

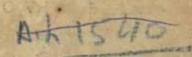
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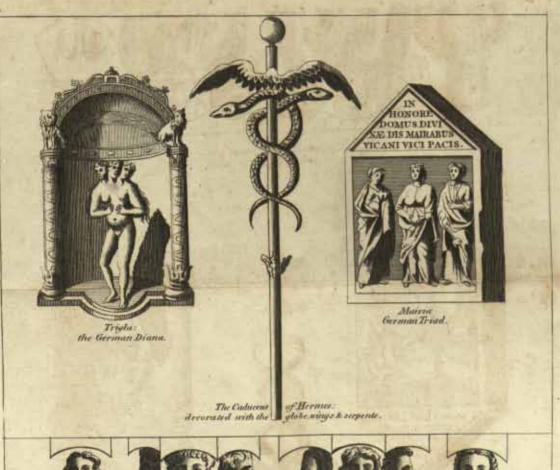
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Gaulie Deities in Triple Groups copied from the Portal of an ancient temple at Montmorillon in France.

From Mangamera.

# INDIAN ANTIQUITIES:

OR,

## DISSERTATIONS,

RELATIVE TO

THE ANCIENT GEOGRAPHICAL DIVISIONS,
THE PURE SYSTEM OF PRIMEVAL THEOLOGY,
THE GRAND CODE OF CIVIL LAWS,
THE ORIGINAL FORM OF GOVERNMENT,
THE WIDELY-EXTENDED COMMERCE, AND
THE VARIOUS AND PROFOUND LITERATURE,

## OF HINDOSTAN:

COMPARED, THROUGHOUT, WITH THE RELIGION, LAWS, GOVERNMENT, AND LITERATURE,

PERSIA, EGYPT, AND GREECE.

A100

AS INTRODUCTORY TO, AND ALLUSTRATIVE OF,

THE HISTORY OF HINDOSTAN,

UPON A COMPREHENSIVE SCALE.

21439

### VOL. V.

In which the Investigation of the ORIENTAL TRIADS of DEITY is continued; and the HORRIBLE PENANCES of the INDIAN DEVOTEES are detailed.

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THE INVESTIGATION OF THE ORIENTAL TRIADS OF DEITY CONTINUED.

### CHAPTER VI.

The Author, persevering in his Research throughout Asia for the Remains of the primitive Doctrine of a divine Triad governing the World, discovers evident Vestiges of it in THI-BET and TARTARY engraved on Medals and sculptured in Images. - An Account of the celebrated MEDAL found in the Deferts of SI-BERIA impressed with the Figure of a triune Deity. - The Scandinavian Theology plainly inculcates the Doctrine in its Three facred Perfons, ODEN, FREA, and THOR. - Extracts from the EDDA decidedly confirming the above Affertion. - From the northern Afia this Doctrine, with other Oriental Dogmas, was propagated to America, demonstrated from Acosta in their great Idol TANGATANGA, or THREE IN ONE. - Brief Statement of the theological Code of CHINA. - Evidence adduced from Le VOL. V. Compte

Compte that the Chinese are not without the Notion of a DIVINE TRIAD governing the World.

ROM the previous extensive survey of the various systems of EASTERN THEOLOGY, it is evident that the notion of a Divine Triad governing the universe, however darkened and degraded through the prevalence of a long series of gross superstitions, was a doctrine that immemorially prevailed in the schools of Asia. From whatever distant source derived, through successive generations, and amidst a thousand perversions, the GREAT TRUTH contended for beams forth with more or less splendor in every country of the ancient world, and darts conviction upon the mind not prejudiced against the reception of it by the suggestions of human pride and the dogmas of false philosophy.

To try the merits of this great cause in the court of human reason, is evidently to bring it before a tribunal incompetent to decide upon so important a question; and is, in fact, to exalt a terrestial judge before the eternal Judge of all things. Since, however, the ancient Jews did not think it repugnant to reason to distinguish the divine Essence into THREE LIGHTS,

LIGHTS, affigning them names very nearly refembling those by which we denominate the three hypoftales of the Christian Trinity, and fince they affirm that number in God does not destroy bis unity; fince, also, the system of emanations, iffuing from, and returning into, the abyss of the Divinity, was so generally admitted into the theology of those pagan nations, whose sole guide in forming that theology is averred to have been the light of reason; we are justified in afferting that this doctrine, though not founded upon reason as a basis, is by no means destitute of its decided support and concurrence. The basis upon which it rests is far more noble as well as durable, DIVINE REVELATION, strengthened by the most ancient traditions, and the consenting creed of nearly all the kingdoms of the Greater Afia. This fact, already in part established, will be still more fully evinced, as we continue the progress of our investigation through that extensive quarter of the globe.

From India, if we direct our eyes northward to the great empires of Tangut and Thibet, and over the vast Tartarian deserts to Siberia itself, we shall find the same sentiments predominate. In the former country, if the authors quoted in Parsons's Remains of Japhet

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may be credited, medals, having the figure of the TRIUNE DEITY stamped upon them, are given to the people by the Dalai-Lama, who unites in his own person the hierarchal and regal character, to be fuspended as a holy object around their necks, or conspicuously elevated in the chapels where they perform their devotions.\* It is there also afferted that the Roman missionaries, arriving in those regions, found the people already in poffession of that fundamental doctrine of the true religion, which, among others, they came to impress upon their minds, and univerfally adoring an idol fabricated to refemble, as nearly as possible, a Trinity in Unity. Dr. Parsons is of opinion, that, as there is no record of their having had the principles of the Christian religion ever propagated among them, they could only have attained to the knowledge of that mysterious truth by means of traditional dogmas, handed down to them from very high antiquity, which, in the course of so many revolving ages and such numerous vicissitudes as Asia has undergone, has never been obliterated from their minds, although it has been degraded by being blended with the fuperstitions of the neighbouring Brahmins

<sup>\*</sup> See Parsons's Remains of Japhet, p. 185 and 206.

Brahmins and the magi. With respect to the Tartars and Siberians, Van Strahlenburg, there cited, after remarking how universal a veneration prevails through all northern Tartary for the facred number THREE, acquaints us, that " a race of Tartars, called Jakuthi, who are idolaters, and the most numerous people of all Siberia, adore in fact only one indivisible God under three different denominations, which, in their vernacular tongue, are Ar-TUGON, SCHUGO-TEUGON, TANGARA;" the first of which words Colonel Grant translates, Creator of all things; the fecond, the God of armies; and the third he renders, Amor ab utroque procedens, the Spirit of heavenly love, proceeding from the two former.

The celebrated SIBERIAN MEDAL, published by Dr. Parsons, and now deposited in the valuable imperial cabinet at St. Petersburg, on one side of which is engraved the figure of a triune deity, and, on the other side, certain Thibetian characters, illustrative of that figure, was found in an old ruined chapel, together with many ancient manuferipts, near the river Kemptschyk, which falls into the great river Jenisei near its head. It is composed, according to M. Van Strahlenburg, of a substance resembling terra sigillata,

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and is of the exact shape and fize of the accompanying engraving, the border of one part of the medal being very much corroded. Of this medal, Dr. Parsons's description is as follows: "The image, which appears upon one fide, and which reprefents a deity, is one human figure as to the body and lower extremities, but is diftinguished above by three heads. The figure fits crofs-legged upon a low fofa, or stool, in the manner of Eastern fovereigns: an arched urn, or fomething refembling it, is under the fofa, but feems empty. It is thought that this figure is thus made, with one body, three heads, and fix arms, from an idea prevailing among those who fabricated it of a Trinity in Unity."\* To this account of Dr. Parfons I shall add the remark of Strahlenburg; that the people who fabricated this figure were perhaps of opinion that the first person in it, content with having created all things, rested in tranquillity: they therefore drew him with his hands folded across, as if he had resigned all care of the universe to the other two: and they figured out this his pre-eminence by adorning his head with a high mitre-cap. The infcription on the opposite side of the medal is in English

of Deity, conspicuous in three figures. Gather the holy purpose of God from THEM: love HIM." The mode of expression and the alternate use of the singular and the plural noun decisively mark the real sentiments and intent of those who caused it to be thus en-

graved.

Dr. Parsons describes this triple image as feated upon a low fofa, with an arched urn, or fomething refembling it, underneath. It is rather furprifing that our author, who was by profession a physician, an order of men to whom one should suppose botany ought to be fomewhat familiar, and a member of the Society of Antiquaries, in whose noble-engraved collection the lotos perpetually appears fculptured on innumerable medallions, vales, and other precious relics of Egyptian and Afiatic antiquities, should have not discovered that the urn, or cup, alluded to, is that of the lotos. In respect to the figure itself, it is evidently the Indian Triad, Brahma, Veethnu, and Seeva, who are portrayed fitting upon that lotos, the usual throne of the fabulous personages of Oriental mythology; and it is one among many other forcible and direct testimonies over how vast an extent of Asia, in ancient periods, the religion, and with it probably the laws and sciences, of Hindostan were diffused.

While in these remote northern regions it would be improper to pass unnoticed by the ancient race and religious rites of Scandinavia, I have elsewhere endeavoured, by a chain of strong evidence, to demonstrate that their first celebrated god Oden, or Woden, was no other than the Taut of Phœnicia, the Hermes of Egypt, the elder Buddha, or Boodh, of India, the Fo of China, and the Mercury of Greece and Rome. In short, that the religion of almost every nation of the earth, previous to the happy diffusion of the Christian doctrine, exhibited little else besides the shattered fragments of one grand fystem of primitive, I do not fay the earliest, theology, once prevalent in the Greater Asia. Not the least forcible of the arguments adduced to support this hypothesis, an hypothesis that gives to Britain, in the earliest periods of the world, a colony of Brahmins, or at least of Brahmin-taught fages of the fect of Boodh, are those derived from the striking fimilitude of the superstitious ceremonies instituted and observed in those respective regions, and the very fingular circumstance of the Indian god and planet Boodh, under the

name of Woden and Mercury, conferring his name, over all the northern and western empires of Europe, upon one particular day of the week. This remarkable fact is evidenced in the instance of the BOODH WAR, or dies Mercurii, of India being the very fame fourth day of the week which the Scandinavians confecrated to Oden, which our Anglo-Saxon ancestors denominated Woden's dag, and which we call Wednesday. I shall not farther anticipate what will fhortly be presented to the reader on this curious subject, than by remarking that both Keysler and Mallet unite in affigning to this god-king Oden an Afiatic origin, and in afferting that the mythology which he introduced was the mythology, not of a cold ungenial region where the efforts of a lively imagination are checked by the rigour of the climate and objects that inspire gloom and melancholy, but of a warm, luxurious, fouthern, realm, where an active, vigorous, fancy, under the impetuous goad of ardent paffions, and animated by the most enlivening and charming objects, forms the most romantic images, and indulges its natural propenfities to gaiety by the most mirthful festivals and the most splendid rites.

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In respect to the Scandinavian religion, I shall only for the present observe, that, in regard to the doctrine in question, it does not differ from other codes of religious institution in Asia; for, it plainly inculcates the worship of a triple Deity in the mythologic persons of Oden, Frea, and Thor.\*

Concerning the first of these deities I think it has been in my power to produce incontestable evidence of his being the very identical personage denominated Taut, Hermes, and Boodh, through all the East. M. Mallet has produced as irrefragable proof that FREA, the fecond person in this Scandinavian Triad, is no other than the celebrated Dea Syria, adored at Babylon, and the Venus Urania of the Perfians. She feems, indeed, to be the prolific mother of all things, the great principle of fecundity, and her name and rites demonstrate her close affinity with the RHEA of the Greeks, to whose honour they smote the refounding cymbal, while the facred melody mysteriously shadowed out the harmony that prevails through universal nature. She gave her name to the fixth day of the week, which was confecrated to her under the denomination of FREYTAG, that is Frea's day, fynonymous

<sup>·</sup> Mallet's Northern Antiquities, vol. i. p. 95.

fynonymous with our Friday; and, in direct testimony that her character is not unconnected with that of Venus Urania, as afferted by M. Mallet, may be adduced the remarkable circumstance of that day being diftinguished in the western world by the appellation of Dies Veneris.\* With respect to THOR, the third of these northern deities, otherwise known among the Celtic nations by the name of TARANIS, a title which, in the Welch, that is, the old Cimbrian, language, M. Mallet observes, fignifies thunder; he in every respect greatly resembles the Eendra of the Indians, and the Jupiter Tonans of the Greeks and Romans. Thor præsidet in aëre, fulmina et fruges gubernat. This Scandinavian love feems to have been also armed with the CHACRA of Veeshnu, recently inscribed as instinct with life; for, fays our author, Thor always carried a mace, or club, which, as often as he difcharged it, returned of itself to the hand that launched it. He grasped this impatient and restless weapon, which, like the thunder-bolt of the Grecian Jove, vibrated to be gone, with strong gauntlets of iron, and he wore around his loins a mystic girdle which had

<sup>.</sup> Mallet's Northern Antiquities, vol. i. p.95.

had the virtue to renovate his strength, when necessary. "It was with these formidable arms that he overthrew the monsters and giants" (the Assoors, or evil dæmons of India) "when the gods sent him to oppose their enemies." To Thor, likewise, there was a day consecrated, in the northern mythology, which still retains his name in various languages of Europe. That day is, in Danish, called Thorsdag; in Swedish, Torsdag; in English, Thursday. It is not less worthy of observation that this day was, by the Romans, and by all those nations who have since adopted their astronomical language, called Dies Jovis.

In that valuable relic of northern genius, the Edda, in which is contained an authentic epitome of Runic mythology, these three deities are represented as sitting on three thrones, with each a crown on his head. The description is curious, and I shall present it to the reader in the words of that eminent antiquary and worthy presate, Dr. Percy, who translated it, and who, as he honoured my juvenile productions with his patronage, I hope will extend it to the maturer efforts of my pen. In that poem, the associated Gangler,

Northern Antiquities, vol. i. p 97.

Gangler, being introduced into the lofty palace, or hall, of the gods, the roof of which " was formed of brilliant gold, beheld, three thrones raifed one above another, and upon each throne fat a facred personage. Upon his asking which of these was their king, the guide answered, he, who sits on the lowest throne, is the king, his name is HAR, the lofty one; the fecond, JAFNHAR, or equal to the lofty one; he, who fits on the highest throne, is called THRIDI, or the third."\* The right reverend editor informs us, that, in the manuscript of the EDDA, preserved at Upfal, there is a representation, or drawing, very rudely executed, of these three thrones, and of the three persons fitting upon them, before whom Gangler is drawn in a fuppliant posture. "These figures," his lordship adds, " bear fo great a refemblance to the Roman Catholic pictures of the Trinity, that we must not wonder if some have imagined them to be an allufion to that doctrine, particularly those who fuppose it was already known to Plato and fome others among the ancient Pagans." To this remark I beg permission to subjoin, that though I am very far from conceiving that thefe

<sup>\*</sup> EDDA, translated by the editor of Maller's North. Artig.

these thrones have any immediate allusion to the thrones which the pious Daniel saw exalted, (for, fo the original words, translated cast down, should be rendered,) whereon the Ancient of Days and the eternal Logos fat in heaven to judge mankind, and much farther from drawing any comparison between the IMMORTAL BEINGS that fat upon the latter, and the deified mortals that were exalted to the former, thrones; yet I may furely contend for the perversion of some ancient tradition, by which the mind of the Scandinavian theologue was impressed with the idea of a heaven, in which were erected three thrones for as many fovereign gods: I fay the perversion of fome ancient tradition, fince it is for a Triad of Deity, the manifest vestige of that nobler doctrine, a Trinity in Unity, that I, in this instance, alone contend. But, lest I should appear, amidst these excursive inquiries into the Pagan Triads, to have altogether loft fight of that nobler doctrine, I shall, upon this subject of celestial thrones, submit to the reader a very curious paffage, relative to the belief of the Jews in a triune Deity, which occurs in the same extensive note of the Universal History from which I borrowed a former extract on that fubject, and in which the true meaning of the paffage in Daniel, just cited, respecting the throne of Deity, is discussed. The writers of the Talmud, they affert, have plainly unfolded their real opinion in agitating this question: Why is the throne of God, in Daniel, mentioned in the plural number? " After feveral trifling answers, which are there given as the folution of the feveral learned rabbies, one of whom pretends, that the plural implies the thrones of God and David: the last and concluding reply is to the following purpose: That it is blasphemy to set the creature on the throne of the Creator, bleffed for ever; and the whole is closed with these notable words: If any one can solve this difficulty, let bim do it; if not, let bim go bis way and not attempt it." The meaning, they observe, is too obvious to need explanation.\*

That the vast continent of America was in the most remote periods visited, and in part colonized, by the great naval and commercial powers of the ancient world, the Phænicians, Egyptians, and Carthaginians, who, driven by tempests, or some of the various accidents attendant upon the perilous science of navigation,

<sup>\*</sup> See Ancient Universal History, vol. iii. p. 12. Edit. oft.

tion, has been rendered highly probable by the learned Hornius in his book, on the Origin of the Americans, from various concurring circumstances of affinity, enumerated by him, respecting the language, civil customs, and religious institutions, prevailing among those respective nations. The universal adoration of the folar orb by the Americans, and the remarkable fact mentioned by Sir William Jones in the Afiatic Refearches, that the first dynasties of Peruvian kings are dignified, exactly as those of India are, by the name of the fun and moon,\* may also be adduced in evidence that a race, wandering from the neighbourhood of Caucafus, and traverfing the vast deserts of Asia, towards the northeastern extremity, passed over the chain of islands, now known to exist between the two continents, and contributed their proportion towards the population of the new world. Whether in Manca, or Mancu, whom the Peruvian traditional books mention as their first emperor, may be traced, as Hornius afferts, any real vestige of the race of Tartars called MANCHEW, or, in the appellation of Majatecæ, one of the four nations

Vide Hornius de Orig. Gent. Americ. p. 105. Edit. oct. 1652.

tions of New Spain; and, in Massachusetæ, a people of New England, the ancient Mas-SAGETÆ, are discovered; these are points on which, from the uncertainty of general etymology, it would be rash to form any absolute decision. But, on a recent perusal of Acosta's Authentic History of South America, I could not avoid being ftruck with his account of the dreadful fanguinary facrifices of which both the Peruvians and Mexicans are enormoully guilty, and I shall here insert it, as forming a striking and gloomy similitude to the bloody facrifices of the old Scythians and Indians, described from Herodotus and Mr. Wilkins in many former pages. That fimilitude is more particularly visible in these two points, the first is, that the victims thus facrificed are prisoners taken in war; the second is, that these are offered up for the preservation of the monarch."

The ancient Peruvians used to sacrifice young children from soure, or six, yeares old unto tenne; and the greatest parte of these sacrifices were for the affaires that did concern the Ynca, as in sickness, for his recovery; and, when he went to the warres, for victory. In these solemnities they facrificed Vol. V.

<sup>.</sup> See the chapter on the Scythian facrifices.

ficed the number of two hundred children of the age described above, which was a cruelle and inhumane spectacle. The manner of the facrifice was to drowne them and bury them with certaine representations and ceremonies; and fometimes they cut off their heads, anointing themselves with the blood. They did likewise sacrifice virgins; and, if a native were ficke, and the ecclefiaftic tolde him confidently that he should die, they did then facrifice bis own sonne to the Sunne, or to VIRACHOCA, defiring them to be fatisfied with him, and spare the life of the father."\* In the following page of the same author we read as follows: "Although they of Peru have furpassed the Mexicans in the slaughter and facrifice of their children, yet they of Mexico have exceeded them, yea and all the nations of the worlde, in the great number of men which they facrificed, and in the horrible manner thereof. The men, thus facrificed, were taken in the warres, neither did they use these solemne facrifices, but of captives; in this they followed the custom of the ancients," Acosta might here have added, in particular that of the Scythians, and

Acolla's Historie of the Indies, p. 380, edit. quart Lond.
 1604.

and the Druids, their direct descendants; as I have little doubt of very shortly demonstrating. "In truth, the ordinary warres they carried on were only made to obtain captives for their facrifices; and, therefore, when they did fight, they laboured to take their enemies alive for the purpose of enjoying their facrifices."# The facrifice was performed upon a raifed terrace, which cannot fail of bringing to the reader's recollection the high quadrangular altar of the Scythian favages, and the ceremony itself is thus described: "The fovereign prieft carried a great knife in his hand of a large and sharpe flint: another priest carried a collar of wood, wrought in form of a fnake:" he might have faid the ferpent, the symbol of that fun, whose devoted victims they were, "The other four priefts, who affifted, arranged themselves in order, adjoining to the pyramidal stone, whereof I have fpoken; being directly against the doore of the chapell of their idoll. This stone was so pointed, as that the man who was to be facrificed, being laid thereon upon his back, did bend in fuch fort, as occasioned the stomach to separate upon the slightest incifion of the knife. When the facrificers

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<sup>\*</sup> Acoffa's Hift, of the Indies, p. 382.

were thus in order, they brought forth fuch as had been taken in warre, and caused them to mount up those large stairs, in rank, to the place were the ministers were prepared. As they respectively approached those ministers, the latter feized them, two of them laying hold of the two feet and two more of the two hands of the unhappy victim, and in this manner cast him on his back upon the pointed stone, while the fifth fastened round his neck the ferpentine collar of wood. The high prieft then opened his stomach with a knife with wonderful dexterity and nimbleness, tearing out his heart with his hand, which he elevated smoking towards the funne, to whom he did offer it, and presently, turning towards the idol, did cast the heart towards it, befinearing his face with the blood. In this manner were all the victims facrificed. and the bodies afterwards precipitated down the flairs, reeking with their gore. There were ever forty or fifty victims, at the leaft, thus facrificed." The above paffage I have given unabridged, because in it are enumerated certain particulars, as the wooden ferpent, the pyramidal stone, and the offering to the Sun the heart of the victim, which exhibit still less equivocal marks of the similarity prevailing

vailing in the theology of the two continents; nor can I, for the fame reason, prevail upon myfelf to omit his relation of their very remarkable veneration for fountains and rivers, and their frequent ablution in them. "Anciently there were Indians appointed to perform facrifice to fountains, springs, and rivers, whose waters passe through the towns. To this day, they are honoured with a confiderable share of the ancient respect paid to them: but a more especial regard and reverence is paid to the meeting of two rivers; and there they perform ablutions, anointing themfelves first with the flower of mays, adding thereto divers ceremonies, as they do likewife in their bathes."\* That portion, however, of the theological fystem of the Americans, to which I wish to direct the more particular attention of the reader, is contained in the following passage, where this reverend father, in pious indignation, acquaints us, that " the devil, after his manner, hath brought a Trinity into their idolatry; for, the three images of the Sun, called APOMTI, CHURUNTI, and INTIQUAQQUI, are terms that fignify FATHER and LORD SUN, the SON SUN, and the Bro-THER SUN. In like manner they named the THREE

. Acofta's Hift, of the Indies, p. 379.

THREE IMAGES of CHUQUILLA, which is the god that rules in the region of the air." But, according to this writer, they go a step farther than the acknowlegdement of a mere Triad of Deity, and worship a direct Trinity in Unity: for, " in Cuquifaco there is a certaine oratory, where they worship a great idol, whom they call TANGATANGA, which fignifies one in THREE and THREE IN ONE."\* Of these three Triads, the first very much refembles the Triplanos Mithras, or threefold power of God in the Sun, adored by the Perfians; and the fecond is parallel to the Jupiter Pater, Jupiter Soter, and Jupiter Ultor, of the Greeks; or, if the reader chooses rather to understand it physically, in respect to the ætherial element, this American Eendra may be the Jupiter Tonans, Jupiter Serenus, and Jupiter Pluvius, all which names are respectively conferred upon him by ancient writers; but the third is an evident perversion of the dogma of a purer theology handed traditionally down, through a channel long fince forgotten, from those holy patriarchs, to whom the eternal Father was pleafed to reveal the awful fecrets of that nature, which, without fuch revelation, it is utterly impossible for finite

<sup>·</sup> Acofla's Hiff. of the Indies, p. 412.

finite beings to fathom; the stupendous mystery of a Trinity of Hypostases in the Unity of the Divine Essence.

But let us return to the great theatre of our present investigation, to Asia, and inquire if the ancient and celebrated empire of China affords a system of theology illustrative of a subject so deeply involved in the obscurity of Eastern philosophy and entangled in the mazes

of Oriental allegory.

In that remote and happy region, feeluded not lefs by fituation than by the wife policy of its fovereigns from all intercourse with the other nations of the earth, the true religion imported, as some think, by Noah himself, or one of his pious posterity, flourished longest unadulterated.\* A succession of virtuous and magnificent monarchs, descending for near three thousand years in regular succession from the great Fohl, whoever he was, made it the proudest glory of their respective reigns to support it by their whole authority, and enforce it by the noble and splendid example of regal piety.

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See Shuckford's Connexions, vol. i. p. 33, and Sir Walter Raleigh's History of the World, p. 54. The subject is extensively confidered in the History itself.

Since it is my intention, in the enfuing hiftory, occasionally to consider India upon the great scale of its more extended geography, as the ancients feem to have understood the term, and as stated by Sir William Jones in the A-. fiatic Refearches,\* that is to fay, as an empire extending from the great northern range of Caucasus to the extreme southern point of Sinhala, or Ceylone, and from the frontiers of Persia on the west to the Chinese Ocean on the east, it will be my province hereafter to detail a variety of circumstances that have relation to the early history of China, at prefent so little known, which will afford the strongest corroboration to the Mosaic history, and incontestibly evince that the great lines of the most ancient Afiatic and the Christian theology are the same. From an elaborate comparison which I have also made of the most ancient histories of China, as they stand translated and epitomized, in Couplet, Martinius, and Du Halde, from those celebrated Chinese books of profound antiquity the Xu-KIM, or book of books; containing the annals of the three first imperial dynasties; the XI-KIM, a more extensive historical detail; and the writings of Confucius, with fuch authenLui [ , 29 - ] Va.

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tic Sanfcreet accounts of Indian history as I have been able to procure, I have the most confident hopes that new light will be reflected as well upon the intricate history of those countries as upon that of Japan. The history of the latter country, by Kæmpfer, has in the courfe of that review been of infinite fervice to me, fince, as an immemorial connexion has fublisted between these three nations, which, after all that has been written by De Guignes and the learned Pauw, have probably all three descended from one common stock, the early history of the one must, under certain restrictions and with due allowances for the changes of customs and opinions during a long course of ages, be confidered as the history of the others. I shall, in this place, present to the view of the reader a few of the points in which that affinity may be clearly traced; and, in the first place, let us attend to it in regard to their theology.

Martinius, who, from a residence of ten years upon the spot, and from understanding both the letters, or characters, and language, of the country, must be supposed well qualified to judge of their religious doctrines and practices, asserts that they anciently worshipped one supreme God, a spirit, nullis

ad religionem exciendum simulachris aut statuis uf, using neither images or figures to excite the devotion of the people, because as the Deity was every where prefent, and his nature exalted far above the reach of human comprehension, it was impossible by any external image properly to represent him to the fenfes of men. Therefore he observes, nullum in iis templis antiquitus idolum vifebatur, fed fimplex tabella, in qua finensi linguâ literis aureis exaratum erat, spiritualis custodis urbis sedes; no idol in the most ancient periods of their empire was to be feen in all their temples, but only an unornamented tablet, upon which was engraved, in large Chinese characters, in gold, the following infcription: THE SANCTUARY OF THE SPIRITUAL GUAR-DIAN OF THE CITY. This pure worthip of the Deity, whom they denominated XANG-TI, or TYEN, continued unadulterated till after the death of Confucius, which took place 500 years previous to the Christian æra, and is a remarkable and almost folitary instance of the pure primeval worship flourishing among a people confining upon nations immerfed in the bafest idolatries of Afia. That they believed in the existence

of subordinate spirits, the ministers of the great God in the government of the universe, and that they paid an inferior kind of homage to those spirits, is to be accounted for in the persuasion, before noticed as being so generally prevalent in Asia, that they might be their intercessors with offended Omnipotence, and avert his apprehended vengeance.

