The vo-

tary stains himself with saffron, and dances with a circular vessel full of water in which are put a particular kind of leaves on his head, and a bunch of the same sort of leaves in his hand. Some of the followers of this goddess also carry a dagger with a lemon stuck on the top.

The Hindoos are extremely afraid of Mariatta, to whom they erect temples in all their villages. In the sanctuary they deposit the head only of the goddess, to which the Hindoos of the superior castes alone address their prayers. The body is placed at the entrance of the temple, in order to receive the adorations of the Parias.

The Poojarees marry, and are at

liberty to relinquish their profession whenever they please, they are never either *Pandurons* or *Tadins*; nor do they run about the streets like other penitents; and they never solicit alms but in the temple of the deity to whose service they devote themselves.

Their name is derived from *poojah*, which signifies a daily ceremony performed in honour of the god. They are also called *Bainians*, because they sometimes accompany their singing with an instrument called *Baini*.

NEMESSOURA-CAORI.

The appellation of *Nemessoura-Caori*, or *Caradi*, is given to women who make a vow to carry water from the Ganges to Nemessourin, a celebrated pagoda at Cape Comorin, dedicated to Sheeva. This penance is considered as one of the most efficacious for the remission of sins.

Women of the superior castes never perform this pilgrimage in person, but pay considerable sums to substitutes. The opposite plate represents a *Nemessoura-Caradi*. The vessels containing the sacred water are set on a kind of

mats, fastened by four sticks, in the manner of scales, to each end of a pole, which she carries on her shoulder.

The Hindoos believe that the idol in the temple of Nemessourin was brought by the god Hanooman from the Ganges, by command of Râma; and that the tank which is in the temple was made by Vishnu, with his own hands. The devout go thither on pilgrimage from distant countries: but to render this act meritorious, the pilgrim must previously visit the banks of the Ganges, lie on the ground and fast during the journey, and arrive laden with water from that river to bathe the idol.

The *Cashi-Cuori*, or *Cavadi*, are a class of *Pandarons*, who perform the same



NEMESURA CAVALI

or Woman carrying the Water of the Night

kind of pilgrimage, with water from the Ganges to Cashi. This water, after being thrown over the idol, is collected and distributed among the devout, by whom it is most religiously preserved. When a sick person is at the point of death, a few drops of it are poured into his mouth and upon his head.

The wealthy inhabitants of Malabar employ people to bring them water from the Ganges, which is always received with extraordinary ceremony. To prove that the water was really brought from the sacred river, the bearers take the precaution to obtain a certificate to that effect from the officer of the place, who, moreover, seals the vessel into which it is put, with his seal.

Every man, without exception, may be a carrier of Ganges water; for which purpose he need not be either *Tadin*, *Pundaron*, or *Yogee*.

SACRIFICES
AND
RELIGIOUS CEREMONIES.

In ancient times it was customary to sacrifice a bull or a horse to the Deity, and a man to the evil genii; but these sacrifices, the first called *gomedha*, the second *assumedha*, and the third *narumedha*, have been forbidden ever since the commencement of the *culi-youg*, or present age: and on this point, at least, the doctrine of Buddha obtained the ascendancy in India on this side of the Ganges. The bull and the horse were sacrificed to Indra, who transmitted the

offering to Brama, and Brama to the Supreme Being. The human sacrifice was made to Bhavani, who afterwards offered the victim to the evil spirits. At this remote period, the Bramins, who officiated at these sacrifices, possessed, it is said, the power of recalling the victims to life, by repeating the Vedas by which they were deprived of it.

The animals now sacrificed are the buffalo and the sheep. The former is offered to Dourga or Bhavani among the Mahrattas and in Bengal at the festival called Doura. The sheep is strangled at the grand sacrifice, which is offered with great pomp to the stars, and is called *jagam*. When the animal

is dead, the heart is roasted and cut in small pieces, which are divided among the principal Bramins; and this is the only occasion on which the Bramins eat flesh.

Some few tribes have retained the practice of sacrificing living victims. The Jhattries offer a ram or a goat twice a year to their tutelary goddess, Bhavani; others even sacrifice human victims on extraordinary occasions: but the tribes which are addicted to this cruel superstition are so few, so insignificant in point of numbers and so weak, that they conceal themselves with the utmost care and venture no farther than to poison, from time to time, some wretched mendicant, as an

agreeable offering to Cali, another form of Bhavani.