Confucius, the noblest and most divine philosopher of the pagan world, was himfelf the innocent occasion of the introduction of the numerous and monstrous idols that in after-ages difgraced the temples of China; for, having in his dying moments encouraged his disconsolate principles by prophecying SI FAM YEU XIM GIN, in occidente erit SANCTUS, in the west the Holy One will appear; they concluded that he meant the good Bhood of India, and immediately introduced into China the worship of that deity with all the train of abominable images and idolatrous rites, by which that groß fuperstition was in so remarkable a manner distinguished. To what holy and illustrious personage, about to appear in the west, Confucius, who feems to have inherited at once the fublime virtues and the prophetic

prophetic spirit of the old patriarchs, alluded, shall presently be unfolded.\*

Were it not for the very fingular circumflance, recorded in the Chinese histories, that the mother of Fohi, the great ancestor of the Chinefe, was embraced and rendered pregnant by A RAINBOW, a mythological fable very probably originating either in fome misconceived tradition concerning the bow, which was first manifested to Noah as a token that the waters should never again inundate the globe, or else allusive to his having emerged from the bosom of the furrounding ocean to commence a new scene of existence upon the renovated earth; were it not also recorded in the fame histories that Fohi carefully trained up feven forts of creatures, which he annually facrificed to the Supreme Spirit of Heaven and Earth, a circumstance so exactly confonant to the account of Scripture, that Noah took into the ark of every clean beaft by fevens, and of fowls in the air by fevens; were it not that they fix the first residence of this their great ancestor, where, according to the most ancient Sanscreet traditions, the first Chinese colony did absolutely fettle, in the

<sup>\*</sup> Vide Couplet. Scient. Sinic. p. 71, and Martini Martinii Sieles Histories, lib. iv. p. 149. Edit. duod. Amsterdam, 1659.

the province of XENSI, to the north-west of India; were it not probable, from the total filence of Scripture concerning the future incidents of the life of fo important a personage as the great and favoured patriarch and the mad unrestrained act of his progeny in building the tower of Babel, that he really did migrate from the place where the ark rested to some spot, remote from his degenerate offspring, on the extremities of Afia; did not the very name of him, who builded the first altar after the flood, and offered thereon the first victim to the Lord, fignify OBLATION, whence doubtless Noah was defignated as the facrificer on the old celeftial fphere, under the name of Shin Num, his immediate successor in the government of China, or rather himself by another appellative, for these two persons are denominated the founders of that empire; did not we recognize the Oriental and in particular the Arabian denomination of China, which is Sin, and in Num the Menu of India, which words combined together may be rendered into Latin Sinicus Noab, the Chinese Noah: were it not for these circumstances, which so decidedly point to the person of Noah, I should be inclined to agree in opinion opinion with Mr. Bryant, that, by Fohi, the Chinese meant the parent of the human race himself, instead of the venerable father of the regenerated world.

If Mr. Bryant's hypothesis could be admitted, the eighteen thousand years, which he observes are said to have intervened between the reign of the first and second emperors of China, by being confidered as centuries only, (for which interpretation of the word thousand some learned chronologists have strenuously contended,) will come very near the scriptural account of time that elapsed from the period of the creation to the deluge. In that case, however, Fohi and Shin Num must be considered as distinct characters, living in very remote ages, which their history does not warrant; \* but that, at all events, Shin Num and Noah were the fame person, and that both meant the Menu of India, can scarcely admit of a doubt, especially when Mr. Bryant's judicious observation, that, in Hoang, or Hoam-ti, the fon of Shin Num, the vestiges of the scriptural name of Ham may plainly be traced. As a farther corroboration of this supposition, I shall for the present only add that the feven

<sup>\*</sup> See Mr. Bryant's Analysis, vol. iii. p. 583.

feven regal descendants of Shin Num, who, according to Couplet, reigned after him, that is, in the provinces subject to the supreme head of the empire, were doubtless the feven Reyshees, or holy men of India; and these, after all, were probably no other than the seven persons who went into the ark with Noah, forming, with himself, the famous ognoas of antiquity.

From an author compelled in a great degree, on account of the repeated attacks made by fceptics upon the Mofaic history through the fides of Indian and Chinefe antiquities, not to pals unnoticed these circumstances, the reader will naturally be led to expect a more extensive investigation of thefe abstrufe points hereafter. I shall, therefore, at prefent, only inquire if any fentiments, of a nature confonant to those already demonstrated to have been so widely diffused through Afia, prevailed in any ancient theological code of China. The purity of their primæval theology has been noticed. They originally adored no sculptured images of the Deity, although they worshipped him in the emanations of guardian and benevolent spirits that iffue from the exhaustless fountain of Deity. The doctrine of those emanations.

emanations, and the lapfe and immortality of the foul, afford the strongest reason for fuppoling that the tradition of a God-Mediator, to appear upon earth after a certain revolution of ages, was cherished from time immemorial in China. Since Confucius strictly adhered to, and vigorously enforced in his writings, the pure doctrine of his country, which equally forbade all images of the Deity and the deification of dead men; and, in consequence, could not confiftently recommend to them to the gross idolatry of the Bhudfoists; it is highly probable that this devout and venerable personage, when he told them to look to the west for the HOLY ONE that was to appear upon earth, was inspired with some foreknowledge of the great event of the redemption, and by divine inspiration was enabled to predict the advent of the Messiah in Palestine, a country which is exactly fituated after the manner described; and, indeed, is the most western country of Asia, in respect to China.

In direct and positive proof that I am not attributing to the Chinese theological notions which they did not in the most ancient æras of their empire posses; and,

in particular, that they really did, either traditionally, or by revelation, entertain a rooted belief of the pacification of the Divine Being by means of a human oblation of royal descent and of distinguished piety, I should produce from their most authentic historians an instance of a most amiable and virtuous monarch, CHING-TANG, the founder of the fecond imperial dynasty of China, bearing the denomination of XANG, being called upon by the public voice, at a period of national distress, to be the propitiatory facrifice of offended heaven. An universal barrenness, arifing from continued drought, having for feven years together desolated the kingdom and thinned the inhabitants of it, Chingtang was told by the priests, who interpreted the will of heaven, that its vengeance could only be appealed by a human facrifice, and he readily became the devoted victim of that vengeance. The aged king, fays Martinius,\* having laid by his imperial robes, cut off the venerable grey hairs of his head, shaved his beard, pared his nails, and fubjected himself to other preparatory ceremonies, esteemed indignities in China, barefooted, VOL. V.

<sup>.</sup> Vide Martini Martinii Historiæ Sinicæ, lib. iii. p. 75.

footed, covered over with ashes, and in the posture of a condemned criminal, approached the altar of facrifice, where with fuppliant hands he entreated heaven to launch the thunder-bolt of its wrath, and accept the life of the monarch as an atonement for the fins of the people. The Chinese histories add that, after he had finished his prayer, and for fome time devoutly waited the awful stroke, which was to crush the fovereign and fave the nation, (a stroke which heaven in remembrance of his piety and refignation forbore to inflict,) the fky became fuddenly black with clouds, and the rain descended in torrents, so that the steril earth shortly refumed its wonted fertility, and unbounded plenty reigned over the whole empire.\* In the annals of China this folemn fast is recorded to have happened in the eighteenth century before Christ; and it is very remarkable, that, in the very fame century, according to Ufher+ and the chronology of our Bibles, the feven years famine in Egypt happened. From this circumstance we are naturally induced to conclude, that the dearth spoken of in Scrip-

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+ Vide Ufherii Annales, p. 15.

<sup>\*</sup> Martinins, p. 76. Le Compte, p. 319.

ture was general throughout the East; and indeed it is evident, from Joseph's supplying all the neighbouring countries with grain, that it was not confined to the Egyptian territories alone. Thus wonderfully do the ancient archives of a great and enlightened nation, feeluded for three thousand centuries from all connexion with the rest of the world, whence arises an impossibility that those archives should be adulterated, in this as well as in many other instances which it will fall to my province to point out hereafter, bear decifive testimony as well to the authenticity of the Mosaic history as to the verity of the great outlines of the Mosaic theology. Among these the vestigia, for which alone I must again repeat that I contend, the veftigia, of a pure undebased Trinity, are not the least visible.

It is the refult of both extensive reading and personal inquiry, made by a learned friend in Asia, that I am able to describe the vast body of the Chinese nation, those few excepted who practise the pure and refined precept of the great Confucius, as divided, at this day, like the Indians, into two grand religious sects, if, in fact, the name of religious may be bestowed upon those who have

have fo far deviated from the pure primæval devotion of their ancestors, as either, on the one hand, to be plunged into the groffest materialism, or, on the other, into the most complicated and multifarious idolatry. It is furely no small honour for Christianity to be able to bring not a few proofs of its grand and fundamental truths from the very creed and practice of its most inveterate opposers; to find its pure principles lying dormant in the despumated and feculent dross of paganism, and the hallowed spark of that original flame which blazed upon the altar erected by Noah, on his descent from Ararat, occafionally beaming forth amidst the embers smoaking upon the polluted shrines of false and fictitious deities.

The first and most ancient of these sects is called the sect of immortals, and the sounder of it was Lao-Kiun, who slourished before Consucius, and about the year 600, preceding the Christian æra. Although the principles of Epicurus have been attributed to this great philosopher, and though the followers of Lao-kiun at this day are, as has been observed, rank materialists, yet, from the account of his writings given by Couplet and Le Compte, there is the greatest reason to suppose



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fuppole that his original doctrines have been grossly corrupted and misrepresented by his. disciples. They are called immortals, say these writers, from a certain liquor, which LAO-KIUN invented, and which, he affirmed, would, if drank, make men immortal. This has every appearance of being an allegory, and hereby may be meant no other than the AM-REETA, or ambrofial nectar of the Brahmins. They are notoriously guilty of the worship of dæmons, and temples of great fumptuousnels and magnitude are erected to those dæmons in various parts of the empire. It was the leading feature in LAO-KIUN'S system of philosophical theology, and a fentence which he continually repeated as the foundation of all true wisdom, that TAO, the eternal Reason, produced ONE; One produced Two; Two praduced THREE; and THREE produced all things: a most fingular axiom for a heathen philofopher, and, as Le Compte, from whofe Memoirs of China I have verbatim copied the above fentence, observes relative to it, a very evident proof that he must have had fome obscure notions of a Trinity.\*

The other great fect of China is that of the Bhudsoists, or those who worship the D 3 Indian

<sup>.</sup> Le Compte's Memoirs of China, p. 314.

Indian god Bhudda under the foftened name of Fo, as, from not having either B or D among the characters that form their alphabet, they were unable to pronounce the prior appellation. The Bhudfoifts have been denominated downright atheifts; the contrary, however, may be fairly inferred from the practice of those who worship a stone as the image of God. That our British Druids were a race of Eastern philosophers of the fect of the Indian Bhudda, I mean the elder, who was the fame identical perfon as the Phœnician Taut, the Egyptian Hermes, the Woden of the Scandinavians, and the Mercury of the Greeks and Romans, I hope, shortly, to produce very clear evidence in an express treatise upon the antiquity of Stonehenge. I had hopes of being able to compress the subject sufficiently to form a chapter of this volume of Indian Antiquities; but I found myfelf obliged, occasionally, to diverge so far from subjects immediately connected with India, and to take fuch an extensive range, in proof of my positions, through every region of Asia, or rather of the earth, that scarcely an octavo volume, and much less a chapter of fuch a yolume, would be fufficient to contain the

refult of the inquiry. I referve that interesting fubject for a distinct Differtation.

The Bhudfoists of China have had the skift to render their real opinions less easy of difcuffion, by adopting the artifice made use of by the ancient Egyptian and Greek philosophers, to veil their mysterious tenets, that of a two-fold doctrine; the one exoreric, or external, the other EsoTERIC, or interior. If, however, they are at all acquainted with the maxims of the genuine, that is, the elder, Bhudda of India; for, I believe the fecond to be a mere fiction springing up out of the Eastern system of the Metempsychosis and divine emanations; they must have some ideas of a triune Deity, intended in their motley theology; for, the Phænician Taut, their famous Bhudda, if Suidas upon that word may be credited, had his furname of Trifmegift, from his decided affertions on that point of faith. Hence too his caduceus, which I have had engraved for the more particular inspection of the reader, is adorned with that old Egyptian fymbol of Deity, the globe, wings, and serpent. Nor should it, on this subject, be forgotten, that this caduceus is described by the ancients as producing three leaves together, a facred trefoil, intimating the threefold

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fold distinction in the Deity, for which he was so strenuous an advocate. Thus Homer, in the Hymn to Mercury, calls it ραθδου χρυσειην ΤΡΙΠΕΤΗΛΟΝ, the golden THREE-LEAFED wand.\*

It is now high time that we should leave the eastern confines of Asia, and, bending our progress towards its western extremeties, resume our investigation of the several Trinities of Greece.

\* Vide Hymn. in Mercurim.

CHAPTER



## CHAPTER VII.

— τι γαρ ές: Πλατων, 'Η Μωσης 'Ατ]ικιζων;

The Chaldwan and Egyptian, being the Source of the Greek, Theology; the Doctrines relative to a Trinity taught by Pythagoras, Parmenides, and Plato, ought not to be wondered at, nor their true Alluhon d nied.—
The extensive Travels of Pythagoras and Plato into the Higher Asia and Egypt detailed.—
Their respective Travels, and that of Parmenides, Numenius, and the later Greek Philosophers, considered.— A retrospective Summary of the Whole of the Argument on the Christian and Pagan Trinities in the preceding Chopters.

A FTER the numerous quotations, in the preceding pages, from the Grecian philosophers, most eminent in the Pagan world, quotations which demonstrate they were by no means unimpressed with notions on this point, similar to those entertained by the more

more ancient fages of Afia; I shall, perhaps, be excused from swelling these pages with an infinite number of passages that might be felected from the works of Pythagoras, Plato, Parmenides, and others, in additional proof of what has been already advanced on this subject. I must again repeat, that it was from the fountains of Chaldwan, Persian, Indian, and Egyptian, learning, that those Grecian fages, as well by the channel of Orpheus as by their own personal travels in those countries, derived that copious stream of theological knowledge, which was afterwards, by their disciples, so widely diffused through Greece and Italy; having, therefore, fucceisfully explored the fource, there is lefs occasion for us to waste our time in minutely tracing the descending current.

It may, with truth, be affirmed, that, there was fearcely one of all the celebrated philosophers, who established the several schools of Greece, distinguished by their names, who had not resided, for a considerable period, either in one or the other of the countries just mentioned. A production of the evidence, on which this affertion is founded, will probably be considered of no small weight in this discussion.

Let us commence our retrospect with the travels of Pythagoras, who flourished in the fixth century, before the birth of Christ. According to the account of his disciple Jamblichus,\* the first voyage of Pythagoras, in pursuit of knowledge, after the completion of his academical exercifes at Samos, was to Sidon, his native place, where he was early initiated into all the mysterious rites and sciences of Phænicia, a country whence, I have before observed, the elder Taut emigrated to Egypt, and where the profound Samothracian orgia and the Cabiric rites were first instituted. From Phænicia, our philosopher travelled into Egypt, and there, with an unabated avidity after science, as well as with unexampled perfeverance, continued, under the feverest possible discipline, purposely imposed upon him by the jealous priests of that country, during two-and-twenty years, fuccessively to imbibe the stream of knowledge at Heliopolis, at Memphis, and at Diospolis, or Thebes. Astonished at his exemplary patience and abitinence, the haughty Egyptian priesthood relaxed from their established rule of never divulging the arcana of their theology to a stranger; for, according to another

<sup>.</sup> Jamblichus, in Vita Pythag. cap. 13.

another writer of his life, Diogenes Laertius, he was admitted into the inmost adyta of their temples, and there was taught those stupendous truths of their mystic philosophy, which were never before revealed to any foreigner.\* He is said even to have submitted to circumcision, that he might more rigidly conform to their dogmas, and leave no point of their most recondite sciences unexplored. It was during this long residence and seclusion, amidst the priests of the Thebais, that he arose to that high proficiency in geometrical and astronomical knowledge, to which no Greek before him had ever reached, and few since have attained.

But all this aggregate of Egyptian wisdom could not satisfy the mind of Pythagoras, whose ardour for science seems to have increased with the discouragements thrown in the way of his obtaining it. He had heard of the Chaldwan and Persian Magi and the renowned Brachmanes of India, and he was impatient to explore the hallowed caves of the former and the consecrated forests of the latter. He was meditating this delightful excursion at the time that Cambyses commenced his celebrated expedition against Egypt,

<sup>.</sup> Diogenes Lacrtius, lib. ii. p. 93.

Egypt, which terminated in the plunder of its treasuries, the slaughter of its gods, and the burning of its temples. During the remainder of the period of his abode in Egypt, he had the mortification to be a spectator of all those nameless indignities which his patrons and instructors underwent from that subverter of kingdoms and enemy of science. Pythagoras himself was taken prisoner, and fent with other captives to Babylon. The Chaldwan Magi, however, at that metropolis, received with transport the wandering fon of science. All the fublime arcana inculcated in the ancient Chaldaic oracles, attributed to the elder Zoröaster, were now laid open to his view. He renewed, with intense ardour, those aftronomical refearches, in which the Babylonians fo eminently excelled; and learned from them new ideas relative to the motions, power, property, and influences, of the heavenly bodies, as well as their fituations in the heavens, and the vast periods they took to complete their revolutions.

Babylon must have been, at that particular period, the proudest and most honoured capital upon earth, since it is evident, from Dr. Hyde,\* that both the prophet Ezekiel and the

<sup>.</sup> See Hyde de Relig. vet. Perf. p. 361.

the second Zoröaster, the friend of Hystaspes, whom Porphyry calls ZARATUS, (a name exceedingly fimilar to the Oriental appellation of ZERATUSHT,) refided there at the fame time. The former, attached to the man who had submitted in Egypt to one fundamental rite prescribed by the Jewish law, instructed him in the awful principles of the Hebrew religion; the latter made him acquainted with the doctrines of the two predominant principles in nature, of GOOD and EVIL, and unfolded to his aftonished view all the stupendous mysteries of Mithra. Twelve years, according to Porphyry, were spent by Pythagoras in this renowned capital, from which, when he had regained his liberty, determined to complete his treasure of Asiatic literature, he fought the distant, but celebrated, groves of the Brachmans of India.\* Among that fecluded and speculative race, he probably carried to the highest point of perfection, attainable in that age, those astronomical investigations, to which he was so deeply devoted: by them he was probably instructed in the true fystem of the universe, which, to this day, is diffinguished by his name: among them he greatly enlarged the limits of his metaphyfical

<sup>2</sup> Porphyrius, in Vita Pythag. p. 185, edit. Cantab.

metaphyfical knowledge: and from them he carried away the glorious doctrine of the immortality of the foul, which he first divulged in Greece, and the fanciful doctrine of the Metempsychosis.

Plato was born at Athens, in the 88th Olympiad, or about 430 years before Christ. He had the honour and advantage of having Socrates for the guide and preceptor of his youth. Already instructed in all the intricate doctrines of the Pythagorean philosophy, on the death of that martyr to the cause of truth, he travelled first into Italy, and then into Egypt, as well to mitigate the anguish he felt at the loss of so excellent and wife a man, as to increase the treasures of knowledge with which his mind was already fo amply flored. Cicero expressly informs us, that, in visiting Egypt, his principal aim was to learn mathematics and ecclefiaftical speculations among the barbarians;\* for, by this difgraceful appellation, the faltidious Greeks stigmatized all foreign nations. He travelled, fays Valerius Maximus, over the whole of that country, informing himfelf, by means of the priefts, during his progress, of geometry in all its various and multifold branches, as well as of their

<sup>·</sup> Cicero de Finibus, cap. 5.

their aftronomical observations: and, while the young students at Athens were inquiring for Plato, and languishing for his instructions, that philosopher was indulging his contemplations on the shores of the Nile, furveying the canals cut from that river, and measuring the dams that restrained its rising waters, being himself but a disciple to the sages of the Thebais.\* From those fages, Pausanias, in Messoniis, affirms he learned the immortality of the foul, and, from the style and tenor of his writings, it is pretty evident that he was deeply versed in the sacred books attributed to Hermes Trismegist. It is equally evident that Plato had read with attention the Mofaic writings and hiftory, not through the medium, as has been afferted, of the Greek translation, (for, that translation was not made till the reign of Ptolemy Philadelphus, which took place near two hundred years after the birth of Plato,) but by means of his own indefatigable exertion in acquiring languages and exploring the fources of Oriental science and traditions. Indeed the study of the Eastern languages, so necessary to a traveller in the East, and, in particular, the Egyptian and Phœnician, which differed only in dialect from

from the Hebrew, cannot be supposed to be unattended to by a man fired with fuch an infatiable thirst of learning as was Plato. Add to this, that, with the multitude of Jews, which, about that period of their diffipation, flocked to Egypt, he could scarcely fail of frequently converting, in order to penetrate into their facred records, and mystic cabbala, fo famous, but so little understood, throughout Asia. The best evidence of this fact is to be found in his writings, where are to be met with fuch repeated allufions to what he denominates παλαιοι λογοι, ancient difcourfes, or traditions, and certain Συριοι και Φοινικοι μυθοι, or Syrian and Phænician fables, that it is impossible to consider this philosopher as not conversant in Hebrew antiquities. The contrary, in fact, was so manifest to Numenius, a Pythagorean philosopher of the second century, that, according to Clemens Alexandrinus, he exclaimed, Τι γαρ ές: Πλατων, ή Μωσης AT MILE What is Plato but Moles converfing in the language of Athens?\*

Thus, in a curfory manner, have I traced the vestigia of these two famous Greeks through those countries where either the true theology was first propagated or first perverted.

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<sup>.</sup> Clem. Alexand. Stromat. lib. i. p. 411, edit. Oxon.

Let us now proceed in a manner confistent with the brevity we profess to observe, after such a wide range through the schools of Asia, to examine the leading features of their

respective systems of theology.

It will fcarcely be contested that Pythagoras borrowed from the Egyptian priefts, who were fo deeply involved in fymbols and hieroglyphics, that symbolical and anigmatical way of inftructing his disciples as to ethical and theological subjects, which he so universally adopted; and I shall, hereafter, when confidering the literature of India, have occasion to prove that nearly all his most famous fymbols have their origin, not in Grecian, but Oriental, ideas and manners. A fimilar obfervation holds good in respect to his veneration for facred mystic numbers; for, when I inform the reader, that the ten numerical characters of arithmetic are originally of Indian, and not, as generally supposed, of Arabian, invention, he will entertain little doubt in what Eastern country he learned, in fuch perfection, that abstruse science. On that very particular and curious belief entertained both by Pythagoras, Socrates, and Plato, relative to the agency of good and evil DEMONS, fome attendant on the human race, as a kind of guardian

guardian and familiar spirit, one of which species, Socrates affirmed, attended himself and others, spleenful, malignant, and ever plotting their ruin, the source has been equally laid open in our review of the Chaldaic theurgy. It is, however, with those sublimer points in their theology, which have reference to the nature of God himself, that we have at present a more immediate concern.

This wife ancient styled the supreme Deity the great Father of all, TO iv, THE UNITY, and μονας, THE MONAD; a term by which Pythagoras doubtless intended to express his conceptions of the fimplicity as well as purity of the divine nature. The fole cause and first principle of all that exists, he esteemed the Deity the centre of unity and fource of harmony. He likewise conferred on this almighty Sovereign the name, by which Plato afterwards diftinguished the first hypostalis of his Triad, To ayafor, the chief good. From this eternal monan, however, from this primæval UNITY, according to Pythagoras and all his disciples, there sprang an infinite DUALITY.\* By the term duality, fays the Chevalier Ramfay, the learned author of a Differtation on the Theology and Mythology of the Ancients, E 2 added

<sup>\*</sup> Vide Diogenes Laertius, lib. viii. p. 507.

addded to the Travels of Cyrus, we are not to understand two persons of the Christian Trinity, but a world of intelligent and corporeal fubitances, which is the effect whereof unity is the cause.\* When the reader, however, shall have duly reflected on ALL that has been previously submitted to his confideration in the former part of this volume, to the doctrine of which this Pythagorean fentiment is fo perfeetly confentaneous, he will probably be induced to think, that, by fo remarkable an expression, Pythagoras intended to allude to the emanation of beings of an order far superior to those referred to in the page of that writer. Besides, as Dr. Cudworth has judiciously obferved concerning the opinions of Pythagoras, fince he is generally acknowledged to have followed the principles of the Orphic theology, whose Trinity we have seen, and, as is allowed by Chevalier Ramfay himfelf, was Физ, BEAN, Zwn; or LIGHT, COUNSEL, and LIFE; it cannot reasonably be doubted that he adopted this among the other doctrines of Orpheus.+

The three hypostases that form the Trinity of Plato, it is well known, are το Αγαθον, Νυς, often

<sup>·</sup> See les Voyages de Cyrus, tom. ii. p. 193, edit. Rouen.

<sup>+</sup> Cudworth's Intellectual System, vol. i. p. 374.

often denominated by him Aoyos, and Yuxy warus. When Plato, in various parts of his writings, calls his first hypostasis, as he frequently does, & mowros Geos and & μεγισος Θεων, and uses terms, with respect to the other two hypoftafes, which mark a kind of fubordination in this his Trinity, it is fcarcely possible to mistake an allusion so plain to the higher TRIAD for which we contend. The countries through which he travelled, and the people with whom he conversed, immediately point out the fource of a doctrine fo fingular, flowing from the pen of an unenlightened Pagan. It is very probable, that, from his acquaintance with Egyptian, Phoenician, and other Oriental, languages, intimately connected with the facred dialect, this philosopher derived the term Any which is the second in his Trinity; for Aoy . as has been frequently before remarked in these pages, is the literal translation of the Chaldaic Mimra, the facred appellative by which the ancient paraphrasts invariably understand the Messiah. The notion is entirely Hebraic. The Melliah was called the Mimra, or Word, because, in the Mosaic account of the creation, that expression so frequently occurs, et DIXIT Deus, and therefore it was a very unjust accufation (although,

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from

from his ignorance of the real fact, a very pardonable one) which Amelius, the Platonist, brought against St. John, when, having read the first verse of that evangelist, where the term Aoy occurs no less than three times, he complained that John had tranfferred into his Gospel the mysterious expression of his mafter, exclaiming, " By Jupiter, this barbarian agrees in fentiment with our Plato, and, like him, constitutes the Aoy of God in the rank of a first principle !"\* The fact is that St. John made use of an ancient and appropriate term, by which the Messiah was known to the Hebrew race, whereas Plato made use of it, because the expression frequently occured in the exotic theology, which he had borrowed, without knowing either the original meaning or fecondary allufion of the term.

It is still more probable, that the active divine agent, which, in the Mosaic writings, is called Insupa Oss, is the same with that primæval principle, which, in reviewing the trismegistic theology of Hermes, we observed was denominated by a word similar to MIND, or INTELLIGENCE. This primitive principle is in the Orphic doctrines styled 'Equis, Divine Love,

<sup>·</sup> Amelius citatus în Drufii Annotat, în John i. 1.

Love, generating all things; and, in the Platonic writings, with still more marked allusion to that supreme demiurgic Spirit, whose powerful breath insused into nature the first principles of life, is called YUXN MOTHE, or the SOUL OF THE WORLD.

Parmenides, according to Stanley's authorities, was of Elea, a city of Magna Grecia, that gave its name to the Eleatic fect, to which Parmenides belonged. He flourished in the 89th Olympiad. Involved in nearly equal obscurity with the incidents of his life are the doctrines which he taught; they were written in verse, and the substance of them is given in Plato's Parmenides, the least intelligible of that philosopher's productions. Stanley has not illumined that abstruse treatise by the epitome which he has given of its contents.\* To Simplicius and Plotinus posterity is indebted for the best explication of the precepts of his philosophy, in which, however, amidst furrounding darkness, the vestigia of this doctrine are to be discerned. Of that philosophical theology the great and fundamental maxim was, that the Deity is in ras wolla, or ONE and MANY; which words, if they do not allude to the unity of the divine Effence and the E 4

<sup>.</sup> Stanley's Lives of the Philosophers, p. 448.

the plurality of persons in that Essence, it is difficult to decide to what they do allude. If the reader should conceive, that, by this fingular mode of expressing himself, Parmenides meant a physical, and not a divine, principle, Simplicius, cited by Cudworth, as an author well acquainted with that philosopher's real opinions, will inform him otherwise, and that he wrote & weed to φυσίκο ζοίχου, άλλα weed το airs orros; not concerning a physical element, but concerning the true Ens;\* and I shall add to Cudworth's remarks on this subject, that the true Ens was no other than the Jehovah of the Hebrews, a word which Buxtorf (cited by me in a former page) afferts to mean Ens, EXISTENS, and whence, it is more than probable, the Greek word, descriptive of the divine entity, was derived. Plotinus, commenting on Plato's Parmenides, represents him as acknowledging THREE divine unities Subordinate: το ωρωτον έν το κυριωτερου έν, και δευτερον έν σολλα, λεγων' και τρίτον, εν και σολλα: " the first unity being that which is most perfectly and properly one; the second, that which is called by him one-MANY; and the third, that which is by him expressed one and MANY." Plotinus then adds ; was συμφωνος ώτος και αυτος ές: ταις τρισιν: " fo that he himself also (Parmenides) agreed in the acknowledgement of a TRIAD of archical hypostases."\* The probable meaning of Parmenides in these distinctions is commented upon at length by Cudworth, to whom I must refer the reader for more particular information, while I sinally pass on to the consideration of the ideas upon this subject of some others of the more distinguished philosophers of Greece.

One of the most express and clear of the ancient philosophers on this subject was Numerius, a Pythagorean, who flourished in the second century, and who, if Eusebius rightly represents his sentiments, wrote concerning Three Sovereign Deities. He makes the Second the Son of the First, and, by a coarse, but decisive, sigure of speech, calls the Third

Hypoftafis, 'Amoyoves, Grandfon.+

The Trinity of Plotinus very remarkably refembled Plato's, and confisted of  $\tau_0$  'En, the One; Nes, the Mind; and Yukn, the Soul; and these he denominates  $\tau_{pas}$  algumas imagaous, three archical or principal hypostases.
The Trinity of Amelius, his contemporary, we have

<sup>.</sup> Plotini Ennead. 5. lib. i. cap. 8.

<sup>†</sup> Vide Eufebius, Prap. Evang. lib. ii. p. 537; and Proclus in Timeo, lib. ii. p. 93.

have clearly seen in a former page, was a plain Trinity of persons; for, he styled them τρας βασιλεις, three kings, and makes them all δημινεργας, creators.\* Porphyry called the first hypostasis in his Trinity, in singular conformity to the notion of Christians, του Πατερα, the Father; his second was Νας, the Mind, like Plato's; but his third hypostasis differed from Plato's and all that went before him; for, he denominated it not the Soul of the World, but a Soul υπερκοσμιος, above that of the world.†

There was an attempt made by Jamblichus, Proclus, and some of the later Platonists, to invalidate this venerable doctrine of Christianity, by multiplying the number of the divine hypostases, and by exalting the 70 'Ayabov to an eminence far above the other two. Of this effort I shall only observe, that it proved as sutile as it was malignant; and, having now, through a series of ages, and a variety of countries, many of them very remote from each other, examined the history of both the Christian and Pagan Trinities, and shewn the extent of this doctrine over all the Oriental world, I shall close the prolonged digression with

<sup>.</sup> Proclus, cited before in Timæo, p. 93.

<sup>+</sup> Proclus in Tim. p. 94 and 98.

with a few reflections that naturally refult

from the furvey.

The first that forcibly strikes the mind is, that this doctrine could not be the invention of Plato, because it has been plainly proved, by accumulated evidence, to have existed in the Higher Asia, and particularly in India, a thousand years before Plato slourished; for, of that remote date are the Elephanta caverns, and the Indian history of the Mahabbarat, in which a plain Triad of Deity is alluded to

and defignated.

Of consequence, still more palpably false must be the affertion, that Justin Martyr, who had formerly been a Platonist, first imported it into the Christian church, from the writings of that philosopher, in the second century. We have feen that, in fact, this doctrine, long before Plato flourished, was admitted, but concealed, among the mystic cabbala of the rabbies; and, as undoubtedly one of the strongeft, if not the strongest, of the arguments, adduced in favour of the doctrine of the Trinity being known and acknowledged by the ancient rabbies, is that deduced from the evident appearance of it in the Chaldee paraphrases, composed before the violent disputes on the fubject broke forth, I have felected many firiking

stranslated in the Targum, the Lord said unto bis Word; which, if not understood of the second hypostasis, is inexplicable nonsense, and

can be refolved by no idiom whatever.

It is a circumstance not less astonishing than true, that the Jews should admit the miracles, while they deny the divinity, of Christ; for, the reader has been already informed, that, unable otherwise to account for the power which he exerted in working those miracles, the reality of which they dare not deny, they are driven to the extremity of afferting that those miracles were wrought by means of the TETRAGRAMMATON, which he stole out of the Holy of Holies. Now, their not denying his miracles is one great and decided proof of their having been really and publicly performed, and consequently of his being the Meffiah. Instead of that belief, however, to which impartial truth should lead them, they obstinately continue to call the crucified Jesus the wicked Balaam, the prophetic impostor,

who ftole the TETRAGRAMMATON, and to whom they impute all the sufferings of their nation, because, as Abarbanel has it, "That deceiver impiously called himself the Son of God."\* Hence inflamed with intolerable hattred against Christians, they remain almost totally ignorant of the leading principles of the Christian religion and the foundations on which it rests. And thus long are they likely to remain, while they continue to entertain the incongruous, the sensual, the absurd, conceptions, which, at this day, prevail among them, relative to the imaginary being whom they have adorned with the ensigns and authority of the true Message.

There was an ancient and almost immemorial tradition among the Jews, that the world was to last only fix thousand years. They divided the ages, during which it was to continue, in the following manner. Two thousand years were to elapse before the law took place; two thousand were to be passed under the law; and two thousand under the Messiah. Indeed, this fexmillennial duration of the world was, it is probable, too much the belief of the ancient fathers, who conceived, that, as the creation was formed in fix days,

reckoning,

reckoning, according to that affertion in the Psalms, that every day is with God as a thou-fand years, and was concluded by a grand sabbath or day of almighty rest, so the world was ordained to last only during the revolution of fix thousand years.

Time rolled on in its rapid and reliftless career, and proved to them the fallacy of this ancient tradition. Still, however, their most celebrated rabbins continued calculating, by the course of the stars, the times of their great Meffiah's expected advent. Repeated calculations of those times, and as repeated disappointments, have, at length, nearly plunged in despair the infatuated sons of Judah. Rabbi Abraham, who, in the year 1516, had found, engraved upon a wall, a very ancient prophecy, relative to that coming, had declared that the fame ftar, which appeared when Joshua conquered the land of Canaan, and when Ezra brought back the people from Babylon, would again appear in the year 1529, when the Messiah might, for a certainty, be expected: but the prediction was by no means verified by the event, and the more recent Talmudic doctors, stung by this painful expofure of their credit, pray to God that the man who now prefumes to calculate the times

of the Messiah may burst asunder, and that his bones may fwell and break. Such is their strong language in the Gemara. His coming, they affert, is still delayed on account of the unrepented fins of the people. When this constellation shall at length manifest itself, the most awful prodigies in nature are to precede his descent. The most fanguinary wars shall defolate the globe; a dew of blood shall fall down from heaven; plague and famine shall ravage the earth; and the most venomous reptiles and the most favage monsters of the defert are to be let loofe on mankind. The fun itself shall be turned into darkness and the moon into blood, according to Joel's prophecy, but, in thirty days, shall recover their pristine brightness. "Men," says the Gemara, " formidable with two heads and numerous eyes, burning like fire, shall come from the extremities of the earth; and a powerful and despotic monarch finally prevailing shall govern the universe with a rod of iron." His throne shall be established in Rome, (a proof at what period they expected the Messiah,) but he shall reign only nine months, when the first Messiah, the fon of Joseph, as he is called in the Talmud, shall appear; and, routing this

<sup>·</sup> Gemara, Title Sanhedrim, fol. 52.

this tyrant with great flaughter, shall establish a more righteous throne. This throne, though more righteous, is however to be scarcely less sanguinary; for, in one battle, nearly two hundred thousand combatants with their leader are to perish. At length the great archangel Michael is to blowthree times the trumpet of heaven; and then the defire of nations, the true Messiah, the Son of David, is to appear with the prophet Elijah by his fide. All the Christians and infidels then living are to be annihilated at the fecond blast of that trumpet. All the virtuous deceased of the Jews, from the time of Moses, are to rise from their graves, and attend the Meffiah to the renovated Jerusalem, which, with its temple, is to be rebuilt with precious stones. A banquet of boundless magnificence is to be prepared for them, which is to be adorned with a Leviathan fatted of old for this feast of the bleffed; with a female Behemoth, of exquifite flavour; and with the bird BARIUCHNE, a bird of fuch stupendous magnitude, that, when its wings are expanded, the orb of the fun is darkened. Wine, treafured up ever fince the creation, in the vault of Adam, is to flow in abundant streams; wine, of the rich vintage that commenced before

the earth became defiled and curfed; wine, the flavour and spirit of which is not to be decayed, but improved, by its immense age. Such are the conceptions, reader, and others a thousand times more gross, of the Jewish nation relative to the grand banquet to take place on the Meffiah's appearance. Bafnage professes faithfully to have detailed these various circumstances from Maimonides, Abarbanel, and other celebrated rabbies, and from him I have copied the luxurious picture, to mark the corruption of their minds, and their carnal notions of those future pleasures which Christians believe to be purely spiritual.\* Can we wonder, after this, at any mutilation or depravation of passages in Scripture by a race fo fenfual and fo corrupt?

To refume the gravity which so solemn a fubject requires, I must beg permission again to observe, that, on these mysterious points, which human reason cannot fathom, it is in vain that we make that reason the umpire. That finite man, however, can form no adequate conception of this great truth, by no means implies impossibility or contradiction in the thing itself. This circumstance arises from the limited nature of the human fa-VOL. V.

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<sup>.</sup> Bafnage's Hiftory of the Jews, p, 373.

culties. It is mere ignorance; but it is an ignorance which we can never overcome. Let it ever be remembered, that Christianity by no means proposes to mankind a theological code, encumbered with no difficulties, involved in no perplexities. Its great mysterious truths are not to be folved by the light of nature, nor scanned by the boldest flight of human intellect. Neither the Trinity nor the Incarnation can be proved, nor were intended to be proved, by philosophical arguments. The word of God is the fole basis of the proofs and folutions of these stupendous doctrines. They are wifely shaded from our view, the better to excite in us the ardour of faith, and exercise the virtues necessary to obtain the fublime rewards which it propofes to perfevering piety. The Almighty has been pleafed to erect mounds and ramparts, as of old at Sinai, around the abode of his Majesty, to ward off the dangerous curiofity of man; he hath wrapped himself in clouds, that we might not be confumed by the full blaze of that glory which invefts the eternal throne.

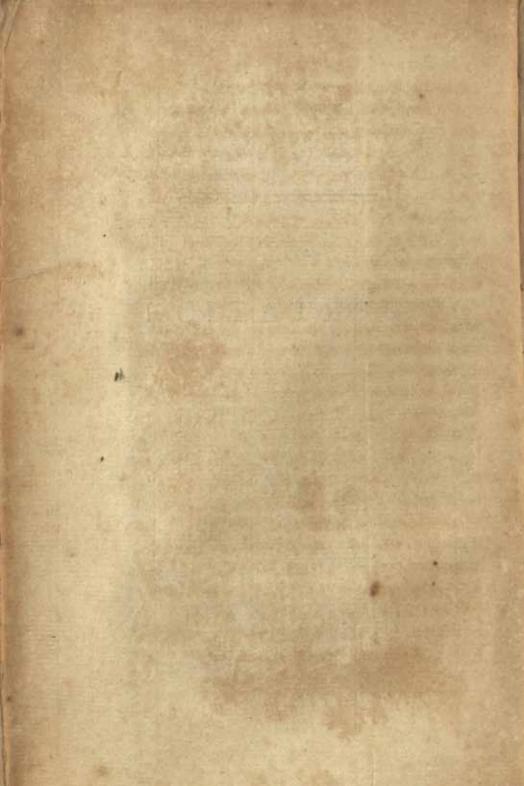
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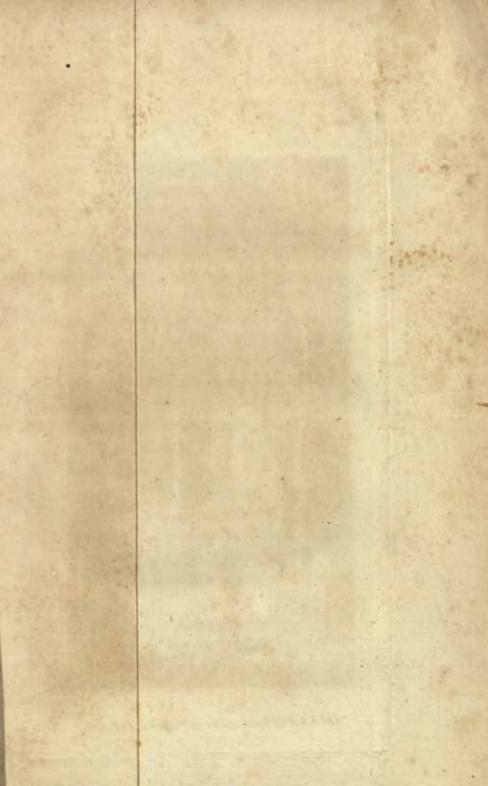
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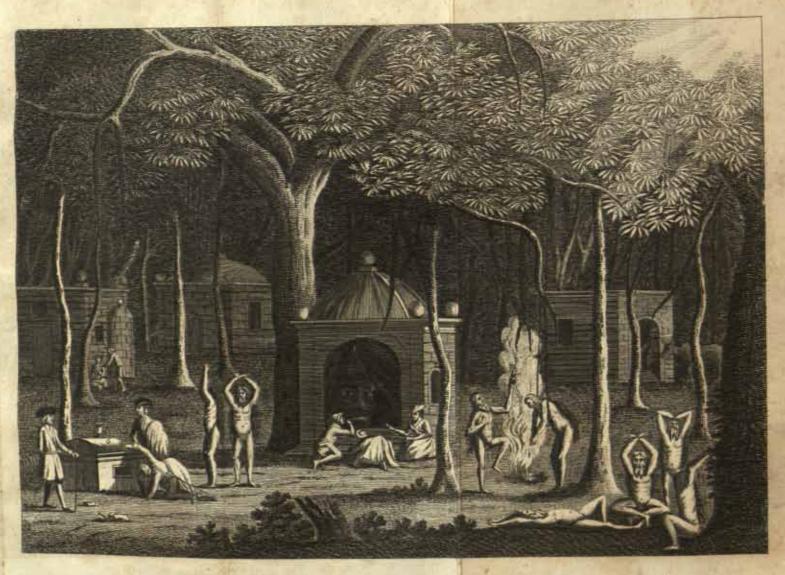
ON THE

## PENANCES, SACRIFICES,

AND OTHER PECULIAR SUPERSTITIOUS PRACTICES, OF THE HINDOOS.







HINDOOS on various altitudes of PENANCE under the great BANTAN TREE of INDIA

## CHAPTER I.

The Author takes a general retrospective Survey of the various Subjects previously discussed in the Indian Antiquities; and apologizes for the Desultoriness unavoidable in so vast a Field of Inquiry.—The theological System of the Brahmins, in many Respects, contradictory.

—The necessary Result of the different Characters of their two principal Deities, Veeshau and Seeva.—Their respective Symbols, Rites, and Worship, described.—The Subject historically investigated, and the varying Modes of Adoration paid them accounted for, by a Reference to the two great Sources whence they were probably derived, the benevolent Sons of Shem and the gloomy Progeny of Cush.

HAVING now considered the Theology of India, under the general divisions into which that comprehensive system naturally branches itself forth; having, in the first place, investigated the nature of the mystic rites, celebrated by this superstitious race in consecrated groves and caverns; their devo-

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tion,

tion, in every age, to the Sabian Superstition, and veneration immemorially paid by them to the mundane elements, but principally to the all-pervading fire; having confidered that religion, in a physical, mythological, and moral, view, as well as in what points it refembled, or appeared to be connected with, the Egyptian, Perfian, Grecian, and, finally, with our own more elevated fystem of theology; I must now descend from more general observation to notice a few particulars by which it is diffinguished from every other ecclesiastical establishment in the known world. A peculiar form of vestment, and an appropriated mode of shaving the hair of the head and beard, have distinguished most religious fects; but where in ancient history do we find a race fo infatuated as to fulpend themselves aloft in cages upon trees confidered facred, that they might not be infected by touching the polluted earth, refufing all fustenance, but fuch as may keep the pulse of life just beating; or hanging aloft upon tenter-hooks, and voluntarily bearing inexpressible agonies; fometimes thrusting themselves by hundreds under the wheels of immense machines that carry about their unconscious gods, where they are instantly crushed to atoms; and, at other times,

times hurling themselves from precipices of stupendous height; now standing up to their necks in rivers, till rapacious alligators come and devour them; now burying themselves in fnow till frozen to death, meafuring with their naked bodies, trailed over burning fands, the ground lying between one pagoda and another, diftant perhaps many leagues; or braving, with fixed eyes, the ardor of a meridian fun between the tropics; and all this in the transporting hope of immediately transmigrating into Paradise? Where do we see an otherwise-polished nation staining their faces according to their different religious casts, and, as I am inclined to believe, according to the imagined colour of the planets, with long strokes of faffron and vermilion; although fprung from one common head, yet divided into innumerable cafts, each ieparated from the other by an eternal barrier; and all uniting to fhun, as death, the contaminating intercourse of strangers? To detail these and many other curious particulars, relative to the Brahmin and Yogee penitents, will be the business of this last and concluding portion of the Indian Theology.

When, in the preceding Differtation, I contended that the Indian Triad of Deity was F 4 (what

(what I firmly believe that Triad to be) the corruption of a nobler doctrine, and when I combated the idea of Seeva being the DESTROY-ING POWER, on the ground that their fystem of philosophical theology allows not of the destruction of any object in nature, I by no means intended to convey an idea that the Indians are not impressed with the most awful conceptions of God the Avenger. The dreadful catalogue of penances, enumerated above, and voluntarily endured to avert that vengeance, incontestably proves the existence of those conceptions in their minds; and the religious rites, at present in practice among them, demonstrate that they consider Seeva as the delegated minister of the Almighty vengeance. On the subject of these and other apparent contradictions in the course of this work, I beg permission to offer one general, and not, I trust, inadequate, apology.

On a subject so extensive and so complex as the ANCIENT RELIGION OF INDIA, a religion so involved in the sables of mythology, so darkened by the deepest shades of superstition, and in the investigation of which, such an ample scope must necessarily be allowed to opinion and conjecture, an exact arrangement of the various matter constantly rising for investigation could not always be preserved, nor unimpeachable accuracy of delineation be always expected. If, however, I have, in one page, reprefented the Indian religion as mild and benevolent, and, in another, as fanguinary and terrible, the inconfiftency is not to be imputed to me, but to that religion itself, which has, in different ages, and under varying circumstances, altered her feature, her voice, and her gesture. Upon this account it is, that she presents to the inquirer a twofold, or rather multifold, aspect; bearing alternately the smile of beauty and complacency, and the frown of horror and deformity. At one time, arrayed in all the giant terrors of superstition, she appears, like a fable and vindictive DEMON from NARAKA, to stalk in desolating fury over the continent of India, brandishing an uplifted scourge, and clanking an iron chain; while after her are borne a band of famished Yogges, stretched on the wheels of torture, and languishing in various attitudes of penance. Her tone is high and menacing, her footsteps are marked with blood, and her edicts are stamped with the characters of death. At another time, she wears the fimilitude of a beautiful and radiant

CHERUB from HEAVEN, bearing on her perfuafive lips the accents of pardon and peace, and on her filken wings benefaction and bleffing. Now, referved and stately, she delights in pompous facrifices and splendid oblations: fhe exults to fee her altars decorated with brocade, and her images glittering with jewels; a numerous train of priefts, gorgeoufly arrayed, officiating in her temples, and wafting around, from golden cenfers, the richest odours of the East. Again she assumes a ruftic garb, and arrays her aspect in festive fmiles: she mingles in the jocund train of dancing girls that furround her altar, and will accept none but the fimplest oblations; fruits, flowers, and honey. This difference of religious feature is of a nature consonant with the division of the HINDOOS, noticed before, into two grand fects; that of VEESHNU, and that of SEEVA; and it may in part be accounted for by the different character of the patron-deities; the one, a mild and preferving, the other, to adopt the language and fentiments of the Brahmins, a fierce, vindictive, and destroying, deity !

But whence originally arose this astonishing contrariety of sentiment, this diametrical opposition of character, as wide asunder as

earth

earth from heaven, between the two great fects of India? Whence came that division itself, if, in reality, the Indians derived their descent from ONE COMMON ANCESTOR, and are universally bound by the laws of one GREAT LEGISLATOR? We have from the authentic, the incontrovertible, evidence of Mr. Orme, in one page, delineated the gentle Hindoo shuddering at the fight of blood,\* and, upon that account, though skilled in all other branches of the medical science, totally ignorant of anatomical diffection; and we have, in another, from the equally incontrovertible evidence of Sir William Jones and Mr. Wilkins, independantly of ancient classical authority, represented them as profusely shedding the blood of men, bulls, and borfes, in facrifice. Nay, even at this day, certain tribes of the ferocious race of Mahrattas are more than fuspected of fecretly cherishing a number of human victims, the most remarkable for perfonal beauty that can possibly be obtained, and generally in the full vigour and bloom of youth, for the rites of the ALTAR; of fattening them like the stall-fed oxen for flaughter; and, on grand folemnities of feftivity or grief, of actually offering up those unhappy

<sup>·</sup> See vol. ii. chap. i.

unhappy victims to their gloomy goddess in all the pomp of that tremendous sacrifice.\*

With diffidence natural to an author of unestablished character, who feels himself advancing upon dangerous and disputable ground, and yet engaged in the discussion of a variety of topics, equally important and interesting, I have hitherto refrained from difclosing to the reader my real fentiments on fo abstruse a subject, and from unfolding a fystem, of which the novelty might subject me to the charge of prefumption, and the precariousness of it to the censures of critical feverity. At the hazard of being at once accounted inconfistent in my affertion, and incompetent to the discharge of that high historic function which I have, perhaps, too rashly adventured upon, throughout this Disfertation, I have endeavoured, in various ways, and by suppositions, none of which, I am convinced, could appear by any means absolutely

<sup>•</sup> An intelligent gentleman, who refided fome years in India, related this circumflance to me, and told me I might depend upon it for a FACT. Another gentleman, who filled a respectable civil office in one of our fettlements, writes me word, that, one morning, while he was attending the duties of his flation, a decapitated child was discovered at the door of a celebrated pagoda. On inquiry, it was found to be a facrifice to avert some dreaded evil, and the father was the executioner.

lutely fatisfactory or conclusive to a fensible reflecting mind, to account for the numerous contradictions pointed out, as well in the VEDAS themselves, as in the principles and practices of the BRAHMINS, and intended to referve the final attempt to refolve the difficulty, till I should have reached that period of the early Hindoo history, when I knew an opportunity would offer for a complete developemement of the plan, which, I own, to myself has ever appeared both plausible and defenfible. My reasons for adopting it will be given at large in their proper place; and it is for the fake of perspicuity alone, during the remaining, and otherwise inexplicable, pages of the theological Differtation, that I shall in this chapter briefly submit the outlines to the candid confideration of my readers.

It is, however, previously necessary that we should enter and more minutely explore the internal regions and decorations of those temples, an account of the external construction of which engrossed former portions of the Brahmin theology. The Indians having broken their grand Triad into three separate deities, it remains that we consider the worship paid, at the present day, to each; their peculiar rites, the facred utensils made use of,

and the different oblations performed, in their respective temples. Thus will this curious subject, so far as it is yet known, be fully before the reader, and this final portion of it conclude to his entire satisfaction, when he is affured that nothing important, on a topic so interesting, has been omitted. Before it closes, however, an astonishing and stupendous scene will be unveiled to his view, such as no country beside ever witnessed, and no religion ever yet displayed to the contemplation of the

philosopher.

In a former volume we left an innumerable multitude affembled, at fun-rife, before the door of a great pagoda, who, after having bathed in the tank of ablution below, and left their fandals on its margin, impatiently awaited the unfolding of those doors by the ministering Brahmins. Before they can enter, however, another indifpenfable ceremony takes place, which can only be performed by the hand of a Brahmin, and that is, the impreffing of their foreheads with THE TILUK, or mark of different colours, as they may belong either to the feet of Veeshnu or Seeva. If the temple be that of Veefhnu, their foreheads are marked with a longitudinal line, and the colour used is vermilion; if it be the temple

temple of Seeva, they are marked with a parallel line, and the colour used is turmeric, or faffron. But these two grand sects being again fubdivided into numerous classes, both the fize and the shape of the TILUK are varied in proportion to their superior or inferior rank. In regard to the TILUK, I must observe, that it was a custom of very ancient date in Asia to mark their fervants in the forehead. It is alluded to in Ezekiel, ix. 4; where the Almighty commands his angel to go through the city, and SET A MARK ON THE FOREHEADS of the men, (his fervants, the faithful,) who fighed for the abominations committed in the midft thereof.\* The fame idea again occurs in the Revelations, vii. 31: Hurt not the earth, neither the fea, nor the trees, till we have fealed the SERVANTS OF OUR GOD IN THEIR FORE-HEADS. With respect to the colour with which the Hindoos are marked, I cannot but confider this rite as a remnant of the old Sabian fuperstition, in which, the reader has been informed, the Chaldaan devotees painted their idols according to the colour of the planet or star adored: and it seems to be no more than right that the fervant of the deity should bear the same mark and be distinguished

<sup>.</sup> Confult Lowth and other commentators on this curious text.

guished by the same colour with which that deity was defignated. In fact, all the idols of the Indian pagodas are at this day gaudily painted; and that paint is renovated by the prieft, whenfoever he renews his devotion; for, speaking of the private pooja, or worship of the Indians in their houses, Mr. Crauford informs us, that the Brahmin who performs the ceremony, occasionally ringing the bell and blowing the shell, "gives the TILUK, or mark on the forehead, to the idol, by dipping his right thumb in a mixture prepared for the purpose,"\* Indeed, Hamilton, giving us an account of the great stone idol of Jaggernaut, after faying he had two rich diamonds near the top, to represent eyes, adds, that his nose and mouth were painted with vermilion; a proof that the Jaggernaut pagoda was erected to Veefhnu. I have no doubt that, originally, this mark was the mark of the hermetic crofs, that celebrated fymbol in all the Gentile world; and, for reasons which will hereafter be unfolded, I am induced to agree with Lowth, that the paffage, above-cited from Ezekiel, originally stood in the Septuagint, not to onusion, a mark; but Tau onusion, THE MARK TAU, or great T. Let us now enter enter the pagoda with the devout and purified Hindoo, and fee him pay his obeifance to the Deity through the symbols that re-

prefent him.

Involved in darkness, scarcely less than the fubterraneous caverns, before-described, from having only one low door for the entrance, and filled with the most disgusting effluvia, arifing from the stench of lamps kept continually burning, and the oil used in the sacrifices, the Indian pagoda exhibits, on the first entrance, the appearance of a polluted dungeon, whose walls are covered with animals, monstrous in shape and terrible in aspect. These, it was before observed, are symbolical representations of the attributes of the Deity; his wisdom being represented by a circle of heads; his strength, by the elephant; his GLORY, by horns, imitative of the folar ray; his CREATIVE POWER, by the male of animals of a prolific kind, as the bull or goat; his BENEVOLENCE, by the facred cow, whose milk nourishes the gentle Hindoo; while the combination of these animals or parts of animals was intended to defignate his united wifdom, power, glory, and benevolence. Degrading, I observed, to the divine nature as these representations appear to be, and as they really VOL. V. are, are, they are only such as might be expected from a race so deeply involved in physical researches as the Indian nation is known immemorially to have been; whose Brahmins, while they acknowledge the Supreme Deity to have occasionally descended from heaven, and invested himself with a human, and even a bestial, form, have themselves opened a wide field for the allegorical designs which decorate

their pagodas.

But, independently of these animal-figures. the fymbols of the divine attributes, all the three great deities of India having wives; as, for instance, Brahma being married to Seraswati, Veeshnu to Lacshmi, and Seeva to Bhavani; and these wives respectively producing a numerous offspring; is the occasion of their temples being filled with a thousand subordinate divinities, whose names and functions it would be an endless labour to repeat. The history of many of these mythological perfonages may be found in Sir William Jones's Differtation in the Afiatic Refearches on the gods of Greece, Italy, and India; and in the publication of M. Sonnerat. I shall still adhere to the great outlines only of the Hindoo faith, and principally confine myfelf to an account of the rites paid to the great Triad collectively

collectively or feparately. It is a circumftance equally curious as true, that there at this day exifts throughout Hindostan scarcely any one temple facred to Brahma, in his individual character of Creator; nor, though in honour of Veelhnu and Seeva numerous festivals crowd the Hindoo almanac, is one day peculiarly confecrated to Brahma. The Brahmins alone, in memorial of their original descent from Brahma, every morning, at sunrife, perform to his honour the ceremony of Sandivane, or ablution in the Ganges, or fome facred tank. In all other respects, his functions and worship feem to be absorbed in that of Veeshnu, in whose temples he is sculptured with four heads and four arms. The four heads, as often before explained, are fymbols of the four elements and four quarters of the world. Some authors affert, they are allufive to the four VEDAS; but that is impossible, fince, originally, there were but three of those facred books. In one of the four hands, Brahma holds a circle, the mystic emblem of eternity; in another, FIRE, the just emblem of power pervading to the centre of that world which he made. With the two others he writes on OLLES, or Indian palmleaves, possibly in token of his having given

G 2

the Hindoos the grand code of their theology, as Menu, who by Sonnerat is too often confounded with this perfonage, imparted to them the code of their laws. I shall not infult the reader's understanding with a ridiculous tale, told by M. Sonnerat, concerning the reafon of this general neglect and degradation of Brahma, the fupreme Creator.\* With thefe mythologic details let the priests of India amuse their deluded followers. Such, however, being the fact, let us endeavour to explain the mystery in the best manner we can, and I humbly propose the following query for the folution of it: Do not the Hindoos mean to intimate, that, the great work of creation being completed, and every thing fet in order and motion by the Almighty CREATIVE FIAT, the regulation and management of the world, thus formed, naturally devolved upon the PRESERVER?