In Malabar fowls are sometimes immolated: but the Bramins have no hand in sacrifices of this kind, which are customary among the inferior castes alone.

Dr. Buchanan informs us, that among the Morasu, a caste of Sooder Hindoos, where bloody sacrifices of sheep and goats are offered to Kala, one of the destroying powers, is this singular custom; when a woman is from fifteen to twenty years of age, and has borne children, terrified lest the angry deity should deprive her of her infants, she goes to the temple, and as an offering to appease his wrath, she cuts off one

or two of her fingers from the right hand.

Besides these sacrifices of living victims, there are many others which are more worthy of the Deity. The latter consist in general of milk, water, honey, corn, flowers, also butter and curds, with which, on many occasions, barley and other seeds are wetted.

At one festival, which is held at the beginning of the season most suitable for navigation, cocoa-nuts are thrown into the sea with great ceremony. At another the military castes mix a red powder with water, with which they drench one another by means of a species of squirt, to represent Parasou Rama, or some other hero, returning

from battle covered with blood. Others are of opinion that this ceremony is designed to celebrate the orgies of Krishna with his mistresses and companions. As tradition relates, that in their sports they dusted one another with a red powder, the pious Hindoos, in imitation of them, pelt each other with a profusion of earth of the same colour, which is found in abundance in Hindoostan, and is employed in painting by the name of India red.

This absurd ceremony, which will be farther noticed hereafter, takes place nearly at the same season of the year as our Ash-Wednesday, and also precedes the Lent, or the Hindoo season of expiation. It is usually held, like

most other ceremonies, in front of the houses of the rich ; but frequently also within them. The annexed engraving represents a rajah and his wives dusting and squirting at one another on a terrace of his garden.

The festivals at which the Hindoos carry their gods about in triumph are of high antiquity, and commonly celebrated with great magnificence. The pious are called together by the sound of drums and trumpets, which is kept up from morning till night in the pagoda. Some fall prostrate before the idol ; others repeat prayers standing up to the waist in the water of the sacred tank : these are employed in anointing their heads with common oil

or essences, and those in drying their clothes. Some read or converse, while the great majority listen respectfully. Meanwhile a thousand cooks are at work in the out-buildings, and banana leaves are prepared as dishes for the rice and other articles of food. All is bustle during the day; but on the approach of night this bustle increases. No sooner is the sun set, than lamps fed with cow-dung dried in the daytime and moistened with common oil give notice that the procession is about to begin.

When the hour awaited with impatience is arrived, the sound of a very large copper basin, which is struck with thick pieces of bamboo, is heard,

and the people take their places. The procession is opened by groups of musicians with long wooden trumpets, who are followed by thousands of devotees in two files, each carrying in his hand a piece of wood a yard long, with a chaffing-dish or circular iron receiver at the top, full of the same matter that is used for the lamps, and numbers of men are incessantly running to and fro with pots of oil for the supply of the latter.

The cars employed in these ceremonies, called *ters*, resemble high wooden steeples curiously wrought and carved. They are adorned with flags and flowers. Pasteboard lions, placed at the four corners, support these ornaments :

sometimes the front is occupied by horses of the same material. The idol is in a niche, or in a pedestal in the middle. The car moves on low but very thick wheels; it has several stories where there are dancing-girls, singing and dancing, while others with large fans, keep continually fanning the statues, or drive away the flies from it with cows' tails. The uppermost story is covered with a circular canopy of a red colour, enriched with gold fringe: from each story wave flags of all hues, particularly blue, red and yellow. Some are striped, others all of one colour, and others have a cross in the middle, as represented in the plate.



The principal adventures, and the most execrable misdeeds of their gods, are painted or carved in relief on the sides of the car. These unwieldy machines cannot move but on very level ground, and some thousands of persons are required to drag them along. In this country there is no want of hands; and as the Hindoos are taught to believe, that by drawing the cars of their gods at these ceremonies they make atonement for their sins, all are eager to seize the ropes. The car is thus dragged away, with loud shouts and a noise and uproar not to be conceived. In their opinion, it is also a highly meritorious action to roll in the ruts made by the car in its passage: nay some even carry

their superstition so far, as to throw themselves down before it, that they may be crushed to death by the wheels. Solvyns assures us that he has seen thirty of these fanatics sacrifice their lives in this manner under a single *ruff*, as the sacred car is denominated.

So much is certain, that if any of those who go before the vehicle happen to be thrown down by the crowd, they must inevitably perish, because it would be impossible to stop in such a confusion. These unfortunate wretches are venerated as saints and their death is envied.