The pagodas, confecrated either to the one or to the other of these latter deities, are invariably adorned with two statues of the god, one without the temple, to which the people themselves present their offerings; the other,

See Sonnerat's Voyages, vol. i. p. 51, in which Brahma is degraded into a pedefial to support his fellow-deities, Veefinu and Seeva.

more facred and richly arrayed with cloth of gold and jewels, tenants the inmost fanctuary, and can only be approached by the officiating Brahmin. These images are generally made of stone or copper, painted and gilt; some are of folid gold, but few or none of filver. They had, formerly, for eyes, rich gems, rubies, or emeralds; but Mohammedan and European avarice united have obscured those more brilliant luminaries, and glass ones have been fubstituted in their place. Tavernier tells a curious flory of a certain goldsmith; who, fecreting himfelf in the great pagoda of Jaggernaut, robbed the idol of one of his envied eyee. The story is exceedingly doubtful. However, the thief was not permitted by indignant Veefhnu long to enjoy a treasure obtained by fuch tremendous facrilege; for, when the Brahmin opened the door the enfuing morning, and he attempted to go out of the pagoda, he was ftruck with death at the very threshold, when the stolen jewel was found upon him. Tavernier adds, that no goldfmith, nor can we wonder at it, was ever after fuffered to enter that holy pagoda.\*

Veefinu is variously represented in his temples according to the different characters

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<sup>.</sup> Indian Travels, book iii. chap, ix, London, folio edit.

assumed by him in his Avatars or descents, but more generally by a human form with four arms. In one of his hands he bears a certain shell, or CHANQUE, as they denominate it on the Coromandel coast. It is the holy fhell used in the rites of public worship, and its nine valves or foldings allude to his nine incarnations. Another bears the radiant CHACRA, described before, as instinct with life. A third grasps, sometimes a drawn sword, like that engraved in the plate of the Matfya Avatar, and fometimes a mace, or fceptre, broad and ponderous at the extremity, but tapering where the hand holds it. The fourth is unoccupied, and ready to affift those who call for the affiftance of the heavenly preserver. Near him is constantly portrayed his GAROO-RI, or fwift-winged bird, on which, in thefe benevolent expeditions, he is wafted through the air.\* According to M. Sonnerat, it is the eagle of Pondicherry, or the briffon; he defcribes its head and neck as white, and the rest of the body as of a dusky red colour. These birds are considered by the Brahmins as facred, and are fed by them at stated periods, when the priefts of Veefhnu fummon them to their repair by the found of two plates of copper

copper flruck against each other. There can fearcely be a doubt, as before-intimated, that Veeshnu, with his chacra and garoori, gave to the mythologists of Greece their Jupiter Tonans and his thunder-bearing eagle; whom, during the early commercial intercourse that fubfisted between them, they might have seen thus defignated in the Indian temples. I defer any particular account of the nine incarnations of Veeshnu, till the ancient history of India shall commence, of which they form a very large and interesting portion. It is fusficient in this place to observe, that those incarnations -it is with reluctance I use the word, but there is no other that can convey my meaning, and it is used by Sir William Jones, and many other writers, who retain for the Christian doctrines the profoundest veneration - represent the Deity, descending in a human shape, either to accomplish certain awful and important events, as in the instance of the three first : to confound blaspheming vice, to subvert gigantic tyranny, and to avenge oppressed innocence, as in the five following: or, finally, as in the ninth, to establish a glorious system of benevolent institutions upon the ruins of a gloomy and fanguinary fuperstition. These, furely, are noble actions; G 4

actions; these are worthy of a god; and it is principally to these different descents of Veeshnu, and for such illustrious purposes, that all the allegorical sculpture and paintings of India have reference. The religion, therefore, of the Veeshnu sect is, as already has been observed of a cheerful and social nature; their's is the festive song, the sprightly dance, and the resounding cymbal: libations of milk and honey slow upon his altars; the gayest garlands decorate his statues; aromatic woods eternally burn before him; and the richest gums of the East disperse fragrance through the temples of the Preserver.

Diametrically opposite to all this is the fombrous superstition of the relentless Seeva; a superstition darkened by gloomy terrors and ensanguined by excruciating penances. Seeva, however, is differently represented, according as the temple is consecrated to him, in his avenging or in his re-productive capacity. I shall for the present consider him in the former character, in which he is portrayed with a sierce and menacing aspect; his features are distorted, and his tongue is protruded from his mouth. He bears in his hand a trident, by whose three tines is symbolized fire, that destroys all things.

On this fubject I cannot forbear remarking, that it appears to me, in the course of these inquiries, that a species of superstition, very diffimilar in feature from that which prevailed on the shores of the peninsula of India, feems very early to have flourished in the remote and lofty regions of Upper Hindoftan. It was a religion that delighted not in the fprightly notes of the tabor, nor was foothed with the melodious warbling of the dancing fyrens of the pagoda: it was a religion of gloom and melancholy, that loved to act its unfocial rites in the folemn recesses of the deep forest, under the cover of the night, and by the pale light of Chandra, the conscious moon, that bore witness to the nocturnal orgies of the fequestered and penitentiary Saivites. Indeed it can by no means be an object of wonder to any reader of reflection, who has travelled through the entertaining volume of Bernier to the feeluded valley of Cashmire, a valley furrounded with mountains, the most stupendous in height and the most rugged in form, from whose lofty steeps a thousand cataracts on every fide rush down into the peaceful bosom of that valley, that the mind of the Hindoo, intimidated by the grand and majestic objects with which he is encircled, should

should be the sport of superstitious terrors. The whole range of mountains, in most places, covered with eternal fnow, that skirt Hindostan to the north, and rise one above the other in a style of horrid grandeur; and the vast and dreary deserts of Sirinagur, through the long extent of which the Ganges winds in its passage to Lower India; the impenetrable forests that in some places clothe those mountains, deepening the shadow thrown by them into the fubjacent plains, and the fleep abrupt denuded rocks that have braved the fury of every ftorm fince the deluge; all together form a contrast, at which human nature may well shudder, and by which human fortitude may be well staggered. These regions were a proper relidence for the auftere fect of the Saivites: men, accustomed to such gloomy objects, view religion and every other object through a falle medium; the Deity is invested with the darkness which enwraps his works; they see him only in his dreadful attributes, they perpetually hear his awful voice in the thunder, and contemplate him only in the form that howls above them. They haften, therefore, to propitiate him by unexampled severities, and they deluge his altars with facrificial blood.

The investigation of this very curious, though unpleasing, subject, which I am about to consider, the detail of these penitentiary fufferings and voluntary facrifices, inftituted by timid superstition in the earliest ages of the world, opens a scene at once novel and interesting. So deep, however, in the abysis of time runs back the period to which I allude, fo thick a veil hath oblivion diffused over the events of that distant æra, that, at the present moment, I can scarcely collect any pofitive or connected intelligence relative to the nature of those mysterious orgies, or the exact place of their celebration. It is evident, however, from the Ayeen Akbery, and the History of Ferishtah, that both serpents (that most ancient symbol of the Deity in Egypt, to whose body, in their mysterious hieroglyphics, they added the head of the sharp-fighted hawk, to denote his all-observing vigilance in the government of the world) and facred fountains were immemorially holden throughout Cashmire in the profoundest veneration. In a passage, cited before, it has been evinced, that in no less than 700 places of that province sculptured figures of serpents were worshipped; and that, at KEHROW, in the same province, 360 fountains, the number of the

the days of the ancient year, before it was reformed by more accurate calculations, were facred to the Moon. As the moon is thus particularly mentioned, under the ferpentine figure they probably adored the sun; but fince we read, in the same page of the Ayeen Akbery, that few venomous reptiles are to be found in the Subah, it is evident that they must have derived the superstition from some other country.\* I am not, however, inclined to deduce it from any connexion with Egypt, fince the whole of this Differtation tends to give the palm of originality to India rather than to Egypt, but from that country where the orbs of heaven, and the great ferpent OB, or Python, were first venerated;+ and where, according to Stanley on the Chaldaic philosophy, the whole system, both of morals and physics, was explained by perpetual allufions to fountains, imaginary or material, whose streams, like those of the Hebrew Sephiroth, were represented flowing into one another, and from whose mingled influences refults the harmony both of the immaterial and material world.

Cashmire,

<sup>\*</sup> Ayeen Akbery, vol. ii. p. 154-

<sup>+</sup> See Stanley, upon the Chaldaic philosophy.

Cashmire, which has been often called the terrestrial paradife, may indeed be justly denominated the boly land of superstition. In the Aveen Akbery, forty-five places are stated to be dedicated to MAHADEO, fixty-four to VEESHNU, twenty-two to Durga, and only three to BRAHMA. Many idolatrous temples also of brick or stone are said to be in Cashmire, of stupendous magnitude, and of unfathomable antiquity; fome of them yet perfect, but many in ruins. Speaking of one of these near Bereng, the Persian historian says. "In the centre of the refervoir is an idoltemple of stone, a beautiful fabric. At this place, the devotees furround themselves with fire till they are reduced to ashes, imagining they are, by this act, pleasing the Deity."\* In the same book, the cataract of Wiffy is particularized, which falls from the enormous altitude of 200 ells, with a noise that inspires awe and aftonishment, and down which the devout Hindoos frequently precipitate themfelves, thinking, again observes Abul Fazil. that, by thus ending their lives, they enfure to themselves reward in another life. Thus again are we led back by infenfible degrees to the Metempsychofis, which, in fact, may be confidered

<sup>\*</sup> Ayeen Akbery, vol. ii. p. 158.

confidered as the leading principle in the religion of India; a principle that at once fires the hopes of the virtuous, and alarms, with unutterable terrors, the fouls of the

guilty.

To the powerful influence over the mind of accidental fituations, dreary and romantic as those above-described, presenting to view the most awful, and even terrifying, prospects in nature, much may be ascribed; and it is not to be wondered at, if, amidst such scenes, a religion of gloom and melancholy should be engendered and cherished. Since, however, the fame fevere rites are practifed (though lefs extensively, and generally) in regions of Hindoltan, very remote from the forest of Gandharvas in the fnowy mountains of Heemacot, or Imaus, on plains when the fun for ever shines, and all nature looks smiling and gay, we must penetrate to a deeper source for the origin of this amazing difference between the festive rites of Veeshnu and the sombrous and blood-stained orgies of Seeva; we must explore the page of facred history, and endeavour to trace out some primæval fountain whence the malady has flowed, and corrupted more than one half of a mighty nation. To folve the difficulty, we need not go to that remote

remote period when the first murderer of the human race flew an amiable and unoffending brother. In the earliest events of the postdiluvian ages, and in the adverse principles of Shem and Ham, we shall find the baneful, and what I cannot avoid calling the true, fource of this distinction of the Indians into two grand fects, each bearing a deadly and implacable hatred to each other, infomuch, that when a follower of Veeshnu meets one of the sect of Seeva, he thinks himself polluted, and flies to some rite of purification for release from the foul stain. The colours of these two deities are as opposite as their opinions; for, Veefhnu, in the pagodas, is painted blue, while Seeva is white. Brahma differs from both, being painted of a red colour.

Having referred to those grand events that necessarily form the basis of all ancient history, however unfashionable it may be with certain writers of a sceptical class to consider them as such, I shall now as concisely as possible unfold to the reader the plan upon which I have ventured to proceed in the arduous undertaking of writing the ancient history of a country, whose annals are so deeply involved in allegory and sable as those of India. He will not consider the detail as entirely digres-

five, fince the ancient religion and the ancient history of India are connected by an inseparable chain; many of the most venerated divinities of India being only their earliest

fovereigns deified.

The aftonishing population of the Indians as well as of the Chinese, their great advance in civilization, and their cultivation of the sciences, at the most early periods which history records, offered to the historian, at his very outfet, a difficulty fo irreconcileable to the chronology of the Bible, that some intelligent writers have extended the Scripture-term ARA-RAT, upon the fummit of which mountain the ark of NOAH is faid to have rested, to that whole range of mountains which runs across Afia: and have maintained, that the faid ark rested, not in Armenia, but on the Indian Caucafus, or one of the mountains to the north of India. In these Indian regions, according to RALEIGH, but, in China, according to Shuckford, + the virtuous patriarch planted the vine, and established the first happy postdiluvian kingdom. Here, they affert,

<sup>\*</sup> Confelt Sir Walter Raleigh's History of the World, book i. chap vii. p. 74, ed. folio, 1677.

<sup>†</sup> See Shackford's Connexion of facred and profane History, vol. i. p. 101, ed. oct. 1728.

fert, during the extended and peaceful reign of that great patriarch, the renovated genius of man had ample time and opportunity to improve and expand itself: here virtue exulted in the fostering smile of a pious sovereign, and fcience fhot up vigoroufly beneath the protecting wing of power, invested at once with the PATERNAL, the PATRIARCHAL, and the RE-GAL, authority. The arguments, however, which have been adduced by these writers, in favour of their darling hypothesis, and which I shall faithfully present to the reader in my History, are specious, but not folid; ingenious, but not convincing. If they possessed still greater speciousness and still more refined ingenuity, they would be totally inadmissible, fince they oppose the tenor of that Sacred Book by which all Christians are bound to regulate their belief, fince they are repugnant to the whole stream of tradition, and fince they are made in direct contradiction to an infinite variety of evidence, engraved on the medals and monuments of Afia, of undoubted authenticity and of the most venerable antiquity. The fystem which I have to propose, and which, from a few fragments in ancient writers, I shall, in the Indian History, endeavour to eftablish, by no means opposes Scripture, violates VOL. V. proprobability, or outrages common sense and received tradition. It reaches nearly the same end and establishes facts nearly similar, without referring to such harsh and improbable means: and, if it does not allow that extended point of latitude to the claims to remote antiquity of the Hindoo nation, which the former hypothesis does, in point of date, yet it falls only about a century short of that hypothesis. In fact, it nearly ascends to the utmost point of all genuine chronology in India, the commencement of the Cali-Yug, or prefent age of the world's duration.

For the outlines of the fystem which I have adopted, I profess myself indebted to the profound investigation of Mr. BRYANT, concerning the migration and dispersion of nations. Throughout that most elaborate performance, I have endeavoured to avail myfelf of many useful and important hints, which the solid judgement and DEEP ERUDITION of the author, when unwarped by a brilliant fancy, enable him to afford the historian. From arguments which I shall hereafter endeavour to extend and amplify, Mr. BRYANT infifts upon a migration of the feveral branches of the great family that furvived the deluge, LONG ANTECEDENT to the confusion

fusion of tongues at Babel, and the confequent supposed dispersion of all mankind. That migration, he labours to demonstrate, took place, not from the plain of Shinar, but from the region of Ararat, where the ark rested. He contends, that neither the confusion of tongues nor the dispersion itself was universal, but would confine those two circumstances to the daring and rebellious race, who were engaged in the erection of that stupendous monument of human ambition and folly, the tower of Babel. His arguments are particularly forcible on that point, fo truly important, if indeed that point can be established on a folid basis in an historical inquiry like the prefent, concerning the antiquity and difputed priority of the different Afiatic nations: fome authors contending for the superior antiquity of the Scythians or Tartars, some for the Chinese, and others for the Indians. Mr. Bryant's idea is, that, by the term confounding the language, we ought to understand merely the confounding of the lip, or mode of pronunciation; and this labial failure he afterwards explains, by deferibing it as an utter inability to fpeak clearly and intelligibly, an incapacity to articulate their words.\*

H 2 With

<sup>\*</sup> Analysis of Ancient Mythology, vol. iii. p. 31.

With respect to the afferted dispersion of the human race from that fpot over the whole earth, he avers from authorities, which I must also hereafter adduce, with some additional observations of an Indian kind, and relative to the Sanfcreet annals, that the Hebrew word Col ARETZ, translated, the whole earth, will likewise bear a very different translation: that the word Con is often used in the fense of every, and that ARETZ, though frequently meant to express the earth, occurs continually in the Old Testament, in the fignification of land or province; as in the remarkable and pertinent instance of Aretz Shinar, the land of Shinar; Aretz Canaan, the land of Canaan; Aretz Cush, the land of Cush; and, he observes, the Psalmist uses both the terms precisely in the sense here attributed to them. Their found is gone out into every land; 'Col Aretz, in omnem terram.\*

When I first commenced this undertaking, I ingenuously acknowledge that the expensive volumes of Mr. Bryant were not in my pos-fession; and, when I was at Oxford, I had but cursorily inspected that learned work. Convinced, however, that the pure primæval theology

logy of India, as described by Sir William Jones, and as, throughout this Differtation, faithfully represented by myself, could only be derived from the genuine unadulterated principles that diftinguished the virtuous line of SHEM, yet, staggered by the universal prevalence in India, as well in ancient as in modern periods, of the gross and multiform idolatry of Ham, I remained for a long time involved in the deepeft fuspense and in the most painful perplexity. The farther I advanced in these Indian researches, the more striking appeared the contrast; the wider and more irreconcilable the difference. Educated, however, in principles that taught me to look to Chaldaa as to the PARENT-COUNTRY of the world, the nurse of rising arts, and the fountain whence human knowledge has flowed by various channels through all the kingdoms of the earth; at the fame time, confounded by the authenticated accounts which have, within these few years, been imported into Europe, of the great proficiency of the Indians in the noblest and most abstruse sciences, when the greatest part of Asia had scarcely even emerged from barbarism, and when all Europe lay buried in intellectual darkness; I was just on the point of throwing away my pen, and giving H 3

giving up at least the ancient bistory of India, as involved in inextricable difficulties. The facred records were filent about their origin; fuch accounts of them as were to be found in the best writers of antiquity, relative to their ancient history, were often in the highest degree romantic, and always unfatisfactory. All that the writers of the Universal History have related of the hiftory of ancient India is included in a few pages, and this portion of that voluminous work, from their confulting only the relations of the historians of Greece and Rome, who knew very little about them, is extremely defective. With few aids, therefore, from claffical books to affift me in this laborious disquisition concerning their antiquities, with little light to direct uncertain conjecture, and with little patronage, at first, to animate exertion, I should have laid by my pen in despair, but for the accidental attainment and revision, when nearly half these Differtations was printed off, of the Analysis of Ancient Mythology. As I was determined to advance no farther in a history, which, in fome parts, had a feeming tendency to throw oblique reflections on the credit of the Mofaic fystem of theology, - that sublime system, which both inclination and profession made

me anxious to support, - unless I should be fully able to obviate those reflections, nothing could be more highly fatisfactory to me, than to find the grand opening which the hypothesis, on which the Analysis was formed, unfolded towards the elucidation of fo dark a fubject, and that too in the third volume, a part of the work where ferious history commences, where the conjectures of mythology are superfeded by the evidence of well-attested facts, and the affertions of the facred volume of truth are corroborated by incontrovertible testimonies from profane authors.

Following the line marked out by Mr. Bryant, I contend, that the first migration of mankind from Ararat took place about a century after the appulse of the ark at BARIS, by which time, fuccessive funs and winds, alternately exerting their force, might have rendered the earth fufficiently dry for the accomplishment of so distant a journey; that either Noan himfelf, whose name is so clearly recognized in India by the Sanscreet appellative of Menu, (and it is remarkable that the Arabians at this day diffinguish, as the Hebrews undoubtedly did, the patriarch by the name of Nun,) or, if not Noah himself, some descendant of Shem, gradually led on the first colony, H4

colony, increasing as they journeyed eastward through Persia, to the western frontiers of India; that its first great capital was Oude, in the province of Bahar, to the magnitude and extent of which city, the ancient records and traditions of India bear fuch repeated testimony; and that the second great inhabited city, equally celebrated in the most ancient Hindoo annals, was Hastinapoor, where Judishter reigned, and in the neighbourhood of which, afterwards, was fought the great battle described in the Mahabbarat. in which fons and brothers, that is, the defcendants of SHEM and HAM, perished in fuch a dreadful and promiscuous carnage; that this happy, this feeluded, and increasing, colony flourished for a long succession of ages in primitive happiness and innocence; practifed the pureft rites of the grand patriarchal religion, without images and temples, the original devotion of Shem, the Son of God, who possibly was the genuine legislator of India, and in his regal capacity bore his father's title of MENU; that they affiduously cultivated all the sciences, and had also the use of the scientific records, and aftronomical observations of their antediluvian ancestors preserved in the ark; and that, according

cording to the latest information imported into Europe in the Asiatic Researches, a colony emigrated about three thousand years ago from India, and, directing their march to regions still nearer the RISING SUN, established, on the most eastern boundary of Asia, the vast and celebrated empire of China.

When the rifing tower of Babel was overthrown (as the Orientals report) by storms. earthquakes, and whirlwinds, commissioned from the Almighty to level the fabric of man's exorbitant ambition; and when that fierce and prefumptuous race, who had engaged in the mad undertaking of erecting it, were difperfed over the earth by the breath of God's displeasure, they turned the arm of violence, which had been impioufly directed towards Heaven itself, against the pious line of mortals, who were its distinguished favourites upon earth. Under Nimrod, their daring chief, the mighty hunter before the Lord both of beafts and men, this desperate band of Cuthite robbers, (the GIANTS and TITANS of profane writers,) ejected by the fignal vengeance of Providence from their own country of Babylon, first seized upon the dominions of Assur, the fon of Shem. They then extended their ravages towards the beautiful tiful regions of Perfia, where Elam, another fon of Shem, reigned: but, in this attempt, those fons of rapine met with a terrible repulse; for, the virtuous race of Shem, indignant at these repeated attacks from the base progeny of HAM, laid afide the native gentleness that distinguished their line, and, uniting their forces, after many fevere engagements, and a contest protracted for a long feries of years, fo totally and finally subjected their opponents, that, we are told in Scripture, they ferved, that is, paid tribute to, their conquerors during twelve years. After this period, their reftless ambition once more impelled them into acts of rebellion.\* But, after a still longer war, and a still more bloody defeat, their power in that part of Afia was totally broken, or rather annihilated. They were driven thence into its most remote regions, even into those cold and gloomy Tartarian regions, which, from the darkness and fogginess of the atmosphere, as well as their forming the utmost boundary of the earth known to the Afiatics, was anciently confidered as the abode of guilty and unclean spirits, and which, in the fabulous mythology of

<sup>.</sup> Twelve years they ferved CHEDARLAGMER, and, in the shirteenth, they rebelled. - Gen. ch. xii. v. 4.

of the Greeks, was represented as HELL IT-SELF. Originally weakened and divided, by the great colony which early emigrated under their great ancestor to Egypt, the remaining posterity of Ham, though numerous, were not able to cope with four powerful and combined sovereigns of the house of Shem; but, rallying their scattered forces, they proved more than a match for one unwarlike branch of that illustrious line.

Far remote from this turbulent and fanguinary scene were situated the forefathers of the happy nation, whose history it will hereafter be my province to record. By nature inclined to peace and amity, and by long habitude attached to it, they neither fufpected, nor were prepared for, the attack which the exiled and discomfited Cuthithes were meditating upon their flourishing country and philosophic race. Collected in innumerable multitudes from all the hyperborean regions beyond Caucafus, regions called from them. as I have before remarked, Cutha, Scuthe, and Scythia; one party hovered, like a dark and angry cloud, over the clifts of that vast mountain, whence they frequently stretched their longing view over the Pifgah, which they were impatient to possess. Another party of this intrepid tribe, which had taken possession of the tract on the west of the Indus, in aftertimes called also from them Indo-Scythia, waited only the fignal from their brethren to pass that frontier river, and rush upon the devoted Panjab of India. The former, as feems to be intimated by numerous passages which I shall hereafter cite from the Dionyfiacs of Nonnus, as well as from Dionyfius the geographer, purfuing the course of the GANGES through Sirinagur, a country whose frightful rocks had no power to difmay that progeny, to whom gloomy and terrible objects, and deeds of extraordinary peril, ever afforded a favage delight, entered Hindostan at the pass of HURDWAR, and seized upon the rich and fertile region watered by that river. These affertions may appear presumptuous as they are novel; but the reader will recollect, that I am labouring to throw light on a dark and remote period, where all is doubt and conjecture. I shall give substantial reasons for adopting this fystem in my history. Two of those reasons only shall be mentioned at present. The first, and that which originally induced me to espouse the hypothesis, and indulge the conjectures thus fummarily flated, is, the relation which, from authentic Indian books books and traditions, the Aycen Akbery\* has given us of the immense extent and unequalled magnificence of the great city and kingdom of Oute in the most ancient periods. The fecond is, that this very account is in the fullest manner corroborated by still stronger evidence adduced by me from Sir William Jones, + who informs us, that RAMA was the first Indian conqueror; that he extended his victories even to the Peninfula and Ceylone; that his capital was Oude, where he was venerated (by his own tribe and pofterity) both as a KING and PROPHET; and that the prefent city of Lucknow was only one of the gates of that vast metropolis. There were, however, it must be observed, three heroes of the name of RAMA celebrated in the Indian annals; but, according to the last author, their splendid exploits may all be referred to this mighty fon of Cush.

The Cuthites, who entered India over the Seendhu, probably pushed on and extended their conquests along the western regions of India, till they had established themselves in that famous city, which Arrian

<sup>.</sup> See the Ayeen Akbery, vol. ii. p. 41.

<sup>+</sup> Afiatic Refearches, vol. i.

rian fays was the capital of the CUTHEI, Sangara; and which was afterwards taken by form by Alexander. SHINAR, fays Mr. Bryant, is fometimes called Singar and Singara; and, it is not impossible, that, attached to that country from which they were fo difgracefully driven, these successful invaders of India might give this name to their new metropolis, in memorial of their original country. The alteration of a letter is not material; for, D'Anville is inclined to think that Sangania, a province of Guzzurat, may be the Sangara of Arrian, to which, however, I own Major Rennel urges a strong objection; and I only introduce the remark by way of observing, that, if this were in reality the Sangara of Arrian, the inhabitants have not at all swerved from their original character, fince, according to Hamilton, they were, in his time, the greatest robbers and banditti on that whole coast, and they continue fo to this day.

To relate the conflicts of rival colonies and contending nations is the bufiness of history rather than of a treatise upon theology.—Suffice it, then, for the present to add, that, immediately after the great and decisive battle described in the Mahabbarat, the national theology,

theology, politics, and manners, experienced a total change. It was the immediate confequence of the triumph of the invading Cuthites, that all the degenerate superstitions of Ham, the worship of the Phallus, the veneration of SERPENTS, the adoration of the SOLAR ORB, HUMAN SACRIFICES, and every other Egyptian rite, the remarkable prevalence of which in India has so long perplexed the antiquary, commenced. Stupendous caverns were scooped from the bowels of the earth, and vast pyramidal temples were erected upon its surface.

No nation upon earth, fays the author of the Analysis, was ever so addicted to gloom and melancholy as these wandering fons of Ham. In consequence, the primitive, mild, and benignant, religion of Hindoftan fuddenly changed its feature, and the angel of benevolence, that before prefided over and directed the public worship of the Deity, was converted into a dæmon, with an aspect replete with wrath and menacing vengeance. This alteration in the religious worship soon became visible in the appearance and manners of the people. The deep wrinkle of thought, and the pale cast of despair and melancholy, fat upon the countenance, formerly illumined with the brighteft

brightest ray of hope; while the eye, that once fparkled with holy transport, now funk in all the languor of grief, or became darkened with the fcowl of mistrust. A tedious round of fuperstitious ceremonies usurped the place of genuine devotion. Modes of penance, the most frightful and excruciating, were established in the room of that heart-felt contrition which is at once most pleasing, and must prove most pacificatory, to a God of benignity and compaffion. Emaciated with continued famine, and staggering through extreme weakness, in all the confecrated groves and forests of India were feen the expiring victims of voluntary torture.\* The temples echoed with the shrieks of penitentiary anguish, and the altars were deluged with a wanton profusion both of human and bestial blood.

The deity himself, the great Brahme, who the Indians were originally taught was a spirit, and that every symbolic representation must necessarily degrade him, was, in time, dishonoured by the most humiliating similitudes, and delineated by the most monstrous sculptures. These sculptures, indeed,

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<sup>\*</sup> In the Hectopades, the forest of the propiet Goutama is mentioned as the forest dedicated to acts of penitential mortification. Hectopades, page 243.

were not all defigned, nor executed, with equal want of skill. There is one on the Ganges highly deferving notice, of HAREE (a title of Veeshnu) sleeping on a vast serpent, both figures of exquifite workmanfhip; and the fabrication of which, as well as of the caverns of Saliette and Elephanta, on the two opposite shores of India, may justly be affigned to the remotest æra of the Indian empire. It is thus described by Mr. Wilkins, in his notes to the Heetopades; " Nearly opposite to Sultangunge, a confiderable town in the province of Bahar, in the East Indies, there stands a rock of granite, forming a fmall island in the midst of the Ganges, known to Europeans by the name of the Rock of Jehangeery, which is highly worthy of the traveller's notice for a vail number of images carved in relief upon every part of its surface. Among the rest, there is HAREE, of a gigantic fize, recumbent upon a coiled ferpent; whose heads, which are numerous, the artist has contrived to fpread into a kind of canopy over the fleeping god; and from each of its mouths issues a forked tongue, seeming to threaten instant death to any whom rashness might prompt to difturb him. The whole figure lies VOL. V.

lies almost clear of the block on which it is hewn. It is finely imagined, and executed

with great skill."

It was the peculiar delight of this enterprifing race to erect stupendous edifices; to excavate long fubterraneous pallages from the living rock; to form vast lakes; to extend over the hollow of adjoining mountains magnificent arches for aqueducts and bridges; in fhort, to attempt whatever was hazardous and difficult; and to carry into execution whatever appeared to the rest of mankind impracticable. Affyria and Egypt were covered with these wonders in sculpture and prodigies in art, which their daring genius and perfevering industry executed. It was they who built the tower of Belus and raifed the pyramids of Egypt; it was they who formed the grottoes near the Nile, and scooped the caverns of Salfette and Elephanta. Their skill in mechanical powers, to this day, aftonishes posterity, who are unable to conceive by what means stones, thirty, forty, and even fixty, feet in length, and from twelve to twenty feet in breadth, could ever be reared to that wonderful point of elevation at which they were feen, by Pococke and Norden, in the ruined temples of Balbec and the Thebais.

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Those that compose the pagodas of India are searcely less wonderful in magnitude and elevation, and they evidently display the bold architecture of the same indefatigable artiscers. What we cannot allow to Mr. D'Ancarville as to Semiramis, who probably was an imaginary being, or, if not imaginary, certainly never penetrated so far into India, may yet be allowed to the primæval ancestors of the nation over whom she governed.

Thus have I endeavoured to account, in a manner, I trust, somewhat more satisfactory than hitherto attempted, for the immense difparity and viciflitude fublifting, through fuccessive ages, in fentiment and practice, between the Indians, or rather between the two great fects of Veeshnu and Seeva; between those who delight in bloody sacrifices, and those who shudder at them. It appears to me the most plausible method for solving the historical difficulty, and the only certain clue for unravelling the theological mystery. Had Sir William Jones completed his strictures upon the origin and priority of the Afiatic nations, or fixed the central country, in which, he feems to intimate, mankind were first settled, and from which, he afferts, all nations emigrated, I should have been enabled

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to proceed with more confidence, and less danger of error. It will be remembered, however, that the whole, which I thus offer, is professedly conjecture; and nothing could afford me greater pleasure than to renounce conjecture entirely upon so important a subject, and sacrifice hypothesis and opinion at the altar of truth.

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CHAPTER

## CHAPTER II.

The peculiar Manners, Customs, and Ceremonies, of the BRAHMINS detailed, and compared with the Accounts given by Greek and Roman Writers of the ancient BRACHMANS. - Peculiar FRUITS, GRAIN, SPICES, and AROMATICS, used in SACRIFICE by the Brahmins; all remarkable for their great fanative Virtues, or other distinguished Properties in the vegetable World. -The facred Bells and Conques, or Shells, immemorably used in Indian Temples, considered .- The Veneration of the Veeshnuvites for certain confecrated Stones .- The uncommon Splendor of the Indian Pooja, or Worship .-The SACRED DANCE of Antiquity considered, and the MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS made use of to animate that Dance. - The Whole compared with Egyptian, Hebrew, Syrian, and Greek, resembling Rises and Ceremonies.

FTER having, in the preceding chapter I unfolded the great outlines of the intended history, I proceed, in the prefent, to the confideration of other interesting circum-

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stances,

stances, relative to the Brahmins, not yet detailed, with which either their native books, or the Greek and Roman writers, have made us acquainted. On this point we may tread, with bolder footstep, the ground of classical

antiquity.

Voluminous, and, in general, just, have been the disquisitions of ancient classical writers, relative to the religious tenets, the fevere habits, the exalted virtues, of this fuperior order or cast of men. As the Brachmans (for fo, in compliment to those writers, we must, for a short time, denominate them) were the guides of the people in religious, fo were they the counsellors of the prince in civil, concerns; and, like the MAGI of Persia, they enjoyed this twofold office by hereditary right. Their literary pursuits, therefore, were of various kinds; for, while fome of those venerable fages made theology and philosophy their fole study, others among them added to those sciences very refined and profound speculations on the great focial and political duties, and were verfed in all the maxims of jurisprudence. In consequence of this, we meet with Brachmans at the courts of princes, and Brachmans in the folitudes of the wilderness: but, whether we descend with them

them into the recluse cell, or enter with them the folitary forest, where, as in the academic groves of Greece, the great mysteries of nature were investigated, and the fublime truths of morality were inculcated; or whether we purfue their footsteps to the crowded city and the splendid palace, where kings were proud to entertain them as their guests; the elevation of their genius and the dignity of their character appear alike conspicuous. The blameless tenour of their lives, the simplicity of their manners, their temperance, their chastity, their deep theological and political wisdom, secured the veneration of the vulgar, and awed even majesty, seated in fplendour upon the imperial throne.

If the speech of Dindamis to Alexander, preserved for posterity by Bissaus,\* be not the entire fabrication of the editor's fancy, it remains a wonderful proof of the deep restlection, the undaunted firmness, and the found political wissom, of the speaker. The Brachmans, indeed, in some instances, carried their practices of self-denial to such extreme lengths; endured the vicissitudes of a climate

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Thus Sir Edward Byshe, Clarencieux king-at-arms, in the reign of Charles the Second, and editor of Palladius and these very curious letters of Dindamis, styles himself.

alternately subject to the raging tempest and the scorching sun with such unshaken resolution; and courted, with such unabating zeal, every opportunity of shewing their contempt of life, and what are usually thought its felicities; that we should be at a loss to account for the motives of a conduct so widely deviating from established rules, did we not know that the pride of human distinction, and the impulsive ardour of emulation, often stimulate mankind to the wildest and most extravagant eccentricities.

Placed, by the policy and partiality of the legislator, in a rank of life superior to their princes; despising the glare of wealth and the pageantry of courts; anxious for no food but the fruits of the earth, and thirsting for no beverage but that of the chrystal stream which watered his folitude; his passions restrained by his temperance, and his ambition bounded by the paucity of his wants; the PRIEST of BRAHMA had nothing to diffract his thoughts from the duties of his function. The inflruction of the younger Brachmans; the numerous, the stated, and frequently-returning, rites of ablution and facrifice; meditation on the perfections of the Deity in private; and acts of benevolence to his fellowcreatures in public; occupied the whole of his well-spent day: while the night was confumed in prayer to his God, and hymns to his praise, in the light slumbers which temperance bestows, and in the solid peace which innocence enjoys. Such was the true Brachman of antiquity; and such, notwithstanding the general degradation of that sacred order, is the inosfensive life of many a modern Brahmin; who, remote from the cares and commerce of the world, offers up to heaven his devout orisons and bloodless oblations on the slowery borders of the Kistna and on the luxuriant banks of the Ganges.

Diodorus Siculus\* informs us, that the ancient Brachmans acknowleged the whole fystem of their civil and religious policy to have been derived from Dionysius; that, in consequence of their veneration for that personage, who introduced at once the knowledge of arms and literature into India, divine rites were instituted in honour of him, and that many cities of India, in the language of the country, were called by his name. It is much to be lamented, that neither the Greeks who attended Alexander into India, nor those who were long connected with it under the Bactrian

<sup>.</sup> Died. Sic. lib, ii. p. 124. Rhodoman-

trian princes, have left us any means of knowing what vernacular languages they found after their arrival in that empire. Pliny, by mentioning that the Indus was called by the natives Sindus, is almost the only instance of the kind. It was, however, without doubt, the Sanscreet, or, at least, a dialect of it. The evidence of this affertion is derived from various records and public infcriptions, fince discovered, of antiquity almost coeval with that period, and of which more than one specimen is exhibited in the Afiatic Refearches. Sir William Jones intimates his belief, that Bacchus, or Dionyfos, as the Greeks denominated him, was the same deity as Rama before-mentioned. As I have devoted a particular portion of my history to the confideration of what the ancients have afferted concerning the invafion of India by Bacchus, I shall not in this place anticipate what is there, perhaps in a more connected manner, related, concerning the true origin and history of that celebrated personage. What those Brachmans related to the Grecians concerning their veneration for Bacchus, a Grecian divinity, might be artfully intended to conciliate the regard or to avert the vengeance of their conquerors: no great stress can therefore be laid on information formation given under doubtful motives and propagated from a fuspicious quarter. But the declaration, that many cities in India were called after that name, ought to lead to fome discovery in regard to the real character alluded to under the name of Bacchus, or Dionyfos. It is in vain, however, that we feek for any name analogous to these words in the places mentioned in the Indian history of this deity, if we except the two instances specified by Sir William Jones of Naishada, or Nysa, and Meru, the one a mountain and the other a city of northern India; but, if we cast our eyes over the map of Hindostan, or over Mr. Rennel's most useful index to that map, we may find the appellative of Ram blended with a very large proportion of the proper names of cities and places in India, either as an initial or as a termination. Two places, diffinguished by this name, near the fouthern extremity of the Malabar coast, which was the scene of his mightiest achievements, when waging war with the giant Ravan, king of Lanca, have been already specified in a part of the Geographical Differtation, to which may be added Ramasseram, an island, situated between Ceylone and the continent, celebrated for its pagoda; and much corroborative evidence

dence of a fimilar kind will hereafter be adduced, which apparently establishes, beyond a doubt, our position that Bacchus and Ram were the fame perfons. Not the least probable is a circumstance which I have not yet seen noticed, that the very name of Sefostris, the supposed Bacchus, who invaded India, was Ramefes or Rameftes. Indeed, if we allow the strong and reiterated affertion of Sir Isaac Newton, in his Chronology of ancient Kingdoms, that Bacchus was the Egyptian Sefoffris, to be well founded, the matter is at once decided; for, the more diftinguished title by which that conqueror was denominated in the Egyptian records, and on the obelifks which Manetho faw, was RAMESES or RA-MESTES.

The whole relation of Diodorus, as well as the relations of most of the ancient classical writers, only tend to throw over the early history of India the veil of inextricable confusion. The readiest way of solving the enigma is to suppose, that, what the Indians related of their great hero and god RAM, the Greeks applied in their usual way to their equally-venerated warrior and divinity. In fact, if we examine with attention the peculiar religious ceremonies observed by this wonderful

derful cast, we shall find them, like all those before recapitulated, strangely tinctured with Egyptian manners; and, if the difficulty is not allowed to be solved by the plan I have above sketched out, we must wait for the full solution of the question from our indefatigable countrymen, who are so laudably busied in exploring the monuments of antiquity in Asia.

It is an invariable rule with the Brahmins to perform their devotions three times every day; at fun-rife, at noon, and at fun-fet. This is a practice fo entirely confonant with what Plutarch relates concerning the Egyptian priefts, that I must be excused for once more adverting to his Isis and Ofiris, especially as that writer adds fome curious particulars relative to this triple adoration of the fun, or rather, as I conceive, of the Deity, who, our own Scriptures inform us, posuit tabernaculum ejus in fole. The Egyptians then refembled the Brahmins, not only in offering facrifice and burning incense to the fun THREE TIMES in the day, but, in those facrifices, they made use of fuch things as fuited best with the nature of a worship involved in mystery, with their speculations in physics, and with their notions of health and personal purification. Thus

Thus in the morning they threw into the facred vafe of incense a quantity of RESIN, whose subtle and penetrative vapour at once rarefied and refined the air, enveloped with the fogs of the past night, and cheered the fpirits funk down under oppression and languor from the same cause. At noon, he tells us, they burned MYRRH for incense, in order to diffipate the groß exhalations drawn up from the humid foil of Egypt by the intense heat of a vertical fun. MYRRH, he adds, is in the ancient Egyptian dialect called BAL, which means the dissipation of melancholy; and that burning MYRRH, according to phyficians, is the means of dispersing noxious vapours, and often even of curing pestilential diseases occasioned by them, as was evidenced at Athens in the plague. The incense offered at the evening-facrifice is composed of no less than fixteen different ingredients; not, fays this writer, because the number of those ingredients form the square of a square, and is the only number, which, having all its fides equal the one to the other, makes its perimeter equal to its area; but on account of the rich aromatic nature of those ingredients. The evening-incense, formed of this mixture, the natives themselves called KUPHI. Now re-

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finous gums, aromatic woods, and confecrated graffes of various kinds, are the usual oblations in the Indian temples. Our best myrrh is known to come from the East Indies, and aloes is the favourite perfume of the inhabitants; but the richer and more extensive country of India producing a greater quantity of valuable drugs than Egypt, the altars of their gods are consequently covered with more abundant variety of precious offerings of this kind. It shall be our business to enumerate a few of them; and, in the first place, let us treat of the vegetable productions offered up in facrifice, and the occasion of their being devoted to the Deity.

Among the different forts of confecrated graffes, fruits, and flowers, offered on the altars of India, may be numbered the graffes called cusa and herbe by the Brahmins, both highly venerated for virtues which their facred books describe; the fruit of the mango, grains of gengely, the root and leaves of beetel, Indian spikenard, flowers of saffron, the herb bilva, renowned in Hindo sables, and grains of all kinds, but particularly of rice in great abundance. These vegetable productions form a species of oblation the most

<sup>.</sup> See various preceding quotations from the Sacontala.

ancient and pure of all others. To offer to the Deity the first-fruits of the tender herbage. fpringing up in the vernal feafon, and of the different kinds of grain and fruits matured by a warm fun, was the practice of mankind in the infancy of the world. The earliest instance of these oblations on record is that of Cain, the cldeit fon of the first great husbandman, who, doubtless, following paternal precedent, brought of the fruit of the ground an offering to the Lord; and of Abel, who also, to the facred altar of God, brought of the firflings of bis flock. The Jews, whose religious cuftoms are, in many respects, similar to the Hindoos, in every age and period of their empire, inviolably confecrated to heaven the firstfruits of their oil, their wine, and their wheat, and, by the divine institution, even whatsoever opened the womb, whether of man or beast, was facred to the Lord.\* Such was the origin of oblations; they were the tribute of the human mind, overflowing with affection and gratitude to the all-bounteous Father.

There was, according to Porphyry, + a very curious and ancient festival, annually celebrated at Athens to the honour of the sun and

<sup>.</sup> See Numbers, xviii. 12, et feq-

<sup>†</sup> De Abstinentia, p. 73.

and HOURS, which, in the fimplicity of the offerings, remarkably refembled the practice of the first ages. During that festival confecrated grafs was carried about, in which the kernels of olives were wrapt up, together with figs, all kinds of pulfe, oaken leaves with acorns, and cakes compoled of the meal of wheat and barley, heaped up in a pyramidal form, allufive to the fun-beams that ripened the grain, as well as to the fire in which they were finally confumed. The feltival was called Θαργηλίου, from Θαργηλία, a general word, fays Archbishop Potter on this festival, for all the fruits of the earth.\* The Indians, whose system of theology, in many respects, retains its primitive feature, although, in others, it has been deeply adulterated, have a variety of festivals facred to Surya and his mythological progeny. There is one in particular, alluded to before, called Surya Pooja, or worship of the sun, which falls on the feventh day of the new moon in January; and, on which day, offerings of peculiar confecrated flowers are made to that deity. - On the first Thursday in the month of August falls VOL. V. K

The reader may confult Potter's Archeologia Greca, vol. i.
 p. 400.

<sup>+</sup> Holwell's Account of the Indian Festivals, part u. p. 134.

falls the Pooja, or worship of Lachsmi, the goddess of abundance, or Ceres of Hindostan, whose altars are then decorated with oblations of PADDY, the name given to rice in the hufk.\* She has another grand festival on getting in the harvest, when she is univerfally adored with many folemn rites. These festivals I confider as of the most ancient date of any existing in India, since the first is a plain relic of the oldest known superstition, and the others, probably, flourished ever since nature was bountiful and man was grateful. The Grecian festivals to the Sun and Ceres were probably instituted from them; and, hereafter, closer comparison and investigation may, perhaps, shew us, not only the Surya and Lachsmi, but many other Indian festivals, flourishing in Greece.

By degrees, the Indians, and mankind in general, advanced in the number and value of their oblations. From graffes, fruits, flowers, and grain, they proceeded to offer up rich aromatics; and, having experienced the purifying and healing virtues of many coftly drugs, they burnt myrrh, aloes, benzoin, camphire, and fandal-wood, in the ever-flaming vale of facrifice.

From

<sup>.</sup> Holwell's Account of the Indian Festivals, part ii. p. 127.

From these αρωματα, according to Porphyry, the censer, or pan, in which the Greeks burned incense, came to be called θυμιατηριον, and to perform sacrifice was called θυαν, while the sacrifices themselves were denominated θυσιαι. Hence the Latin word Thus, frankincense, or, as it is sometimes used, incense in general. There can be little doubt that the Indians, in burning these woods, were actuated by the same motives which guided the Egyptian priests; viz. to administer to health as well as religion, since the numerous ablutions and purisheations of the Hindoos demonstrate, that, like those priests, they thought the preservation of health a branch of religious duty.

But, to proceed in describing the progress of sacrificial rites, at least so far as India is concerned. They soon contrived to extract from these precious woods a rich essential oil, with the purest portion of which they proceeded to anoint the idols they adored. Oil of gengely, oil of cocoa-nut, oil of sandal-wood, and other expensive oils, during the continuance of the Pooja, or public worship, with their rich streams perpetually bathe the shining countenance of the Indian deity, and the stench, arising from a hundred burning samps, is, for a moment, vanquished by the

more powerful effluvia of the most exquisite odours. I have before had occasion to mention the very high antiquity of this cultom in the Oriental world, reaching up even to the time of the patriarch Jacob, who poured oil upon the stone which he had set up for a pillar, calling that pillar Beth-el, the house, or fhrine, of God. From this conduct of the pious patriarch, I contended, came the pagan practice of confecrating certain facred stones called BETYLI, anointing them with odoriferous oils, and venerating them as divine oracles, oracles into which the Deity had deigned to descend, drawn down by the energy of prayer and the force of magical incantations.

The ardor of the devout Brahmin stops not here. Inured from his youth to rigid temperance, and unconscious to the guilty banquet of blood, he beholds with horror the sless of slaughtered animals: he is principally cherished by the nutritious milk of the benevolent animal whom he considers as the emblem of the deity; and he feeds upon the pure honey elaborated by the industrious bee. His grateful heart, therefore, returns a tithe to heaven, and ample libations of milk and honey lave the sanctuary of his god. When

that milk becomes butter, a portion is fet apart for the deity; but clarified, left, during the process, any impurities should have been blended with it. With this clarified butter, or GHEE as the Indians term it, upon grand festivities, the holy slame of the altar is fed, and numerous lamps, kindled around, blaze forth with purer fplendor and more vigorous energy. The two following passages in the Sacontala, quoted, I believe, before, will evince at once the use, and the antiquity of the use, of this ingredient in the Indian facrifices. -" My fweet child, there has been a happy omen: the young Brahmin, who officiated in our morning-facrifice, though his fight was impeded by clouds of fmoke, dropped the clarified butter into the very centre of the adorable flame." - " My best beloved, come and walk with me round the facrificial fire. May these fires preserve thee! fires, which fpring to their appointed stations on the holy hearth, and confume the confecrated wood, while the fresh blades of mysterious cusagrass lie scattered around them I sacramental fires, which destroy fin with the rising fumes of clarified butter!' P. 47.

It has already been observed, that one indispensable ceremony in the Indian Pooja is

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the ringing of a small bell by the officiating Brahmin. We have also seen, that the women of the idol, or dancing girls of the pagoda, have little golden bells fastened to their feet, the soft harmonious tinkling of which vibrates in unison with the exquisite melody of their voices.

The BELL, in fact, feems to have been a facred utenfil of very ancient use in Afia. Golden bells formed a part of the ornaments of the pontifical robe of the Jewish highprieft, with which he invested himself upon those grand and peculiar festivals, when he entered into the fanctuary. That robe was very magnificent, it was ordained to be of fky-blue, and the border of it, at the bottom, was adorned with pomegranates and gold bells intermixed equally and at equal diftances. The use and intent of these bells are evident from the passage immediately following: And it shall be upon Aaron to minister, and his found shall be beard when he goeth in unto the boly place before the Lord, and when he cometh out, that be die not. Ezekiel, xxviii. 23. He was never to make his appearance before the shechinah of glory without this richlyornamented tunic, and he was forbidden to wear it except when engaged in the most folemn

folemn rites of his ministry. The sound of the numerous bells, that covered the hem of his garment, gave notice to the affembled people that the most awful ceremony of their religion had commenced. When arrayed in this garb, he hore into the sanctuary the vessel of incense. It was the signal to prostrate themselves before the Deity, and to commence those fervent ejaculations which were to ascend with the rich column of that incense to the throne of heaven.

Calmet has a curious article upon this fubject of facred bells.\* He tells us that the ancient kings of Persia, who, in fact, united in their own persons the regal and sacerdotal office, were accustomed to have the fringes of their robes adorned with pomegranates and golden bells: that the Arabian courtesans, like the Indian women, have little golden bells fastened round their legs, neck, and elbows, to the found of which they dance before the king; and that the Arabian princeffes wear golden rings on their fingers, to which little bells are suspended, as well as in the flowing treffes of their hair, that their superior rank may be known, and they themfelves. K 4

<sup>.</sup> See Calmet's Diftionary on the word BELL.

felves, in passing, receive the homage due to their exalted station.

To return from this digreffion to the founding of facred bells in the fervice of the Indian deities, I am of opinion, that there is another reason for the invariable use of them in the ceremonials of the pagoda. It is connected with their notions of evil dæmons, who are supposed to molest the devotee, in his religious exercifes, by affuming frightful forms, in order to inspire terror into his foul, and detach his thoughts from the steady contemplation of the benignant numen. "O king," exclaim the terrified Brahmins in the Sacontala, " while we are beginning our eveningfacrifice, the figures of blood-thirfty dæmons, embrowned by clouds collected at the departure of day, glide over the facred hearth, and spread consternation around." P. 205.

The vibration of the facred bell, however, was ever heard with horror by the malign dæmons, who fled at the found; while the air, being put in motion by it, became purified of the infection which their presence imparted. From Asia, it is probable, that the bell, with a thousand concomitant superstitions, was imported into Europe, and mingled with the rites of a purer religion. Every body knows

its importance in the Roman Catholic worship; the ceremony of anathematizing with bell, book, and burning taper; and the thrilling found of the dreadful paffing bell, which not only warns the devout Christian to pray for the departing foul of his brother, and to prepare to meet his own doom, but drives away, faid the good Catholies of old time, those evil spirits that hover round the bed of the dying man, eager to feize their prey, or, at least, to molest and terrrify the foul in its paffage into eternal reft. Hence, possibly, the great price paid for tolling the great bell, whole awful and portentous voice filled thole perturbed spirits with increased astonishment and direr difmay, driving them far beyond the parish bounds into distant charnel-vaults and other dreary fubterraneous cavities. This detestation of the found of bells, so natural to wicked dæmons that infest the atmosphere, is pointedly described in the Golden Legend, by W. de Worde: " It is faid, the evill spirytes that ben in the regyon of th'ayre doubte moche when they here the belles rongen; and this is the cause why the belles ben rongen whan it thondreth, and whan grete tempeste and outrages of wether happen, to the ende that the feinds and wycked ipirytes shold be abashed. aballied, and flee, and ceale of the movyng of the tempelte."\*

Mr. Forbes, of Stanmore-Hill, in his elegant museum of Indian rarities, numbers two of the bells that have been used in devotion by the Brahmins. They are great curiofities, and one of them in particular appears to be of very high antiquity, in form very much refembling the cup of the lotos, and the tune of it is uncommonly foft and melodious. I could not avoid being deeply affected with the found of an instrument which had been actually employed to kindle the flame of that fuperflition, which I have attempted fo extenfively to unfold. My transported thoughts travelled back to the remote period when the Brahmin religion blazed forth in all its splendour in the caverns of Elephanta; I was, for a moment, entranced, and caught the ardor of enthufiafm. A tribe of venerable priefts, arrayed in flowing stoles, and decorated with high tiaras, feemed affembled around me; the mystic fong of initiation vibrated in my ear; I breathed an air fragrant with the richest perfumes; and contemplated the deity in the fire that fymbolized him.

With

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With respect to the conch, or SHELL, blown, during the Pooja, by the Brahmins, I have not obtained the same advantage of perfonally examining it as I was able to procure in the case of the sacred bell, and can only affert, on the authority of a gentleman profoundly versed in the Hindoo mythology, that this venerated shell has, or ought to have, nine valves or foldings, in memorial of Veethnu's nine past incarnations. The facred instruments of antiquity have nearly all of them a mythological allufion. The cymbals, whose exquisite notes resounded during the celebration of the rites of the Grecian Rhea, were allegorical of the harmony that pervades univerfal nature, that nature of which she herfelf was the personification. The fiftra of Isis in Egypt, with their three cross bars of gold, filver, or brass, denoted the three elements of nature, to a race who confidered water only as the aërial element condensed. The violent agitation and rattling noise of these bars, when the fiftra were shaken at her festival, pointed out the concussion of the primitive atoms, and the elementary conflict that prevailed at the birth of nature. The conch of India, indicative of the nine incarnations of Veeshnu, naturally brings to our recollection the testudo,

or tortoifeshell, of which Mercury formed his famous lyre, whose three strings had a mythological allufion to the three feafons that composed the Egyptian year, and were made of the finews of Typhon, the evil genius, to shew that out of discord true harmony arises. This shell is always blown by the Brahmins in the fame manner as the wind-instruments of the Jews; the shapbar, or trumpet, and the jubal, or ram's horn, during their religious ceremonies, were blown by the priefts alone. When the walls of Jericho were miraculoufly overthrown, Jeven priests blowing Jeven trumpets of rams borns were commanded to make the circuit of that devoted city, at the terrific blaft of which, on the feventh day, those walls were levelled with the dust.\* These facred instruments were supposed to be defiled by the breath of the vulgar Hindoo and the unpurified Hebrew. The awful clangor announced the deity's descent to his throne upon the flaming altar, the ear of devotion was penetrated by the found, and the eye of ecitafy was rivetted to the blaze. Even on the illumined fummit of Sinai, when the true God defcended in all the majesty of his glory to promulge the law, the voice of the trumpet founded long, and waxed louder and louder: and, we are farther told, that, at the dreadful day of final judgement for that law infringed, the Lord bimjelf shall descend from beaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the TRUMP OF GOD.\*

It is not, however, only the conch-shell that is venerated by the Brahmins; there is a certain stone of high mystical virtue, and, for the same reason, consecrated to Veeshnu, called Salagram, in which the Hindoos imagine they discover nine different shades, emblematical of his nine incarnations. It is found in the river of Cafi, a branch of the Ganges, is very heavy, oval or circular in its form, and in colour it is fometimes black and fometimes violet. Only a fmall cavity appears on the outfide, but within it is hollow, and almost concave, being furnished in the interior coats above and below with spiral lines, which terminate in a point towards the centre. The fuperstitious Brahmins say, that they are formed by a fmall worm, which, working its way in the stone, prepares in its bosom a habitation for Veefhnu. Some of them find in these spiral lines the figure of his chacra.