The procession halts now and then at *pendals*, or resting-places. The idol is visited by a great number of pup-

pets fastened above with silken threads ; these figures are let down, and dance and play antics till the spectators have had enough of their performance.

It is a singular fact that the most devout of the musicians throw themselves on the ground, and move forward on their backs with astonishing celerity, playing their instruments all the while.

The car with the idol remain under the last *pendal* till the eighth day, when they are removed and drawn back to the temple, but without ceremony. Next day the enormous machine is stripped of its decorations and put away under a straw shed till the following year.

Sometimes the idol is carried on a mere litter or bier. In the back-ground of our plate are seen the outer walls and the towers of a pagoda. On the right is a gate of honour, or resting-place. The god borne upon a bier is stopping there while the devedassees perform dances accompanied with obstreperous music. Half-naked Hindoos, with white turbans, carry a kind of trident, having lighted tow burning at the points.

The manner of adoring the idols consists in holding the clasped hands before the face, and bending the body half way to the ground.

The idol represented in the engraving, is of colossal stature and gilt. Ample

muslin drapery conceals it almost entirely from the view of the devout. Over it there is a kind of small cupola of a red colour.

The resting-place is in the form of a canopy enriched with drapery, and adorned at the four corners with red standards, bearing a white cross. From the centre hangs a lighted lamp. When the sacrifices, libations, and other rites are finished, the crowd convey the god back to his temple.

The ceremony represented in our next plate is called *boussa-djeng*. It concludes in a very curious manner. The people, after carrying the images of the gods in procession several days, take them to a river and set them upon

two boats placed alongside each other. The respect and adoration hitherto paid to these images are then succeeded by the grossest abuse and the most vehement imprecations. The Bramins themselves strive to outdo one another in vituperation, and such as distinguish themselves continue to be objects of peculiar veneration till the next festival. After this extraordinary scene, the boats are separated, and the images of the gods tumble into the water amidst the acclamations of the multitude.

The figure, exhibited in the plate, of colossal dimensions, represents the goddess Cali, the wife of Sheeva. She lolls out her tongue, which practice, as Solvyns observes, is very common



Ceremony of throwing the golden
Goddess Kali into the water.

with the Hindoo women, when any thing affects them in a disagreeable manner.

The goddess is crowned with a kind of tiara. One of her four hands is armed with a large scimitar; another is holding a head by the hair; and she has round her neck a chain of human heads which descends to her knees.

The description given by an eye-witness, the late Rev. Dr. Buchanan, of the ceremonies practised at the temple of Juggernaut, though rather long, is too characteristic of these horrid scenes, and too interesting to be omitted here.

That part of the provincē of Orissa which contains the temple of Jugg-

naut, first became subject to Britain, under the administration of Marquis Wellesley, who permitted pilgrims to visit the place without paying tribute. It was proposed soon afterwards, to pass a regulation for the management of the temple, and for levying a tax; but as such a measure might have led to the inference that the government sanctioned the idolatrous and bloody rites performed there, his lordship disapproved it, and left his successor to pass the opprobrious law. A tax was imposed by it on pilgrims, for admission to the temple; an officer of government was appointed to collect it: and out of the produce, a sum was allotted for the expenses of the temple.

Having premised thus much, let us hear Dr. Buchanan, who visited this place in the year 1806, and whose information is given in extracts from the journal of his tour.

The first is dated from Buddruck, in Orissa, *May 30*:—We know that we are approaching Juggernaut, (and yet we are more than fifty miles from it,) by the human bones which we have seen for some days strewed by the way. At this place, we have been joined by several large bodies of pilgrims, perhaps two thousand in number, who have come from various parts of northern India. Some of them say, that they have been two months on their march, travelling slowly in the hottest

season of the year, with their wives and children. Numbers of pilgrims die on the road, and their bodies generally remain unburied. On a plain by the river, near the pilgrims' caravansera at this place, there are more than a hundred skulls. The dogs, jackals, and vultures seem to live here on human prey. The vultures exhibit a shocking tameness. The obscene animals will not leave the body sometimes till we come close to them. This Buddruck is a horrid place: wherever I turn my eyes, I meet death in some shape or other.