Thefe

it is necessary that we should again revert to the rites of that goddess; and that we deeper investigate her mysteries, which equally outraged decency and order, and which, uniting to, or rather congenial with, the base Hammonian idolatries, first contaminated the purer

patriarchal theology prevalent in Afia,

One of the most curious and valuable tracts of a theological kind that have come down to us from the ancients is the famous treatife of Lucian de Dea Syria. The genius of that writer could affume any form; and if, in some instances, he was the banterer of the pagan religion, he was, in others, the grave biflorian of its most ancient and venerable rites. In the treatife alluded to, there appears fo different a spirit from that which animates his comic poetical effays, and there are fuch evident marks of credulous superstition, as to have induced fome modern writers of credit to suppose him not to have been the author of it: a matter, however, which is too well attested to admit of a ferious doubt. That treatife is more peculiarly valuable because it contains an accurate detail of the fuperstitious rites, celebrated in the most ancient periods, and in the most renowned pagan temples, of the world; I mean those of Assyria, and the Venus Urania

Urania just mentioned. To the short account given from Herodotus, in a former page, of the impure mysteries of the worship of this Uranian Venus, in regard to their public proftitution, I might have added, that, possibly, in Syria, was to be found the genuine origin both of the Indian and Egyptian Phallic worship; for, according to this author, at the very entrance of this most ancient shrine, on each fide of the portal, were conspicuously placed two enormous stone pillars, the usual fymbols of that worship, on which an inscription informed the worshippers, that Bacchus, the Indian Rama, who was the fon of Cush, had confecrated those Phallic pillars to Juno; that is, I suppose, to Juno under the useful and important character of Lucina, in which fhe prefided oven child-birth. The part of this tract to which I wish, at present, to call the reader's attention, is that in which Lucian acquaints us that the most solemn feast obferved by the ancient Syrians was celebrated at the vernal equinox, and it was denominated THE FEAST OF FIRE. It was holden at Hierapolis, or the facred city; and thither, not only the inhabitants of Syria, but those of all the adjoining empires, Arabia, Phœnicia, and Babylon, in crowds, reforted, bearing with them VOL. V. the

the idols worshipped in their respective countries, probably in token of subordination and respect to the superior Deity. At this festivity, every Bacchanalian extravagance was publicly allowed and encouraged; whole hecatombs of various animals were facrificed, while the most precious gums and the most fragrant woods fed, day and night, the vast column of slame that continually ascended from the altar.

Every extreme of licentious mirth was then publicly allowed of, and even encouraged. The priests of the lascivious goddess, whom, understood in a mythological point of view, I cannot but consider as a personification of Nature wantoning in her loveliest prime, and arrayed in the beauty of the blooming fpring, were transported with a divine fury, and some of them mutually scourged and wounded each other: others loudly smote the sacred instruments of music, and chanted forth prophetic hymns, accordant with their fonorous melody: but, what is remarkably fingular at a festival that plainly alluded to nature and the renovation of her powers, some of those unmanly priefts, if Lucian may be credited, indecently arrayed themselves in female attire, fubmitting to the degradation of the emafculating

culating knife, and facrificed to their protectress, not the symbolical, but the real,
Phallus.\* This practice can only be accounted for, either by that ancient maxim of superstition, that whatsoever is most facredly
precious to mankind should be consecrated to
the gods, and that we please him best when
we make the most costly facrifice; by supposing that, in the perpetration of an act so
abhorrent from nature, they intended to give
public proof of a vow of perpetual virginity;
or on account of a particular mythological
reason which shall immediately be explained.

Those mythologists who consider the Syrian goddess to be a personification of the earth, as Cybele in Greece doubtless was, rather than of nature, infift that her eunuch-priefts allude to the barren state of that earth without cultivation. When confidered in this point of view, they represent the noise of her beaten cymbals, which denote the globe, as allufive to the uproar which the warring winds, waters, and fubterraneous fires, confined in its cavities, occasion, and which, convulsing its internal regions, produce earthquakes and volcanic eruptions; and the rattling of her brazen fiftra they understand as figurative of the I. 2 clashing

<sup>·</sup> Lucian de Dea Syria, p. 87.

clashing of the various instruments used in husbandry, which were composed of brass before iron was invented. It is indeed a principal object with Lucian in this treatise to demonstrate that the Rhea of Greece was the Dea Syria of the Eabylonians; and he is doubtless right, since the very same species of worship, and the use of the very same instruments, have immemorially prevailed in India. His hypothesis, if admitted, only exhibits still more glaring proof how universally throughout the pagan world a system of gross physics prevailed, and the earth was adored instead of its Creator.

I am still, however, inclined to the opinion of other mythologists who consider this celebrated deity in the most extensive view of her character, as universal nature herself, which includes not only the earth, but the whole circle of being; and though, when understood in this point of view, the mutilation of her priests may appear somewhat singular, there was another custom practised in her temple very consonant to this character, the consideration of which brings us back to the dancing-girls of India, who, we observed, are public prostitutes, and are denominated women of the idol. This custom, recorded with expressions

pressions of just indignation by Herodotus,\* was, that all female votaries of this deity, once at least in their lives, should prostitute themselves to some stranger in the polluted porches of this temple. It had, fays that historian, for this infamous purpose, a long range of galleries open on every fide, that the paffing stranger might more freely view the affembled fair, thus devoutly frail, and make his choice with unrestrained freedom. For the object of his choice he did not, like the proud fultan, throw the handkerchief of love, but a piece of filver coin, into her lap, which the fevere laws of the country forbade her to refuse, as well as his embrace, however difgusting might be her lover. The wages of iniquity, thus menially obtained, were accounted boly, and were devoted to increase the treafures of this temple. Every female in that district without exception, the noble as well as ignoble, the princess and the peasant's wife, were alike obliged to go through this indispensible ceremony of initiation into the mysteries of Mylitta, with this difference only, that women of diffinguished rank, with a numerous train of fervants attending at fome little distance, no doubt with the politic in-

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<sup>.</sup> Herodot, lib. i. p. 60.

tention to overawe any intruder of mean parentage from approaching the shrine of princely beauty, took their station in covered chariots at the gate. Such were the rites of the Syrian goddess; and the reader, by comparing the account with that of the Bayaderes in a preceding page, will find that the devotees of India are by no means behind those of Syria in the duty of facrificing at the shrine of nature, either at the vernal or autumnal equinox.

Cybele then, the mother of the gods, that is, the fruitful parent of all the pagan theology, if Lucian may be credited, is no other than the Dea Syria. She is faid to have invented the tympanum, or fmall drum, which she constantly carries in her hands, and Varro has told us, that, by that tympanum, the globe of the earth is defignated, of which she was thought to be the animating principle. If that affertion be true, we cannot wonder at the constant use of it in the devotion of India, and it is a strong additional proof from what central country that devotion originally came, as well as to whom it has immediate reference; whether she be, in fact, the Indian Lachsmi, the goddess of abundance, or Bhavani, the fofter deity who prefides over love and genera-

tion. In the frantic dance before her altars. pipes, or flutes, alfo, and tabors, formed a part of the facred concert. In regard to the first of these instruments, I have only to remark, that, in most of the engravings of Veeshnu, in the form of Creeshna, that god is represented playing to the enamoured Gopias, or milk-maids, of Mathura, on this melodious pastoral instrument, a proof of the great antiquity of its use in India, and its invention is attributed to Hanumat, the Hindoo Pan, a famous general of the great Rama, who conquered the world with an army of fatyrs. Now, Hanumat was the fon of Pavan, the Indian god of the winds,\* and feems to have been well calculated, from this mythological birth, to become the inventor of mufical modes and paftoral airs. The fimilarity of found between the names Pavan and Pan might incline us to believe they both mean the same deity, that deity, qui primus (Pan) calamos conjungere plures instituit. A figure of the VINA, or Indian guitar, engraved in the Afiatic Researches, with some remarks upon its antiquity which accompany that engraving, demonstrate how early and affiduously the ancient Indians cultivated music: indeed, at the ancient L 4

ancient period in which the Vedas were written, they must have had considerable skill in that science; for, like many parts of the lewish fcriptures, they are written in a kind of metre, as if meant to be fung, and accompanied with instruments; and, when properly read, I understand, they are chanted after the same manner as the Jewish scriptures in the synagogues are chanted to this day. With respect to the tabor; the immemorial use of this instrument in India is proved by the circumflance of two of the mansions of the moon in the Lunar Zodiac being defignated with this afterism, and they are very properly used to mark the nightly stages of that planetary deity, in whose festivals of the Neounvia, throughout every nation of the ancient world, the cheerful found of the tabor gave energy and animation to the midnight dance. The facred dance itself, of ancient periods, must now form the subject of extensive consideration.

Immoderate joy and pleasure naturally shew themselves in the air and gestures of the person affected by such sensations. His eye glistens, his cheek is stussed with crimson, and his feet spontaneously bound in accordance with the increased contraction and dilatation of his palpitating heart. When religious fervour adds its stimulus to the excited passions, the transport is greater, in proportion to the sub-limer nature of the object, and the more animating prospect which celestial hope and inspiration unfold to the intellectual view.

Superfition still heightens every colour, dazzles us with a false glare, and inflames the ardour of zeal to mental intoxication and phrenzy. Of the truth of the first affertion in the common concerns of life, we meet with daily and striking proof. Of the second, we have a memorable instance in David's laying by the majesty of the monarch, and dancing in holy triumph and ecftacy before the ark, restored, after a long absence, to desponding Israel. Of the third, the rites of Mylitta at Babylon, the ravings of the furious priestess of Apollo at Delphi, and the Bacchic revels, are irrefragable testimonies. Besides these, however, there existed in antiquity a solemn and meafured dance, more particularly inftituted by the astronomical priests, which imitated the motion of the fun and planets in their respective orbits. This dance was divided into three parts, the stropbe, the antistropbe, and that which was called flationary, or flow and fcarcely-perceptible motion before the altar.

altar. According to an ancient author, Antiqui deorum laudes carminibus comprebensas. circum aras eorum euntes, canebant: cujus primum ambitum, quem ingrediebantur ex parte dextra. spopy vocabant: reverfionem autem finistrorsum factum, completo priore orbe, avrigoody appellabant. Dein, in conspectu deorum soliti confiftere, cantici reliqua confequebantur, appellantes id Etodon.\* In the strophe, they danced from the right hand to the left; by which motion, Plutarch is of opinion, they meant to indicate the apparent motion of the heavens, from east to west. In the antistrophe, they moved from the left to the right, an allufion to the motion of the planets, from west to east; and, by the flow, or flationary, motion before the altar, the permanent stability of the earth. It was in the last fituation that the emuda, or ode after the dance, was fung. I cannot, however, help being of opinion, that the ancients knew fomething more of the true fystem of aftronomy than this, and that, by the flow, stationary, or hardly-perceptible, motion before the altar, they intended to denote either the revolution of the earth upon its axis, or else the solstitial period; for, it is scarcely possible they should be acquainted with the revolution of the sun (whose motions, I believe, they meant principally to represent) upon its own axis.

From another curious treatife of Lucian, expressly written upon this subject of the ancient dances, I have, in the presace to this work, mentioned his account of the circular dance, used by the Indians when they paid their adorations to the sun.

The dance alluded to is undoubtedly that practifed on the grand annual festival, holden in India, in honour of Veefhnu, in the form of Creeshna. It is called the Raas Jattra, literally the dance of the circle, and the following account of it may be found in Mr. Holwell, on the Hindoo fasts and festivals. Creefhna is the Indian Apollo, and the exploits of this deity on the hallowed plains of Mathura will engross a very large portion of the ancient Indian history. This feast, Mr. Holwell informs us, falls on the full moon in October, and is univerfally observed throughout Hindostan; but in a most extraordinary manner at Bindoobund, in commemoration of a miraculous event which is fabled to have happened in the neighbourhood of that place. A number of virgins having affembled to celebrate in mirth and sport the descent of Creeshna.

Creeshna, in the height of their joy, the god himself appeared among them, and propoted a dance to the jocund fair. They objected the want of partners with whom to form that dance; but Creeihna obviated the objection, by dividing himfelf (his rays) into as many portions as there were virgins, and thus every nymph had a Creeshna to attend her in the circular dance. Mr. Holwell, the writer of this account, has illustrated his narration by an engraving, and, whether by accident or defign I cannot fav, but the number of the virgins thus engaged is exactly feven, the number of the planets, while the radiant god himself stands in an easy, disengaged, attitude in the centre of the engraved table.\* Thus early did the people of India know, and endeavour to represent, the harmonious dance of the planets; and, having intimated that dance, we cannot wonder at their attempting to imitate also, while it was performing, the imagined mufic of the spheres.

Although neither mufical inftruments nor dancing are particularly ordained in the Levitical law to be employed by the Hebrews in religious worship, there can be little doubt of both having been very anciently in use among them.

<sup>\*</sup> See Holwell's Ind'an Feftivals, part ii. p. 132.

them. A very early instance of it we find almost immediately after their exodus from Egypt; for, after Moles and the children of Ifrael had finished finging that sublime fong, which he composed upon the miraculous overthrow of Pharoah, we are told, that Miriam, the prophetels, the fifter of Aaron, took a TIM-BREL in her hand; and all the women went out after ber with TIMBRELS and with DANCES.\* It is impossible to consider this band otherwise than as a facred chorus of dancing-women, differing only from the Indian women, as being firictly and exemplarily virtuous, with the priestess or prophetess at their head, the leader of that band. Their fong, indeed, was truly facred, being in honour of the Omnipotent Jehovah himself; since Miriam anfwered them, fing ye to the Lord, for be bath triumphed gloriously: the borse and his rider bath be thrown into the fea. + And this, perhaps, was the first confecration in the world of the measured step and the triumphant fong to the true God. Too fwiftly, alas! and deeply were they dishonoured; when, forgetting their true Deliverer, this infatuated progeny afterwards proftrated themselves, in idolatrous worship, before the golden calf, the symbol of

Ofiris, and began to dance and fing around the altar of that base Egyptian deity! In the fucceeding periods of their empire, during the national festivities, we read of the hallowed dance to the found of facred mulic constantly taking place. When the ark was brought back from Kirjath-Jarim to Jerusalem, the fingers went before, (" conjuncti pfallentibus," reads the Æthiopic version,) the players on instruments followed after (that is, with steps modulated to the mufic of those instruments); among them were the damfels playing with timbrels. Pfalm lxviii. 25. David feems from his youth to have been devoted to mufic, and greatly multiplied the musicians and singers employed in religious service. Most of those beautiful and pathetic compositions, which we call the Pfalms, were the productions of that monarch's genius and piety united. The titles prefixed to them shew them to be addreffed to the different prefidents of the bands of muficians, to be fet to the different instruments of which they respectively had the charge; and those bands, we are told, amounted to twenty-four in number. When Solomon erected his most magnificent temple, the pomp and splendour of the public worship at Jerusalem were vastly increased, and the mufical

fical establishments instituted by David were confiderably enlarged. There were, on the whole, no less than four-and-twenty thousand Levites, who had offices affigned them in that fuperb temple. Four thousand of these were appointed to the function of public fingers, who, aiding with their numerous voices the loud JUBAL, or great Hebrew trumpet, and the folemn HASUR, or instrument of ten ftrings, contributed on grand occasions to swell the pomp of the Hebrew devotion, and raise it to a point of exaltation and distinction among the nations, in fome degree correspondent to the fuperior majesty and purity of the God they adored. Hence, when that temple was destroyed, and the Jewish nation carried away captive to Babylon, originated those repeated taunts thrown out by their infulting victors, Sing us one of the fongs of Zion! Psalm exxxvii. 3. The desponding fons of Judah, however, are beautifully described in the Psalm just cited, as having hung the neglected KINNOR, or harp of Paleftine, on the willows that grow plentifully on the banks of the Euphrates, and as pathetically exclaiming, How can we fing the fong of Jebovab in the land of strangers? Even when groaning under the chains of their captivity, they

they feem not to have entirely neglected that fascinating science which David had so zealously promoted among them, and Solomon had fo confiderably improved; for, in the lift which is given by Ezra of those who returned with him from Babylon, there are numbered two bundred finging-men and finging-women. Ezra ii. 65. The principal difference between the Jewish dancing-women, and those employed in the Affyrian, Egyptian, and Indian, temples, consists, as has been intimated before, in the immaculate and virgin purity of the former, and the licentious, and even libidinous, character of the latter. That difference is to be explained by an investigation into the nature and attributes of the deities respectively adored in those countries. The gods of the latter were gross physical deities, nature and its various powers personified. The sublime object of the adoration of the Hebrews was THE GOD OF NATURE HIMSELF.

The account which a recent traveller, M. Savary, gives of the present Almai, or dancing-girls of Egypt, is very curious, and highly deserving attention, because in manners and habits they exactly correspond with those of India. It is in the fourteenth letter of his first volume on Egypt, and I shall trouble

the reader with a pretty confiderable extract from it.

" The Almai," fays M. Savary, " form a class very famous in this country; to be admitted into which, it is necessary to possess beauty, a fine voice, eloquence, and to be able to compose and fing extempore verses adapted to the occasion. The Almai know all new fongs by rote, their memory is stored with the best funeral and love fongs, they are prefent at all festivals, and are the chief ornament of banquets. They place them in a raifed orchestra, or pulpit, where they fing during the feaft: after which they descend, and form dances which no way refemble ours: they are pantomimes that represent the common incidents of life: love is their usual subject. The suppleness of these dancers' bodies is inconceivable, and the flexibility of their features, which take impressions characteristic of the parts they play at will, aftonishing. The indecency, however, of their attitude is often excessive; each look, each gefture, fpeaks, and in a manner fo forcible as not possibly to be misunderflood. They throw aside modesty with their veils. When they begin to dance, a long and very light filk robe floats on the ground, negligently girded by a fash; long black hair VOL. V. perfumed, M

perfumed, and in treffes descends over their shoulders; the shift, transparent as gauze, scarcely conceals the skin. As the action proceeds, the various forms and contours the body can assume seem progressive; the sound of the slute, the castanets, the tambour de basque, and cymbals, regulate, increase, or slacken, their steps. Words, adapted to such like scenes, instame them more, till they appear intoxicated, and become frantic Bacchantes. Forgetting all reserve, they then wholly abandon themselves to the disorder of their senses, while an indelicate people, who wish nothing should be left to the imagination, redouble their applause.

"These Almai are admitted into all harams; they teach the women the new airs, recount amorous tales, and recite poems, in their prefence, which are interesting, by being pictures of their own manners. They teach them the mysteries of their art, and instruct them in lascivious dances. The minds of these women are cultivated, their conversation agreeable; they speak their language with purity, and, habitually addicting themselves to poetry, learn the most winning and sonorous modes of expression. Their recital is very graceful: when they sing, nature is their only guide: some of

the airs I have heard from them were gay, and in a light and lively measure, like some of ours; but their excellence is most seen in the pathetic. When they rehearfe a moal, in the manner of the ancient tragic ballad, by dwelling upon affecting and plaintive tones, they inspire melancholy, which insensibly augments till it melts in tears. The very Turks, enemies as they are to the arts, the Turks themselves, pass whole nights in listening to them. Two people fing together fometimes, but, like their orchestra, they are always in unison: accompaniments in music are only for enlightened nations; who, while melody charms the ear, wish to have the mind employed by a just and inventive modulation. Nations, on the contrary, whose feelings are oftener appealed to than their understanding, little capable of catching the fleeting beauties of harmony, delight in those simple founds which immediately attack the heart, without calling in the aid of reflection to increase sensibility."

The Israelites, to whom Egyptian manners, by their long dwelling in Egypt, were become natural, also had their Almai. At Jerusalem, as at Cairo, women were taught to move in graceful measure. St. Mark relates a fact which proves

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the power of the Oriental dance over the heart of man.

And when a convenient day was come, that Herod on his hirth-day made a supper to his lords, high captains, and chief estates of Golilee;

And when the daughter of the said Herodias came in, and danced, and pleased Herod, and them that sat with him, the king said unto the damsel, Ask of me whatsoever thou wilt, and I will give it thee.

And be sware unto ber, Whatshever thou shalt ask of me, I will give it thee, unto the half of my kingdom.

And she went forth, and said unto ber mother, What shall I ask? and she said, The head of John the Baptist.

And she came in straightway with baste unto the king, and asked, saying, I will that thou give me by and by the head of John the Baptist.

And immediately the king sent an executioner, and commanded his head to be brought; and he went and beheaded him in the prison.

It may, I think, be depended upon, that the ancestors of these Almai had their parts assigned them in the ancient religious sestivals of Egypt; the slutes, the tambours, and the cymbals, were the very instruments used in the rites of Isis. When those rites were imported into Greece, and Ceres usurped the honours of Ifis, the Greeks carried the facred as well as the focial dance to the highest point of attainable perfection. They made use of the varied dance, not only to animate devotion, but to excite valour and terrify guilt. The Pyrrhic dance of the Spartans was performed by youths armed cap-a-pie, who brandished aloft their fwords and darted their javelins to the found of martial music. It is unnecessary, in this place, to enter into any particular account of the frantic revels of the Bacchantes. during the dance facred to their festive deity; when his votaries of both fexes refigned themfelves to boundless licentiousness; when, wildly toffing about their thyrsi, with their hair dishevelled and furious gesticulation, they rushed, by torch-light, through the streets, committing every species of mirthful extravagance, and making the capital of Greece refound with thundering acclamations of Evisi, Banys! The dance of the Eumenides, or Furies, on the stage of Athens, was not less frantic, but impressed a different sentiment, that of irreliftible terror. The minds of the aftonished spectators were agitated with a dreadful alternation of passion, rage, anguish, and difmay. The valiant veteran, who had a thousand M 3

thousand times braved death in the field of battle, trembled while it was performing. A great part of the scared multitude rushed with precipitation from the theatre; and outcries of horror were heard on every side. The remaining audience, who had courage to witness the exhibition, appalled at the scenes which were acting, imagined they saw in earnest those terrisic deities, the ministers of eternal justice, armed with the vengeance of heaven, and commissioned to pursue and punish crimes upon earth.

I have already, with as much delicacy as was confistent with perspicuity, informed the reader that Seeva is fometimes represented by emblems that express, in that mythological deity, the union of the two fexes, in which fense he may be called 'Aggeroβηλυς, or male and female; an idea which, it has before been observed, is not peculiar to India, but runs through all the mystic writers of antiquity, and alludes to the productive fecundity, inherent in the divine nature. The glaring fymbols of it are too evident in every pagoda of this physical race, and the frequency of them impresses strangers with mistaken notions of their being a people immerfed in boundless profligacy of manners, which is by no means

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the case. In this his genial character, Parvati, another term for Bhavani and Durga, is allotted him for a confort, or, rather, is only one part of himself. Under these two forms, says M. Sonnerat, he is adored by the name of Parachiven and Parasati. In some temples, these two sigures are separate; but, in others, they are joined together, and compose one sigure, half man and half woman. The principal temple of Seeva, under this combined

image, is at Tirounomaley.

In forming these conceptions, and in combining these images, I am ready to admit that mythology has had confiderable influence; yet, am I not without strong suspicion, that the whole of this ANDROGYNOUS system is founded upon fome mistaken tradition, similar to that occuring in the writings of some rabbinical doctors, and founded on a falle interpretation of a verse in Genesis, that God, at the beginning, created man of both fexes; male and female created be them. So far distant are the zealous adorers of Seeva, in this capacity, from being of a licentious character, that none of his votaries are doomed to a more rigid purity than thefe: they have all the frozen chastity of Atys, the well-beloved of Cybele, with this difference, that they retain

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the ability, which Atys wanted, of violating the vow of perpetual virginity. In fact, by the force of severe penances and habitual abstinence, some of them entirely vanquish the ebullition of natural defire; while others, by deadly stupefying drugs, lock up all the springs of genial passion, and are absorbed in holy infentibility. The necessity for their arriving at this state of invincible apathy must be evident to those who consider the danger of these devotees, who appear constantly in public without the smallest covering, and in whom the least apparent deviation from their profession of entire abstraction in spiritual objects would be confidered as an unpardonable crime; a crime for which they would be infallibly stoned to death by the enraged populace. These people bear the disgusting, but too-expressive, symbol of their god around their neck, or fastened to their arm; and they rub the forehead, breast, and shoulders, with ashes of cow-dung. They use cow-dung, I prefume, because it is the medium by which the barren foil is rendered prolific, and therefore reminds them of the famous Indian doctrine of corruption and re-production. They use it burnt to ashes, because fire is another emblem of Seeva, as a destroyer, and it is fire that capt towers, the gorgeous palaces, the folemn temples, the great globe itself, and all which it inherit." It is very remarkable that the Affyrian Venus, according to Lucian, had also offerings of dung placed upon her altars. This custom could only originate in the Galli, her priests, considering her in the light of the great productive principle in nature perfonised, and connecting with that idea the maxim of the Brahmins, that the apparent, destruction of an object is only the re-production of it in another form.

Such, furveyed in its general feature, is the vaft, the complicated, fystem of Indian, or rather of Asiatic, superstition. If some parts of the Brahmin ritual appear to have been blended with those adopted by the Jews, the difficulty can only be solved by one or other of the following suppositions; either that, in the grand primeval theology of the venerable patriarchs, there were certain mysterious rites and hallowed symbols universally prevalent, the use of which has descended to their posterity, settled in the various regions of Asia, and retained among others by the progeny of the faithful Abraham; or else, that the supreme Deity, in condescension to the weakness

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of the Jews, and the predilection which they had unhappily formed in Egypt for the religious habits and ritual of that country, thought proper to indulge his favoured race in the adoption of a few of the most innocent of the Gentiles ceremonies. The former of these suppositions is by far the most agreeable to the hypothesis on which this book proceeds, and is by far the most confonant to the jealous honour of the God of Ifrael. After all, we must own, with Calmet, that the temple of the great Jehovah had many decorations fimilar to those in the hallowed temples of Asia. He was ferved there, fays the last-cited author. with all the pomp and splendor of an Eastern monarch. He had his table, his perfumes, his throne, his bed-chamber, his officers, his finging-men, and his finging-women.\*

See Calmet's Critical Differentions on the Hebrew Music,
 p. 49. Quarto, 1727.

## CHAPTER III.

The general Description the Author enters on minuter Details relative to the Indian Pooja, or Sacrifice. — A concise Chapter on the Subject from Sonnerat. — Extracts from the Ayeen Akhery. — Commutations of gold and silver Utensils allowed instead of Sanguinary Sacrifices of Men and Beasts. — Those Sacrifices, however, still in a Degree prevail, which introduces the Subject of the Penances of the Hindoos. — The excruciating Severities submitted to in the Course of the Char-Asherum, or Four Degrees of Probation, during Initiation into the Indian Mysteries, detailed and compared with those undergone in the Mysteries of Mithra in Persia and at Eleusis.

THE general view, previously exhibited, of the rites practised in the Indian temples will prove a proper introduction to the peculiar ceremonies of the smaller distinct Poojas, which are numerous and varied according to the character and attributes of the Deity adored. Sonnerat has given an entire

but concise chapter, in which the principal of these ceremonies are enumerated and described. As that author is not in the hands of every body, and was an eye-witness to the scenes which he relates, I shall present my readers with it entire as it stands in the Calcutta edition of his voyage, without presuming to make any other alteration in it than the occasional one of a proper name, to render it more consonant to my own orthography, in which, throughout this work, I have endeavoured, as closely as possible, to follow Mr. Wilkins.

OF THE DIFFERENT CEREMONIES USED IN THE INDIAN POOJAS.

"Under the name of Pooja," fays M. Sonnerat, "all the ceremonies, which the different
deities daily exact, are comprehended. They
confift in bathing the god with water and
milk, anointing him with butter and odoriferous oils, covering him with rich clothes,
and loading him with jewels, which they
change every day, as well as the other ornaments, when the pagoda is opulent. They
also present him with lamps, where butter is

nsed instead of oil; and throw to him flowers of a particular fort, which are confectated to him feparately, one after another: the number they throw is fixed in their facred books. During the whole time of the ceremony, the dancers move in measured steps before his ftatue to the found of instruments. A part of the Brahmins, with chouries of white hair, or peacocks' feathers, keep off the infects, while the rest are employed in presenting him the offerings; for, the Indians never come emptyhanded to the temple. They bring, adlibitum, rice, camphire, butter, flowers, and fruit. When they have none of thefe, the Brahmins give them flowers, of which they have always baskets ready; and, after they have received payment, they offer them to the god in the name of the worshippers. It belongs to the Brahmins alone to make the Pooja in particular houses, because the divinity must be prefent, and they alone have the right of making him descend on the earth. On certain festivals of the year, all the Indians are obliged to perform this ceremony, which confilts in making offerings and a facrifice to the god. For this purpose the Brahmin prepares a place which is purified with dried cow-dung, with which the pavement is plastered; and the room

is sprinkled with the urine of the same animal. A vafe full of water, covered, is placed in the middle of the room, round which they light lamps filled with butter. When every thing is ready, the Brahmin, fitting on the ground with his head uncovered, recites prayers, and from time to time flings flowers and rice upon the vafe: when the invocations are finished, the god should be found in the vale. They then make him offerings in which they are interested; for, they present him with that which they defire the year may return to them a hundred-fold, fuch as fruits, rice, and beetel, but no money. The Brahmin afterwards makes the facrifice, which confifts in burning feveral pieces of wood before the vafe. which he only has the right to throw into the fire, one after another, and at those moments which are engaged during the prayer he recites. After this ceremony, the Brahmin takes his leave of the deity with another prayer.

## OF DIBARADANÉ.

The Dibaradané, or offering of fire, is also a daily ceremony in honour of the gods, and makes part of the Pooja. The Brahmin who officiates officiates holds, in one hand, a small bell, which he sounds; and, in the other, a copper lamp full of butter: he makes it pass and repass round the statue of the god he worships. During this time, the Bayaderes dance and sing his praises; after which, the assistants in contemplation, with hands joined, address their vows to the idol. The Brahmin then breaks the garland with which the idol is adorned, distributes the fragments to the people, and receives from them the offerings they have brought to the divinity.

#### OF THE ABICHEGAM.

The Abichegam makes a part of the Pooja: This ceremony confifts in pouring milk on the Lingam. This liquor is afterwards kept with great care, and some drops are given to dying people, that they may merit the delights of the Calaisson. We find traces of the Abichegam in the earliest antiquity. The primitive race of men had a kind of sacrifice called Libation, which was made in pouring out some liquor, but especially oil, in honour of the divinity. It was also ordained in the written law.

The Indians have preserved this custom, not only in respect to the Lingam, but also in honour of their other deities. They actually offer them libations, wash them with cocoanut-oil, melted butter, or water of the Ganges. They always rub them with oil or butter when they address prayers or present offerings to them; so that all their idols are black, smoked, plastered, and soiled with a fetid grease.

### OF SANDIVANE.

The Sandivane is a ceremony which the Brahmins alone make daily to the gods in general; and, in the morning, particularly, to Brahma, as the author of their origin. At fun-rife, they go and take water out of a tank, with the hollow of their hand, which they throw fometimes before and fometimes behind them, and over their shoulders, invoking Brahma, and pronouncing his praifes; by which they are purified and made worthy of his favours. They afterwards throw water to the fun, to teltify their thanks and their respect, that he has had the goodness to appear and chase away the shades of darkness: they then finish, purifying themselves by bathing.

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bathing. This kind of worship was established, in honour of the great Creator of all things, by the first race of mortals, and the Indians have always inviolably adhered to it.\*

#### OF DARPENON.

The Darpenon is inftituted in honour of the dead. The Indians, after having purified themselves by bathing, sit down before a Brahmin, who recites prayers: when the Brahmin has finished praying, he pours water, with a small copper vase called chimbou, into one of their hands, which they present to him open and leaning towards him; he then throws, on the same hand, leaves of the plant herbé and grains of gengely, naming the persons for whom he prays. These prayers are made to Dewtahs, who are protectors of the dead.

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The ancient priests of Egypt in like manner purished themfelves by bathing in the morning, and plunging into the facred waters of the Nile; a worship they might have received from the Indians.

# OF NAGAPOOJA.

The term Nagapooja fignifies worship of the fnake: women are commonly charged with this ceremony. On certain days of the year, when they choose to perform it, they go to the banks of those tanks where the Arichi and Margofier grow: they place under thefe trees a stone figure, representing a Lingam between two fnakes: they bathe themselves, and, after ablution, they wash the Lingam, and burn before it fome pieces of wood partieularly affigned for this facrifice, throw flowers upon it, and ask of it riches, a numerous posterity, and a long life to their husbands. It is faid, in the Sastras, that, when the ceremony of Nagapooja is made according to the form prescribed, what is asked is always obtained.\* When they have finished their prayers, they leave the ftone on the place, never carrying it back to the house: it serves for the same use to all women who find it. If there is neither Arichi or Margofier on the bank of the tank, they carry a branch of each of

However whimfical this worthip may appear, we fee it eftablished among all the ancients; and the moderns have enlarged upon them.

of these trees, which they plant for the ceremony on each side of the Lingam, and make a canopy over it. The Indians look upon the Arichi as the male, and the Margosier as the female; though these trees are of a very different species from each other."\*

This account of M. Sonnerat, however accurate, is by no means sufficiently comprehensive. The general Pooja is still more minutely described, with all the accompanying circumstances, in the Ayeen Akbery, and in the following terms, which too forcibly demonstrate how abject a flave to superstition is the Brahmin devotee.

Since the Hindoos admit, observes the minister of Akber, that the Almighty occasionally affumes an elementary form without defiling his holiness, they make various idols, in gold and other metal, which serve to affist their imaginations while they offer up their prayers to the invisible Deity: this they call Pooja, and divide it into sixteen ceremonies. After the devotee has performed his usual and indispensable ablutions with the Sindehya and Howm, he sits down, looking towards the east or the north, with his legs drawn up in front; then, taking in his hand a little water and N 2 rice.

<sup>\*</sup> Sonnerat's Voyages, vol. i. p. 163. Calcutta edit.

rice, he sprinkles the idol, and conceives this act to be a proper preface to the commencement of his adoration. Next follows the Kulfb Pooja, in which he worships the idol's flaggon. Then fucceeds the Chankb Pooja, or the worship of the conch-shell. Last in order is performed the Gbunta Pooja, which confifts in plastering the bell with ashes of fandal-wood. When he has finished these Poojas, he throws down a little rice, and wishes that his God may be manifested. These various duties are all comprized in the first of the fixteen ceremonies. In the fecond, he prepares and places a table of metal, either gold, filver, or copper, as a feat or throne for the Deity. In the third, he throws water into a veffel to wash his footsteps; for, in Hindostan, it is the custom, that, when a superior enters the house of an inferior, he washes his feet. In the fourth, he sprinkles water thrice, to represent the idol rincing his mouth, fince it is also the custom for an inferior to bring to a superior water to rince his mouth with before meals. In the fifth, fandal, flowers, beetel, and rice, are offered to the idol. In the fixth, the idol and his throne are carried to another fpot: then the worshipper takes in his right hand a white conch-shell full of water, which

he throws over the idol, and with his left hand rings the bell. In the feventh, he wipes the idol dry with a cloth, replaces it upon its throne, and adorns it with vestments of filk or gold stuff. In the eighth, he puts the zennar upon the idol. In the ninth, he makes the tiluk upon the idol in twelve places. In the tenth, he throws over the idol flowers or green leaves. In the eleventh, he fumigates it with perfumes. In the twelfth, he lights a lamp with ghee. In the thirteenth, he places before the idol trays of food, according to his ability, which are distributed amongst the by-standers as the holy relics of the idol's banquet. In the fourteenth, he stretches himfelf at full length with his face towards the ground, and disposes his body in such a manner as that his eight members touch the ground, namely, the two knees, two hands, forehead, nose, and cheeks, and this they call flashtang: these kinds of prostration are also performed to great men in Hindostan. In the fifteenth, he makes a circuit around the idol feveral times. In the fixteenth, he ftands in the posture of a slave, with his hands uplifted, and asks permission to depart. - There are particular prayers and many different ways used in performing these sixteen ceremonies.

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Some believe, that only from the ninth to the thirteenth are indispensable duties. Except a Saniassi and a Sooder, all other Hindoos are bound to perform this tedious Pooja thrice every day.

Befides these daily offerings of rice, fruits. and ghee, the Hindoos have their grand national facrifices, not very diffimilar from that of the scape-goat among the Hebrews. The reader will find an account of one of these facrifices extracted from a Sanfcreet book, and inserted in the Preface to Mr. Halhed's Code. It is called performing the jugg, literally the facrifice; and, though that of the living horse and bull, as well as the more impious oblation of human beings, so extensively detailed towards the commencement of this theological Differtation, are no longer fuffered in Hindostan, yet have the Brahmins instituted an ingenious fubflitute, which, without staining the altar with blood, once swelled with exhaustless treasures the coffers of the pagoda. If the expiatory facrifice of a man for fome atrocious crime be no longer demanded by the gods, the weight of a man in gold and jewels is the only compensation that can be admitted in lieu of the original. If the milk-white steed no longer pour his noble blood on the altar

altar of the fun, the radiant deity may yet be appealed with a golden horse. If the immolated bull no longer fmoke upon the facred coals of that altar, and feed at once the ravenous idol and his glutton priests, a thousand cows, with the points of their horns plated with gold and their hoofs fhod with filver, will fuffice to avert the dreaded calamity which the living facrifice was intended to deprecate. This kind of jugg is called DAN, or the giving away of alms to the needy; and of this dan, or pious donation, there are fixteen kinds enumerated in a fection of the Ayeen Akbery, a fection which cannot be omitted because it is one of the most curious in the whole book. The immense value of these oblations, which history informs us were in ancient times actually and frequently bestowed on the Brahmins, demonstrates, as I before had occasion to remark, that Hindostan must, before the invation of the Mahommedan plunderers, have been far more abundant in bullion and jewels than it has been at any period fince that invafion.

THE POOJA CALLED DAN, OR PIOUS PRO-

There are various methods of performing DAN, or pacificatory oblations of bullion and jewels. 1. The devotee weighs himfelf against gold, filver, and other valuables, and prefents the amount to the Brahmins as an oblation to the gods. 2. An image of Brahma is made with four faces, in each of which are two eyes, two ears, two nofes, and two mouths; it has four hands, and the parts of the body like an ordinary man. It is of gold and ought to weigh not less than thirty-three tolahs\* and four mashahs, not more than 3410 tolahs. The height must be seventy-two fingers, the breadth forty-eight fingers: this is adorned with jewels, and, after the performance of certain ceremonies, given away in alms. 3. An egg is made of gold, divided in two parts which join together fo as to make a perfect oval: it must not be smaller in breadth and height than twelve fingers, nor larger than a hundred

The tolah, we are informed by Tavernier, a merchant in gold and jewels, is a weight peculiarly appropriated, throughout the Mogul empire, to those precious commodities, and, according to that author, a hundred tolahs amount to thirty-eight ounces.

hundred and ten fingers: the weight must be from fixty-fix tolahs fix mashahs to three thousand three hundred and thirty-three tolahs four mashahs. 4. This donation confifts of a tree, which was one of the fourteen things difgorged by the fea in the Courma Avatar: birds are represented fitting upon the branches: it is made of gold, and must not weigh less than two tolahs. 5. This confists of one thousand cows, with the points of their horns plated with gold, and their hoofs with filver, with bells and katasses about their necks. 6. This confifts of a cow and calf. made of gold, weighing from 850 to 3400 tolahs. 7. The feventh is a horse, made of gold, weighing from 10 tolahs to 3333 tolahs four mashahs. 8. A four-wheeled chariot. made of gold, with four or eight horses, weighing from 10 tolahs to 6660 tolahs eight mashahs. 9. A carriage, drawn by four elephants, all of gold, weighing from 16 tolahs to 6660 tolahs eight mashahs. 10. Four ploughs of gold, of the same weight as the last article. 11. A representation of a piece of land, with mountains and rivers, made of gold, not weighing less than 16 tolahs eight mashahs, nor more than 3333 tolahs. 12. A golden fphere, weighing from 66 tolahs tolahs eight mashahs to 3333 tolahs four mashahs. 13. A golden vine, weighing from 16 tolahs to 3333 tolahs four mashahs. 14. A representation of the seven seas, in gold, weighing from 23 tolahs four mashahs to 3333 tolahs four mashahs. 15. A cow and calf, made of precious stones. 16. A golden sigure, with the head of an elephant and the other parts human, weight from 16 tolahs eight mashahs to 3333 tolahs four mashahs.

According to fome Purauns, toladan is the only kind that is proper, and none of the others should be less than 106 tolahs fix mashahs, or more than 833 tolahs four mashahs. There are also different opinions about the manner of distribution; some Brahmins maintaining that it ought to be first given to the ACHAREYA, and by them distributed to others. The ACHAREYA are those who teach the Vedas and other sciences. There are distinct ceremonies appointed for each kind of Dan, but it may be bestowed at any time; although, offerings made during eclipses, and when the fun enters the fign of Capricorn, are esteemed more especially meritorious. Great rewards are promised to those who are charitable; infomuch, that, for the first kind of Dan, when a man gives away his own weight in gold, rolains

gold, he is ordained to remain in Paradife for one hundred million kalps, (periods of Brahma,) and, when he re-assumes a human form, he will become a mighty monarch.

I now hasten to fulfil my promise, so often repeated, of detailing the dreadful prescribed penances which the Brahmins undergo in their progress through the CHAR ASHERUM, or four Hindoo degrees of probation, and the still more tremendous sufferings spontaneously inflicted upon themselves by the Yogees, or devotees of India, to attain a certain and speedy admission into the delights of paradife. This description will, in fact, amount to little less than the history of the human foul, that æthereal spark, as the old-philosophers of Asia considered it, which emanated from the bright central fource of light and heat; of its various toils and wanderings during its earthly pilgrimage; and its inceffant and strenuous efforts to re-unite itself to that source. Nothing can be more interesting or important than this inquiry. I am about to bring forward, on the great theatre of human transaction, agents who equally brave the dangers of the raging flood and the devouring fire, whose courage is not to be shaken by the sharpest pangs of torture, or the approach

proach of death in its most ghastly and appalling form. On this most curious and affecting subject, let us take, as a basis of our disquisition, that observation of Strabo, which he lays down as the first principle of their theology: Τον μεν ένθαδε βικ, ώς αν ακμην κυομενων είναι, του δε θανατου γενεσιν είς του έπως Bior: or, that this present life is but the life of embryo-existence, a mere conception; but that death is a generation or birth into TRUE LIFE. The reader will now please to compare this true representation of Strabo with all the numerous passages previously extracted by me, in the first book of the Indian theology, from the Geeta, the Heetopades, and the Sacontala, relative to the inceffant migration of the foul, its afcent through the feveral spheres, and its ardent defires after, and final absorption in, Brahme, THE SUPREME GOOD. He will likewise pardon me, I trust, for once more bringing to his view the confequent observations upon them, with the circumstances there enumerated of the peculiar and dreadful feverities inflicted on himself by the infatuated Yogee, the truth of all which circumstances I shall presently proceed to prove from the most respectable authorities.

" From the collective evidence exhibited in the preceding pages, the affertion with which I commenced these particular strictures on the Metempsychosis, that the professed design of it was to restore the fallen soul to its pristine state of purity and perfection, is proved beyond contradiction. Thus, an interesting and aftonishing prospect unfolds itself to our view. Their facred writings, we fee, represent the whole universe as an ample and august theatre for the probationary exertion of millions of beings, who are supposed to be so many fpirits degraded from the high honours of angelic distinction, and condemned to ascend, through various gradations of toil and fuffering, until they shall have reached that exalted fphere of perfection and happiness which they enjoyed before their defection. Animated by the defire of obtaining that final boon, and fired by all the glorious promifes of the Vedas, the patient Hindoo smiles amidst unutterable mifery, and exults in every dire variety of voluntary torture. In the hope of expiating former crimes by adequate penance, and of regaining speedily that fancied Elysium, he binds himself to the performance of vows which make human nature shudder and human reason stagger. He passes whole weeks without

without the smallest nourishment, and whole years in painful vigils. He wanders about naked as he came from the womb of his parent, and fuffers, without repining, every viciffitude of heat and cold, of driving ftorm and beating rain. He ftands with his arms croffed above his head till the finews shrink and the flesh withers away. He fixes his eye upon the burning orb of the fun till its light is extinguished and its moisture entirely dried up. It is impossible to read the following minute description of one of these devotees in the act of stationary penance, as given in the Sacontala, without shuddering. Every circumstance enumerated fills the mind with encreasing horror, and freezes the astonished reader to a statue, almost as immoveable as the fuffering penitent. Dushmanta asks, "Where is the holy retreat of Maricha?"-Matali replies, " A little beyond that grove, where you fee a pious Yoger, motionless as a pollard, holding his thick bushy hair, and fixing bis eyes on the folar orb. - Mark, his body is balf covered with a white ant's edifice, made of raifed clay; the skin of a snake supplies the place of his facerdotal thread, and part of it girds his loins; a number of knotty plants encircle and wound his neck,

and furrounding birds nefts almost cover his

From the whole of the preceding statement it must be evident to every reader that the Brahmins are no strangers to the doctrine, efteemed abfurd in some Christian countries, but admitted by them from time immemorial, that of ORIGINAL SIN. It is their invariable belief that MAN IS A FALLEN CREATURE. Upon this very belief is built the doctrine of the migration of the foul through various animal bodies, and revolving BOBUNS, or planetary fpheres; and I have already endeavoured to prove, that they could only have been united in this uniform belief by fome ancient. but mutilated, tradition, relative to the defection of man in paradife from primeval innocence and virtue.

The doctrine just alluded to, as so univerfally prevalent in Asia, that man is a fallen creature, originally gave birth to the perfuasion, that, by severe sufferings and a long series of probationary discipline, the soul might be restored to its primitive purity. Hence oblations the most costly, and sacrisices the most sanguinary, in the hope of propitiating the angry powers, for ever loaded

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<sup>.</sup> Indian Antiquities, vol. ii. p. 283.

the altars of the pagan deities. They had even facrifices denominated those of regeneration, and those sacrifices were always profusely stained with blood. The Taurobolium of the ancients, a ceremony in which the high prieft of Cybele was confecrated, was a ceremony of this kind, and might be called a baptism of blood, which they conceived imparted a fpiritual new birth to the liberated spirit. In this dreadful and fanguinary ceremony, according to the poet Prudentius, cited at length by Banier on the ancient facrifices, the high priest about to be inaugurated was introduced into a dark excavated apartment, adorned with a long filken robe and a crown of gold, Above this apartment was a floor perforated in a thousand places with holes, like a fieve, through which the blood of a facred bull, flaughtered for the purpose, descended in a copious torrent upon the inclosed priest, who received the purifying stream on every part of his drefs, rejoicing to bathe with the bloody shower his hands, his cheeks, and even to bedew his lips and his tongue with it. When all the blood had run from the throat of the immolated bull, the carcase of the victim was removed, and the priest issued forth from the cavity a spectacle ghastly and horrible, his head

head and vestments being covered with blood, and clotted drops of it adhering to his venerable beard. As soon as the pontifex appeared before the assembled multitude, the air was rent with congratulatory shouts; so pure and so sanctified however was he now esteemed, that they dared not approach his person, but beheld him at a distance with awe and veneration.\*

It has been before observed, that by these initiations, or baptisms of blood, the ancients conceived that they obtained an eternal regeneration, or new birth: nor were they confined to the priefts alone: for, persons, not invefted with a facred function, were fometimes initiated by the ceremony of the Taurobolium; and one invariable rule in these initiations was to wear the stained garments as long as possible, in token of their having been thus regenerated. This facrifice of regeneration was also sometimes performed for the purification of a whole nation, or the monarch that governed it. The animal facrificed was not obliged to be always of one species; instead of a bull, a ram was frequently facrificed, when the ceremony was called Criobolium; and fometimes a she-goat, when it obtained the VOL. V.

\* Prudentius, apud Banier's Mythology, vol. i. p. 275.

name of Ægibolium. Some of these regenerations were valid only for twenty years, when they were to be renewed for the acquisition of renovated virtue, and the celebration of them often continued for many days. The reader will find in Montfaucon engravings of several of these Taurobolia and Criobolia, and in particular he will there meet with the design of a very curious one, dug up at Lyons, with an inscription, importing that it was celebrated there for the health of the Emperor Antoninus Pius.\*

But to return to that country which is the immediate scene of our investigation, whence this doctrine is with great probability afferted in the most ancient periods to have spread over all the kingdoms of Asia: we there find it at this day slourishing with uncommon vigour; all ranks and ages inslicting on themselves severe mortifications in hopes of speedy restitution, and pressing forward to the gaol of immortality. From the possibility of this envied restitution to pristine purity and happiness none in India are excluded, but those who have been either so unfortunate or abandoned as to have forfeited their cast; the unhappy and rejected, even though repentant,

race of Parais or Chandalas, who, by the unalterable laws of Brahma, are doomed to be the everlasting drudges of the other tribes, excluded from even the hope of rising to a higher rank in the creation, or ever amending their forlorn and desperate state. In such abomination are these Chandalahs holden, that, on the Malabar fide of India, if they chance even to touch one of a superior tribe, he draws his fabre and cuts him down on the fpot, without any check from the laws of the country. Even the shade, which the wretched body of a Chandalah in passing throws upon any object, imparts pollution, pollution n t to be wiped away but by a particular process of purification. Destined to misery from their birth; bowed down with incessant toils, which, to any but the patient and unrepining Chandalah, would make life an intolerable burthen; death itself, that last refuge of the unfortunate, opens no dawn of comfort to his mind, and unfolds no fcenes of future felicity to reward his past sufferings. The gates of Jaggernaut itself are to him for ever closed; and he is driven, with equal difgrace, from the fociety of men and the temples of the gods. Human policy or caprice might have given birth to the other fingular institutions of

of this great empire; but to what principle of human policy can we attribute a law so contrary to the general principles of benevolence, that reigns through the institutions ascribed to Brahma, and fraught with such a diaboli-

cal spirit of revenge and malignity?

Like their neighbours the Indians, the ancient Chinese, also, according to Couplet, believed not only in the immortality, but in the transmigration, of the human foul, occasioned by its primeval defection. They confidered the departed spirits of their most virtuous ancestors, who had performed the planetary journey, as engaged in the celestial regions in the benevolent office of intercession with the Supreme Being for their progeny, fojourning, like weary pilgrims, on the bobun of earth; and therefore, fays our author, at their festival entertainments, before the banquet commenced, they made offerings to them of the choicest viands, and poured out libations to their honour; a practice very fimilar to the ceremony of the Indian STRADHA.\* The Chinese theologians, however, while they conclude all men to be involved in vice and error, do not go the dreadful length of anathematizing for ever any of the inferior casts, and barring

<sup>·</sup> Couplet, Scientin Sinica, lib. ii. p. 103.

barring them out at once from the gates of heavenly mercy and every benefit of earthly compassion. It is doubtless a relic of the abominable Cuthite doctrines, of that relentless race, whose bloody worship outraged all the dictates of humanity, and who, in their infernal orgies, offered up even their sons and their daughters to devils.

Besides the promise of entering at large into the Brahmin initiations, I have repeatedly pledged myfelf in the course of this extensive review, or rather history, of the Asiatic theology, to compare the greater Mithratic mysteries, as far as they are known, with those which were celebrated in the cavern-temples of India; and there cannot be a better opportunity for making that comparison than what the present chapter affords, in which we are confidering the Brahmin doctrine of the regeneration of the foul, by a fevere course of progressive penances rising above each other in horror and anguish. The principal feature of fimilitude is the unexampled tortures which the respective candidates underwent in their progress through either dreadful ordeal. I shall begin with describing the probationary discipline endured by the Brahmin during his progress through the four degrees of the Char Afherum. 0 3

Asherum. I shall then proceed to detail the severities submitted to by the Mithriaes; and the reader, who will take the trouble of turning, while he reads these accounts, to the description in the first chapter of the Indian Theology of the Grecian mysteries in honour of Ceres, celebrated at Eleusis, and to that of the Egyptian pomp sacred to Osiris and Isis at Philaë, in the second, will find that he has nearly the whole of the mysteries, performed in the ancient world, brought at once before his view in this Differtation, detailed from the best authorities, and pourtrayed with no unanimated, but I trust with no exaggerating, pencil.

Abul Fazil, the secretary of Sultan Akber, from the sacred books of the Brahmins, to which he had access, as well as from the oral accounts of those Brahmins, who reposed a considence in the minister of their most lenient monarch of Mohammedan extract, has inserted, in the third volume of the Ayeen Akbery, a very ample description of the Char Asherum, of which I shall immediately submit the substance to the reader.

The veneration anciently entertained both in India and Persia for the sun and FIRE, together with many of their consequent superstitions,

perstitions, engaged a confiderable portion of the first chapter of the Indian Theology. I did not prefume to determine in which of those nations that worship first commenced, but referred it to a Chaldaic origin; to that people who earliest practifed the Sabian idolatry. I cited classical authority in proof that horses were, in Persia, sacrificed to the fun; in addition to which I might have added that direct affertion of Justin, from Trogus Pompeius; Solem unum Deum effe credunt et equos Deo facratos ferunt. From Sanfcreet books, I also produced evidence of the existence, in ancient æras, of an Aswammed-HA-Jug, or horse-sacrifice, in India. It is to be feared that both the Mithratic and the Suryatic rites were stained with a more horrid species of sacrifice, the blood of men. This abominable rite, fo univerfally prevalent in the ancient world, took its rife from the idea, that, the nobler was the victim offered, the more propitious and benignant was rendered the deity adored. With how dreadful a profusion human blood was anciently shed on the altars of India has already been related; that the caverns of the furious Mithriacs were little better than vaft sepulchres of facrificed men is evident, not only from Porphyry's fecond 0 4

fecond book De Abstinentia,\* in which the dreadful pangs of hunger and thirst, and various other miseries undergone by the emaciated candidate during initiation, are enumerated; but it is farther evinced by a very curious fact, related in the Ecclefiastical Hiftory of Socrates, a Christian writer who flourished in the fifth century, shortly after the final extinction of the Mithratic superstition at Rome, by order of Gracchus, præfect of the prætorium. In this author's time, the Christians of Alexandira, having discovered a cavern that had been confecrated to Mithra, but for a long period closed up, resolved to explore it, and examine what remnants of that fuperstition it contained, when, to their astonishment, the principal thing they found in it was a great quantity of human skulls, with other bones of men that had been facrificed, which were brought out, publicly exposed, and excited the utmost horror in the inhabitants of that great city.+

This general though dreadful feature of refemblance between the Mithriac and Suryatic devotees, having been thus again brought before the view of the reader, I proceed, in

<sup>.</sup> De Abstinentia, lib. ii. p. 71, et feq.

<sup>+</sup> Hift. Ecclefiaft. fib. ii. cap. 2.

the first place, from that authentic register the Ayeen Akbery, to present him with the account of

THE BRAHMIN CHAR-ASHERUM, OR FOUR DEGREES OF PROBATION.

THE FIRST DEGREE, OF BRAHM-CHAREE .-This state may be entered into by the young Brahmin noviciate, fo early as his eighth year, when the first ceremony of initiation is the putting on of the facred zennar, or cord of three threads, in memory and honour of the three great deities of Hindostan. Those who refuse to admit the hypothesis, so amply detailed in the former chapter, relative to what I suppose to be the genuine origin of those three deities, must continue to consider them as the three elements personified; earth, fire, and air: which latter element condensed, acaccording to the Brahmins, is water. Thefe, fay the antagonists of that hypothesis, are the principles of which all bodies in nature, and man himfelf, are composed. These were therefore confidered as first principles, and in that fense deified by a race plunged in materialism. I have thus ingenuously stated the opposite argument, argment, that the reader, who is not inclined to degrade the human foul into a portion of respired air, may judge which of the two is the nobler hypothesis.

The materials of which the zennar is composed, and the mystic ceremonies with which it is formed, have been already described. This cord must be twisted and put on the young Brahmin by his father or tutor; and, when put on for the first time, it is accompanied with a piece of the skin of an antelope, three fingers in breadth, but shorter than the zennar; the meaning of which I cannot conjecture, except it be allufive to the life which the holy hermit leads in those woody folitudes, where beafts of the chase are his companions, and their fkins his only covering from the inclemency of the weather. This doctrine of fylvan feclusion is farther inculcated by their also investing the Brahm-charee or Brahmassari, as the word is fometimes better written, by a circular belt, formed of a facred grafs, called moonj.\*

He now learns the Gayteree, or hymn in honour of the fun; and he is presented with a staff of sacred palass-wood. He then leaves the house of his natural for the abode of his spiritual

<sup>\*</sup> Ayeen Akbery, vol. iii. p. 215.

fpiritual father, under whose tuition he learns all the fublime doctrines and mysterious rites inculcated in the Vedas. There is no occasion for me to recapitulate all the routine of his various ablutions. The precise enumeration of these would be in many instances indelicate, fince it is with the Brahmins as with the Mohammedans, every call of animal nature is attended with reiterated lavation. Let us attend to his drefs; for, the reader will ever bear in remembrance the difference subfifting between a Brahmin, who is the old Brachman, and wears apparel; and the Yogee, or old gymnosophist, who, warm with fervid piety, fpurns external clothing. A gymnosophist, or Hindoo penitent, is not properly a Brahmin; though a Brahmin, by adopting feverer austerities, may become a gymnosophist.