June 12.—At nine o'clock this morning the temple of Juggernaut appeared in view at a great distance. When the

multitude first saw it, they gave a shout and fell to the ground and worshipped. From the place where I now stand, I have a view of a host of people, like an army encamped at the outer gate of the town of Juggernaut, where a guard of soldiers is posted to prevent their entering, until they have paid the pilgrims' tax. I passed a devotee to-day, who laid himself down at every step, measuring the road to Juggernaut by the length of his body, as a penance of merit to please the god.

Many of the pilgrims being poor and unable to pay the tax, it frequently happens, that a body of them consisting chiefly of old men, women, and children, trusting to the physical weight

of their mass will make a charge on the guards, overwhelm them and force their way through the gate without paying; the soldiers being unwilling to oppose their bayonets. On these occasions numbers perish; and we are assured that one hundred and fifty persons have been trampled to death at once in the crowd in approaching the gate.

June 14.—I have seen Juggernaut. The scene at Buddruck is but the vestibule of Juggernaut. The idol has been considered as the Moloch of the present age, and he is justly so named, for the sacrifices offered up to him by self-devotement are not less criminal, perhaps, not less numerous than those

recorded of the Molech of Canaan. Two other idols accompany Juggernaut, namely, Boloram and Shubudra, his brother and sister; for there are three deities worshipped here: They receive equal adoration, and sit on thrones of nearly equal height.

This morning I viewed the temple—a stupendous fabric, and truly commensurate with the extensive sway of the “horrid king.” As other temples are usually adorned with figures emblematic of their religion, so Juggernaut has representations, numerous and varied, of that vice which constitutes the essence of his worship. The walls and gates are covered with indecent emblems, in massive and durable sculp-

ture. I have also visited the sand-plains by the sea, in some places whitened with the bones of the pilgrims; and another place, a little way out of the town, called by the English the Golgotha, where the dead bodies are usually cast forth, and where dogs and vultures are seen.

The vultures generally find out the prey first, and begin with the intestines; for the flesh is too firm for their beaks immediately after death. The dogs soon receive notice of the circumstance, generally from seeing the *hurries*, or corpse-carriers, returning from the place. On the approach of the dogs, the vultures retire a few yards, and wait till the body be sufficiently torn for easy

deglutition. The vultures and dogs often feed together, and sometimes begin their attack before the pilgrim be quite dead. There are four animals which may be seen about a carcass at the same time—the dog, the jackal, the vulture and the *hurgeela*, or adjutant, called by Pennant, the gigantic crane.

Independently of the enormity of the superstition, there are other circumstances which render Juggernaut noisome in an extreme degree. The senses are assailed by offensive effluvia, and by the squalid and ghastly appearance of the famished pilgrims, many of whom die in the streets of want or disease; while the devotees, with clotted hair and painted flesh, are seen practis-

ing their various austerities and modes of self-torture. Its vicinity to the sea probably prevents the contagion which otherwise would be produced by the putrefactions of the place.

June 18.—This day, being the grand Hindoo festival of the *Rutt Jatra*, the Moloch of Hindoostan was brought out of his temple amidst the acclamations of hundreds of thousands of his worshippers. When the idol was placed on his throne, a shout was raised by the multitude, such as I had never heard before. The throne of the idol was placed on a stupendous car or tower, about sixty feet in height, resting on wheels which indented the ground deeply as they slowly turned under the

ponderous machine. Attached to it were six cables, of the size and length of a ship's cable, by which the people drew it along. Thousands of men, women, and children pulled by each cable, crowding so closely that some could use only one hand. Infants are made to exert their strength in this office; for it is accounted a merit of righteousness to move the god. Upon the tower were the priests and satellites of the idol surrounding his throne. I was told that there were about a hundred and twenty persons upon the car altogether. The idol is a block of wood, having a frightful visage painted black, with a distended mouth of a bloody colour. His arms are of gold,

and he is dressed in gorgeous apparel. The other two idols are of a white and yellow colour. Five elephants preceded the three towers, bearing towering flags, dressed in crimson caparisons, and having bells hanging to their caparisons, which sounded musically as they moved.

I went on in the procession, close by the tower of Moloch ; which, as it was drawn with difficulty, "grated on its many wheels harsh thunder." After a few minutes it stopped, and now the worship of the god began. A high-priest mounted the car in front of the idol and pronounced obscene stanzas, called *cubber*, the people at intervals responding in the same strain. "These songs," said he, "are the delight of

the god. His car can only move when he is pleased with the song." The car moved on a little way and then stopped. A boy about twelve years was then brought forth to attempt something yet more lascivious, if peradventure the god would move. The child "perfected the praise" of his idol with such ardent expression and gesture that the god was pleased, and the multitude, emitting a sensual yell of delight, urged the car along. But a scene of a different kind was now to be presented. The characteristics of Moloch's worship are obscenity and blood.

After the tower had proceeded some way, a pilgrim announced that he was ready to offer himself a sacrifice to the

idol. He laid himself down in the road before the tower, as it was moving along, lying on his face, with his arms stretched forward. The multitude passed round him, leaving the space clear, and he was crushed to death by the wheels of the tower. A shout of joy was raised to the god. He is said to smile when the libation of the blood is made. The people threw cowries, or small shells which pass for money, on the body of the victim in approbation of the deed. He was left to view a considerable time, and was then carried by the *hurries* to the Golgotha, where I have been just viewing his remains.

June 20. — The horrid solemnities

still continue. Yesterday a woman devoted herself to the idol. She laid herself down in the road in an oblique direction, so that the wheel did not kill her instantaneously as is generally the case; but she died in a few hours. This morning as I passed the place of skulls, nothing remained of her but her bones. And this, thought I, is the worship of the Bramins of Hindoostan, and their worship in its sublimest degree! What then shall we think of their private manners and their moral principles?

I was surprised to see the Bramins with their heads uncovered, in the open plain, falling down in the midst of the Sooders before the "horrid shape,"

and mingling so complacently with the polluted caste.

June 21.—I beheld another distressing scene this morning at the place of skulls—a poor woman lying dead or nearly dead, and her two children by her, looking at the dogs and vultures which were near. The people passed by without noticing the children. I asked them where was their home. They said they had no home but where their mother was. Oh, there is no pity at Juggernaut! no mercy, no tenderness of heart in Moloch's kingdom!

As to the number of worshippers assembled here at this time no accurate calculation can be made. The natives themselves, when speaking of the num-

bers at particular festivals, usually say, that a lack of people (100,000) would not be missed. I asked a Bramin how many he supposed were present at the most numerous festival he had ever witnessed. "How can I tell," said he, "how many grains there are in a handful of sand?" So far Dr. Buchanan.

According to Dr. Carey, an eminent member of the Baptist mission at Serampore, twelve or thirteen pilgrimages are made annually to the temple of Juggernaut. "It is calculated," he says, "that the number who go thither is on some occasions 600,000 persons, and scarcely ever less than

100,000. I suppose on the lowest calculation that in the year 1,200,000 persons attend. The numbers who die in their long pilgrimages, either through want or fatigue, or from dysenteries and fevers caught by lying out and want of accommodation, are incredible. Now, if only one in ten died, the mortality caused by this one idol, would be 120,000 in a year; but some are of opinion that not more than one in ten survives to return home.²⁰

A circumstance which renders it probable that the number of pilgrims is equal to what Dr. Carey computes is; that Mr. Buller, who was long secretary to the board of revenue in India,

has calculated the population, extending as far as Cabul, at little short of two hundred millions.

The annual expenses attending the idol of Juggernaut amount, according to the official account to about 70,000 rupees, or £8,700 sterling.

The rites of Juggernaut are not confined to the temple in Orissa. Close to Is hera, about eight miles from Calcutta, there is a temple of this idol, which is often stained with human blood. It was visited at the Rutt Jattrra, in May 1807, by the Rev. Dr. Buchanan. The tower here, says he, is drawn along like that at Juggernaut, by cables. The number of worshippers at this festival is computed to be a hundred thousand.

The tower is covered with indecent emblems, which were freshly painted for the occasion. One of the victims of this year was a well-made young man, of healthy appearance and comely aspect. He had a garland of flowers round his neck, and his long black hair was dishevelled. He danced for a while before the idol, singing in an enthusiastic strain; and then rushing suddenly to the wheels, he shed his blood under the tower of obscenity.

About the year 1790, twenty-eight Hindoos were crushed to death at Ishera, under the wheels of the car of Jugger-naut, impelled, it was said, by sympathetic religious phrenzy. The fact of their deaths was notorious: it was re-

corded in the Calcutta newspapers, but so little impression did it make on the public mind, and so little inquiry was made by individuals on the subject, that it became doubtful at length, whether the men perished by accident, or as usual by self-devotement: for it was said, that to qualify the enormity of the deed in the view of the English, some of the Hindoos gave out that the men fell under the wheels by accident.

It was probably to this very circumstance that Solvyns, whose testimony is quoted in a preceding page, was an eye-witness.

END OF VOL. II.