His dress consists of, first, a langowtee, or cloth of decency, which covers the waste; secondly, a langee, another cloth which folds over the former; thirdly, a linen robe without any future, a kind of vestment, which, it is remarkable, the great high priest himself condescended to wear; fourthly, a linen cap. He bathes every morning without any covering but the lungowtee and the grass cord of moonj. His morning-ablution and the attendant ceremonies,

monies, extracted from this part of the Ayeen Akbery, are inferted in my fecond chapter with fome observations, which need not be repeated here, although the account of the bathing itself must by no means be omitted. " The Brahmin bathes every morning before fun-rife. He begins his ablution with taking up in his right hand a little water, and fays, Pardon my offences! After this, he throws away the water; then he rubs himfelf all over with earth; and, if he be in a river, dives three times, or else he throws water thrice over his body, and rubs himfelf with his hands. Next, he repeats the name of Gop, and, afterwards, thrice takes up in his right hand a little water, which he fips, and repeats certain prayers, during all which time he fprinkles water upon his head. Then, with his fore-finger and thumb, he stops his noftrils, and, bowing down his face to the furface of the water, repeats another prayer, and then plunges again or throws water over himfelf thrice. He then sprinkles seven times his forehead, breaft, and shoulders; after this, joining his open hands, he fills them eight times with water, and throws it towards the fun, reciting a particular prayer. He then fips the water, and finally repeats the PA-RAYENAM."

RAYENAM." After this ablution, he puts on the different garments above-described, and, accordingly as he may chance to be a Brahmin of the Veefhnu or Seeva cast, makes the different marks on his forehead and body with ashes, turmeric, or vermilion; but, if he have bathed in the Ganges, nothing can be more in repute for this ceremony than the clay of that holy river, which washes away all human offences. He now takes up his pilgrim-staff, and throws over his shoulders a leathern belt, with a pouch fastened to it, for the purpose of containing fuch food as benevolence may fupply him with. He then performs the findebya and bown. The former is a prayer attended with a repetition of drinking and sprinkling of water after a particular manner. The latter is a burnt-facrifice, and can only be properly performed in a fire which has been kindled by the friction of two pieces of palass or peepul wood, which are accounted facred. The ceremony confifts in paffing through the fire, or throwing into it a piece of the same confecrated wood with which it was kindled, and the flame of which is never suffered to be wholly extinguished.

When the charity of the pious has supplied rice or fruits for his scanty meal, he

first offers it to his tutor, who tastes it, and, having craved his permission to eat, with many prayers and ablutions he gets through his vegetable banquet. The luxury of honey, beetel, and perfumes, is denied to the Hindoo aspirant, who never goes where there is finging, dancing, or gaming. As he grows up, the hair of his head is shaven, all but one folitary lock at the back of the crown. He is permitted to have no commerce with women; but the most rigid purity in thought and action is enjoined him. All the ebullitions of anger, envy, and revenge, are checked by the feverest discipline; and the love of truth and virtue inculcated by promifes of the most flattering diffinction and attainments in another and more perfect state of being. In prayer, ablution, and studying the Vedas, the day is confumed, and, when the fun begins to decline, ceremonies, nearly fimilar to those which preceded its appearing above the horizon, are again repeated: the gayteree, the findeyha, the howm. At length he retires to short repose on his wretched bed of straw, or sleeps under the first tree that offers, wrapt up in the fkin of a ftag, antelope, or some other animal.\* Some continue in this initiatory state only

<sup>·</sup> Ayeen Akbery, vol. iii. p. 219.

only five years; the more general practice is to remain in it twelve years; but others, from diffidence and other motives, fpend all their lives in this preparatory ordeal.

THE SECOND DEGREE, OF GERISHTH. -When the Brahmaffari has finished the course of study, devotion, and austerity, prescribed him, if he feel an inclination to continue his ipiritual progress, to despise all terrestrial enjoyments, and devote the rest of his life to the fervice of the stern deity whom he adores, it is in the highest degree meritorious; but if he feel no fuch inclination, or thrink from the feverity of future fuffering, he is not compelled to advance farther in the dreadful trial. In that case, he waits upon his Brahmin-preceptor, and obtains permission to return to the house of his father. In the state of GE-RISHTH, the drefs is entirely changed, except in the article of the zennar, which is retained through life. The initiated now puts on a turban of linen rolled round in many folds; a sheet eight cubits long and two broad ferves to cover his loins and thighs; another fheet four cubits long and two broad is thrown over his shoulders: this latter may have a future, the former must have none.

The Gerishth rifes four ghurries before day-break, and goes through all the ceremonies which were observed by him in his former state; but his ablutions are doubled, and his prayers, fprinklings, and facrifices, proportionably increased. His day is divided into eight different parts, to each of which a parsicular duty is affigned; the enumeration of all which would be tedious to an European reader. He offers folemn oblations to the deutahs, and his departed ancestors, whom he hopes speedily to rejoin: he supports life by gleaning the fields after the reapers, or by begging here and there a handful of rice, and a part even of this scanty supply he throws into the fire, as an offering to the deutah and the dead. In the evening, the multiplied ceremonies of ablution, the findeyha, and the howm, return; and afterwards he retires to pass the greater part of the night in vigils, observing the filent courses of the moon and planets, and contemplating with rapture the blue vault in which the fixed ftars are placed; those glittering orbs, among which his impatient spirit burns to mount. In this sense alone can we understand what we are told by Abul Fazil, in regard to the Brahmins of this degree passing the evening in the study of philosophy:

philosophy: it was an astronomical philosophy deeply connected with their Sabian theology; and, though the fecretary of Akber was not deeply acquainted with their system of astronomy, yet, from that extent in which it is now known to the moderns, we are certain that a very large portion of the night must anciently have been devoted to this study. The awful feafon of incumbent darkness was that in which anciently the deeper mysteries of the Brahmin religion commenced, and nocturnal hymns resounded through the long ailes of Elephanta, and echoed amidst the spacious dome of Salfette. Through the northern gates of those caverns, or cavities, pierced in the roof for the purpose, they watched the motions of the planets, and marked the gradual apparent revolution of the heavens; on particular aspects and conjunctions, rending the midnight air with shouts of joy or outcries of terror.

Were not they accustomed thus nightly in their cells to observe the celestial phænomena, how could their various fasts and festivals, which are, for the most part, regulated by the position of the heavenly bodies, and particularly by the entrance of the moon into the respective nac-shattras, or lunar massions, have Vol. V.

been instituted with such astronomical precision? What is the RAAS JATTRA but the circular dance of the planets round the fun? What are the eternal contests of the Soors and Affors, or bright and fable genii, reprefented in the festival dramas of India, especially at the great equinoctial feast of Durga, but emblematical representations of the imagined contests of the fummer and winter figns for the dominion of the varied year, and the different aspects of the planets? What is meant by the great celestial dragon, that on every eclipse seizes with his teeth the affrighted sun and moon, but the afcending and the defcending nodes? What is the ferpent with a thoufand heads on which Veeshnu sleeps at the folftitial period, but the hydra of the fkies, that vast constellation, the numerous stars inclosed in which are poetically called its flaming heads, vomiting fire, and on which the Greeks founded the story of the Lernæan hydra, flain by Hercules, (that is, the confellation Hercules,) the foot of which latter afterism, on the celestial sphere, is placed near the head of the former. These dramatic exhibitions at the various festivals of India, nearly all founded upon astronomical observation, instituted in the earliest periods of the Indian

Indian empire, allusive to physical phænomena, and the meaning of which is not at this day fully comprehended by the Indian audience themselves, I can consider in no other light than as relics of the facred mysteries anciently exhibited in the holy grove and the gloomy cavern, where, as in the Mithratic mysteries, the constellations were represented by forms fimilar to those under which they were defignated in the heavens; where, while Seeva rode on the bull, Veeshnu flew on the eagle of the fphere, and became fuccessively incarnate in the fishes, the boar, (an afterism in the Chinese zodiac,) the testudo, and the lion. At this late period, and with the few genuine documents of remote Indian antiquity in our possession, we can only be guided by analogy in forming our judgment relative to the ancient mysteries practised in the religious exhibitions of the Brachmanian magi; and that judgement may, in a great degree, be regulated by the glimmering information which has descended to us, relative to the doctrines and practices of their Persian brethren, the disciples of Zoroaster, in the neighbouring mountains of Media, during periods in which we have few authenticated accounts of those flourishing in Hindostan.

The

The initiation, therefore, into these profounder mysteries, I consider as peculiar to the second Asherum, in which both the constitution and the mind of the aspirant were endued with matured and manly vigour, to bear, with less injury, the trying severities which distinguished it, the first Asherum being a state of comparative infancy. The third Asherum, on the description of which we must now enter, is the state of imbecil age. The accumulation of horrors which mark this state I shall insert, almost verbatim, from Abul Fazil.

The third degree, or Banperisth.—
When a Brahmin, determined to be a Banperisth, arrives at advanced age, or becomes a grandfather, he gives up the management of his family to his fon, or some other relation, and he then bids adieu to the world. He quits the populous city for eternal solitude, and, retiring to the desert, he there builds himself a cell or grotto, where he gradually weans his heart from all worldly concerns, and makes preparation for his last journey. If his wife, through affection, wishes to accompany him to this woody solitude, it is allowable; but the secluded pair must subdue

all carnal inclinations, and become cold as the rock on which they repose.

Here the hoary devotee cherishes the perpetual fire for facrifice, and wraps his aged limbs in a veltment made of the leaves or bark of trees; a coarse lungowtee being the only piece of linen that he may wear. He never cuts his hair nor pairs his nails. At morning, noon, and evening, he performs his ablutions with the findehya; and every morning and evening the howm takes place, in the fame manner as is directed for the gerishth; but his ablutions are now trebled, and he lives, as it were, in the purifying wave. Yet, folitary and forlorn, he hangs down his head, bending under the weight of imaginary crimes. In filence not to be broken, and with reverential awe, he perpetually reads and meditates on the holy Vedas. He never suffers sleep to oppress his eye-lids in the day-time, and, in the night, he takes his scanty repose upon the bare ground. In the fummer-months, he fits in the ardent beam of a tropical fun, furrounded with four fires. During the four rainy months, he dwells upon a stage raised above the water by four poles, but entirely exposed to the inclemency of the weather. In the four winter-months, he fits all night in cold water. P 3

water. He incessantly performs the fast of Chanderayen, and eats only when night approaches.

To fustain life in his voluntary exile, he is allowed to amass a store of provisions sufficient for one year; but he is absolutely forbidden to tafte any food artificially prepared by man, and he exists solely upon dried fruits and grain that grow wild in the deferts. That grain is not to be cooked even by himfelf, he is only allowed to loften it with water. When he cannot collect provisions himself, he applies to other Banperisths, or, if they cannot fupply him, he then through absolute necessity goes to the next town for fuch food as charity may fupply him with, but he remains there no longer than is neceffary for the purpose of obtaining that food.

If, worn down by a long course of unrelenting feverities, the animal fpirits fink, and he becomes weary of life: he then, by the permission of the Vedas, travels either to the east, whence the bright symbol of the deity darts its first ray upon the earth; or directs his progress towards the north, doubtless for an astronomical reason, since, in deferibing the two gates of heaven, through

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which the migrating foul glides, Homer in-

That on the north is pervious to mankind, The facred fouth to immortals is configu'd,

purfuing his folitary journey to the land un-Disdaining all obstruction, rejecting all nourishment, and absorbed in intense contemplation on the state to which he is rapidly advancing, he presses forward in his fancied career to happiness and glory, till exhausted nature faints under the talk: he staggers, falls, and expires! If a less tedious and toilfome death should prove more agreeable to him, he is not restrained to this mode of departure, but he may plunge at once into confuming fire, he may bury himself in the overwhelming flood, or he may precipitate himself from a rocky eminence, that he may be dashed to pieces in the fall. These suicidal executions they confider as the fure road to Paradife; but, unless the penitent has reached the fourth degree, and fuffered the tortures of the state of Saniassi, he has no title, from this action alone, to the fublime rewards of Mokr.\* The fast of Chanderayan, mentioned above, is thus practifed :- The devotee

<sup>.</sup> Heaven. See Ayecn Akbery, vol. iii. p. 223.

eats on the first day only one mouthful, two mouthfuls during the second day, and he thus continues increasing a mouthful every day for a month. He then decreases gradually a mouthful on each day, till he is at length reduced to the single mouthful with which he began. Such is the Chanderayn, and it must be owned to be a very ingenious mode of inflicting progressive and lingering torture: but the ingenuity of the Hindoos in this respect still more wonderfully displays itself in many of those enumerated in the following section, which forms a proper appendix to the tremendous excruciations of the third Asherum.

## DIFFERENT KINDS OF HINDOO FASTS.

The first kind is, when the penitent neither eats nor drinks for a day and night. There are twenty-nine such fasts in the course of the year, which are indispensable.

The fecond kind. He fasts during the day,

and eats at night.

The third kind. He eats nothing but fruits, and drinks milk or water.

The fourth kind. He eats once during the day and night,

The fifth kind. He eats only one particular kind of food during the day and night, but as often as he pleases.

The fixth kind. Chanderayan, which has been described.

The feventh kind. He neither eats nor drinks for twelve days.

The eighth kind. This lasts twelve days. During the first three days, he eats a little once in a day. During the next three days, he eats only once in the night. During the three days next succeeding, he never tastes any thing, unless it be brought to him by the hand of accidental benevolence. During the last three days, he neither eats nor drinks.

The ninth kind. This fast lasts sifteen days, and is observed in the following manner: — For three days and nights, the penitent eats only one handful at night. For the next three days and nights, if accidental charity should bestow upon him such a handful, he eats it; otherwise he does not take any sustenance. For the three succeeding days and nights, he eats nothing. During the three days and nights following, he takes only a handful of warm water each day. The last three days and nights of this dreadful pe-

nance, a handful of warm milk each day is his only allowance.

The tenth kind. For three days and nights, he neither eats nor drinks. He lights a fire, and fits contemplative at a door, where there enters a hot fuffocating wind, which he draws in with his breath.

The eleventh kind. This also lasts fifteen days, and is performed after the following manner:—Three days and nights he eats nothing but leaves; three days and nights, nothing but the seed of the lotos; three days and nights, nothing but peepul-leaves; three days and nights, the expressed juice of particular kind of grass called DOOBAH.

The twelfth kind. The following is his regimen for a week. The first day he lives entirely upon milk; the second, upon milk-curds; the third, he tastes nothing but ghee; the fourth, his disgusting beverage is the urine of the cow; the fifth, the excrements of that holy animal are his allotted food; the fixth, water is his only nourishment; the seventh the stern mandate of a severe superstition ordains to be a total fast.

During every kind of fast, he abstains from flesh, adess, lubya, honey, and molasses, sleeps on the ground, plays not at any game, has no connexion with woman, anoints not himfelf with oil, neither shaves himself; but every day, while it lasts, he bestows charity, and

performs other good actions.

The FOURTH ASHERUM being the state of Saniassi, and the Saniassi differing but little in point of unexampled severity from the gymnosophist of the ancients, or modern Youze, a character on the investigation of which I must enter at considerable length, and with which it is my intention to conclude the Indian Theology, I shall, in this place, insert the relation of the kindred tortures endured by the initiated in the MYSTERIES OF MITTHRA; stupendous and nefarious mysteries, equally dishonourable to the deity and destructive to man!

THE DREADFUL RITES OF INITIATION INTO

The account, given in a preceding page of the discovery of the Mithriac sepulchral cavern of Alexandria, is decisive in regard to the human sacrifices of the Mithraics, but exhibits no satisfactory evidence relative to the peculiar mode of ornamenting and lighting up the fubterraneous temple, described by me in a former chapter, and the refulgent orbs of different metals, (whence came the astronomical characters of chemistry in use among us,) by which the several planets were designated. I have it, however, now in my power to establish beyond a doubt that curious circumstance recorded by Celsus.

Towards the close of the fixteenth century, in digging between the hills Viminalis and Quirinalis, at Rome, and in a spot which formed the vineyard of Horatius Muti, fome workmen difcovered a vaulted chamber, or fmall circular temple; and the reader has been already informed, that all the temples of Mithra and Vefta, that is, the fun and fire, were both vaulted and circular, being fymbolical of the world, fabricated by Mithra, and illumined by his beam, and nourished and invigorated by the central fire of Vesta; in the middle of this temple flood a statue of Mithra, of white marble, somewhat less than four feet high; it stood erect upon a globe, out of which a ferpent iffued, the emblem of life, which, twining in numerous folds around the body of the deity, marked the revolutions of his orb and the cycles of revolving time. The body of the statue was that of a man; the

the head was that of a lion, alluding to the LEO MITHRIACA, or lion of the zodiac, which the reader may fee engraved on Dr. Hyde's first plate and in this volume. And here it may be useful to observe, that whensoever, in antique sculptures or paintings, we meet with figures having the heads of lions, bulls, dogs, serpents, or horses, they in general allude either to those in the zodiac, or one or other of the forty-eight old constellations, according to the astronomical mythology of the country. The Sphynx of Egypt, fo often noticed as the fymbol of the fun in Leo and Virgo, and the Anubis of that country, exposed to view when Syrius rose heliacally, will fully explain my meaning. The two hands of this image grasp two keys, preffed closely to his breaft, and four large wings expand from his shoulders. The two keys plainly denote his power over the two hemispheres, when, as the poets have it, he unlocks the gates of light to either world, and his four wings evidently point to the four quarters of that universe which he commands, as well as the velocity with which the folar light travels to them. The circumstance, however, which principally arrested the attention of those who discovered this cavern-temple, was, that, around this image, order, which seemed to be made of baked earth, and which there can be but little doubt were formerly coloured to give the varied light of the planets symbolized, although those colours were no longer discernible. What was exceeding remarkable, these lamps were so arranged as that the side which gave the light was turned towards the statue, a proof that the ancients knew the planets were themselves opaque bodies, and derived their light from the central orb around which they revolved.\*

Such was the Persian Mithra: — Let us examine the character and offices of the priests who officiated in those caverns, which, Luctatius has before partly informed us, were chosen to be his temples; for this reason, that, amidst the darkness of those recesses, the astronomical priests might more effectually display to the view of their disciples the manner after which eclipses of the sun, and other heavenly bodies, took place. On this head we must again consult Porphyry, who well knew, and as ably as possible defended against the repeated

See the account of Flaminius Vacca, a Roman Sculptor, who
examined this temple, extracted, from an Italian journal, by
Montfaucon in his Antiquities, vol. i. p. 232.

peated attacks of the fathers, the whole circle of pagan fuperstitions. Porphyry informs us, that, from the lion being fo usual a symbol in these rites, the priests were sometimes called Leones, and the pristelles Leana; for, Mithra had female ministers attendant on his orgies. Hence too the rites themselves were often denominated Leontica. From a crow or raven being, in most Oriental regions, a bird facred to the fun, and of great request in these myfteries, they were thence called Coraces and Hierocoraces, and the mysteries themselves Coracica and Hierocoracica.\* The raven is one of the oldest constellations, and perpetually occurs on all the Marbles on which the Mithratic emblems are engraved, as may be feen in the plates of Hyde and Montfaucon, illustrative of the rites of Mithra. In fine, thefe rites were fometimes called emphatically Eliaca, from El and Elios, terms which fignify the fun. All these priests were the figures of the animal-constellations which they reprefented, and whose names they bore; but, as we have learned from Celfus, that, in the cave of Mithra, were exhibited the two-fold motions of the celestial orbs, that is, the apparent one of the fixed stars and the real one of the planetary;

<sup>\*</sup> Porphyry de Abstinentia, lib. iv. p. 165.

planetary; and, as there were patres facrorum et matres facrorum, so it is reasonable to suppose that there were numerous priests of different orders, ages, and stations, according to the different magnitudes of the constellations which they represented, some being placed in the zodiac, some in the northern, some in the southern, hemisphere; but, as to Mithra himself, I have Porphyry's express authority for asserting that his elevated station in his own temple was in the middle of the equinoctial, possibly engraved on high, in a broad line of gold, which cut the zodiac as in the real sphere.\*

The general figure of the cavern, and the position of the two gates; the gate of the fiery Cancer, the summer solftice, through which the migrating soul descended on the north, and that of the watery Capricorn, the winter solftice, through which it ascended on the fouth; the geometrical symbols with which it was adorned, the fountains of water that ran murmuring through the midst of it, the fires kept continually burning in its inmost recesses; the two last, emblematical of the fluid and igneous elements; and the erected ladder of seven planetary gates; have all been noticed

<sup>.</sup> De Antro Nymph. p. 265, eadem edit.

noticed in various preceding pages.\* Among the decorations of the cave, alluded to and described by Porphyry, were marble urns for the water of ablution, and with fuch small cifterns, or tanks, as they call them, every facred cavern in India at this day abounds. The Mithratic cave also contained numerous vales full of honey for oblation. Now honey, I have observed, still makes a principal part of the libations offered on the altars of the Indian deities. Porphyry descants highly on the virtues of honey as a great cleanfer and purifier of the blood, and therefore, fo far as man was concerned, properly used in initiation as an emblem of that purer state about to be commenced by the candidate. Speaking of it as an offering to the deity, he calls it the aliment, the nectar, of the gods. It is indeed the effence of odorous flowers, and it appears no more than just and grateful that a production, in part elaborated by the folar beam, should be offered up to the altar of the god, whose vivifying energy matured it in the fragrant bosom of the parent-plant.

All ancient writers unite in afferting that the Mithriac mysteries were of an awful and terrifying nature. They seem to have thought Vol. V. O them

<sup>\*</sup> See Indian Theology, chap. i. p. 316, et feq.

them too horrible even to be revealed, and have therefore left us totally in the dark as to the greater part of the punishments endured during initiation. These punishments some of them affirm to be of eighty different kinds;\* others reduce them to twenty-four in number.† From the severity of those which are known to posterity, we may form some judgment of the others, the history of which is lost in the abyse of near two thousand years.

A drawn fword, if Tertullian may be credited, opposed the candidate at his very entrance into the cavern, from which, in the virtuous obstinacy of perseverance, he received more than one wound. The inflexibility and firmness of his character being thus tried, and steel itself in vain opposed to him, he was admitted through the north gate, or that of Cancer, where a fire, fiercely glowing with the folftitial blaze, scared, but could not terrify or retard, the determined afpirant. He was compelled to pass through this flame repeatedly, and was thence hurried to the fouthern gate, or that of Capricorn, where the folditial floods awaited him. Into thefe floods

Porphyry de Abstinentia, p. 150.

<sup>†</sup> Nonni Dionyfiaca, p. 97.

floods his exhaufted frame was instantly plunged, and he was obliged to fwim in them, and combat with the waves, till life was at the last gasp. The dreadful rite of purification was not yet over: he was now doomed to undergo a rigid fast, which, according to Nicætas, quoted by the Abbé Banier, lasted fifty days; but this we must presume to be exaggerated, fince no human creature can exist fifty hours without taking sustenance. We can only reconcile it to reason, by suppoling the time much shorter, or an allowance of fome fcanty food, barely fufficient to fupport agonizing nature. During this rigid fast he was exposed to the horrors of a dreary defert, remote from human affistance, and flut out from human compassion. After this, according to the same author, the candidates were cruelly beaten with rods for two whole days; and, during the last twenty days of their trial, were buried up to their necks in fnow.

If nature funk not, as the frequently did, under all this dreadful accumulation of furferings, the honours of initiation were conferred upon the candidate; and, first, a golden ferpent was placed in his bosom, as an emblem of his being regenerated and made a disciple of Mithra. For this animal, renewing its

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vigour in the spring of every year, by casting its skin, was not only considered as an apt symbol of renovated and revirescent virtue, but of the sun himself, whose genial heat is annually renewed when he re-visits the vernal signs; at that period, when, as I have elsewhere expressed myself of Mithra opening the year in Taurus,

Burfling the gloom of winter's drear domain, The radiant youth refumes his vernal reign; With finewy arms reluctant Taurus tames, Beams with new grace, and darts feverer flames.

The candidate was next adorned with a mystic zone, or belt, which was the circle of the zodiac, and had the zodiacal figures engraved upon it. Upon his head was placed the Perfian tiara, or high Phrygian bonnet, terminating pyramidically, as we see it on all the statues of Mithra. This cap was symbolical of the beam of the sun, and it was worn by the priests of Egypt, as well as by those of Persia; it is conspicuous on the heads of the antique sigures, engraved on the large plate of the temple of Luxore, in my former volume.

The high priest of Mithra wore a linen tiara, or mitre, of great magnitude, and rolled round several times, in imitation of the convolutions

volutions of the orbs. Possibly the name of mitre might be primarily derived from this high conical cap worn in the rites of Mithra, which was also covered with rays and painted with various devices. It is to these caps that the prophet Ezekiel, cited in the first chapter, alludes when he ridicules the ornaments that decorated the gods of the Sabian idolaters, which he calls the images of the Chaldeans, portrayed upon the walls with vermilion, GIRD-ED with GIRDLES upon their loins, and exceeding in DIED ATTIRE upon their beads.\* The Brahmins and their deities, to this day, wear the mystic belt, or girdle; and it has been before observed, from ancient travellers, that they formerly wore a cap or turban, of white muslin, folded round the head in such a manner, as that the extremities of the folds exhibited to the spectator the appearance of the two horns of a cow, that is, of the moon in her increase.+ This fashion of folding the fash that girds the head is not now, I believe, in use, at least in general use, in India; and perhaps never flourished but among the higher order of the priefts. Its existence there, however, in ancient periods still farther proves

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<sup>\*</sup> Ezekiel, xxiii. 15.

<sup>+</sup> Sce Voyage de l'Arabie Heureuse, p. 135.

the fimilarity of the astronomical mythology of these two nations.

The noviciate was now invefted with the candys, or large loofe tunic, which, on every ancient picture of Mithra, is represented floating widely in the air from the shoulders of the god, while his rapid wings waft him impetuously through the expanse of heaven. This tunic or mantle was the most beautiful and fplendid pageant in the world; having a purple ground, and being studded all over with innumerable ftars, the constellations of both hemispheres, like the robe worn by Isis Omnia, and engraved in the first volume of the Indian History, after the description of that goddess, as beheld in the pomp of her paraphernalia, by Apuleius, who had himfelf been initiated in the mysteries of Eleusis. He had likewise the pastoral staff, or crosier, fimilar to that of the Brahmins, put into his hand, being allusive to the immediate influence of the fun in the affairs of agriculture.\*

Thus invested and decorated with all the fymbols of the power and operations of his god, he was prepared for those greater and more tremendous mysteries, of which no authentic

<sup>.</sup> See Apuleius, vol. i. p. 13.

thentic relations have reached posterity, but in which both bulls and men are supposed to have been facrificed, and in which real lions, whence the mysteries were called leontica, and other animals, whose figures covered the walls of the temple, are thought to have been introduced. The ill-omened raven fcreamed aloud its funeral note; the dreadful barkings of the dog Sirius reverberated through the cavern, visceque canes ululare per umbras; the histings of envenomed ferpents, that is, the Draco and Serpentarius of the fphere, filled with terror the trembling audience; for there, if ever, in that fidereal Metempfychofis, or passage of the foul among the stars to its final abode, the MOKT of the Brahmins, angues Triptolemi firidebant; and there, if ever, were heard those dreadful thunderings and lightnings the conflict of elements and warring clouds, which Mithra at his will could congregate or diffipate, and which the poet Claudian profesfedly alludes to as forming a part of the Eleufinian mysteries; mysteries of which Warburton ought to have known that those of Mithra were the prototype, because the Persians were a more ancient nation than the Greeks.

Jam

Jam mihi cernuntur trepidis delubra moveri Sedibus, et claram dispergere sulmina lucem; Adventum testata Dei! Jam magnus ab imis Auditur siemitus terris, templumque remugit!\*

How much more applicable this description is to the stupendous exhibitions in the Mithratic temple than those of Eleusis must be evident to the reader, who reflects how much fublimer a character in antiquity was Mithra than Ceres; how much fuperior the deity, who rules the heavens, in which thunder is generated and lightning kindled, to the deity which prefides over the earth and its productions. In fact, in the rites of the former, the thunders alluded to were the awful tropical thunders, and bore immediate reference to a particular stage of the mystic exhibition; in those of the latter, they were principally used to fwell the pomp of the ceremony, and elevate the grandeur of the goddess.

How close an imitation the Eleusinian mysteries were of the more ancient rites of Persia will, I am of opinion, appear from what has been inserted in a preceding page, relative to the officiating characters who presided in the former, and who were of an astronomical cast. Indeed, the general feature

of fimilarity between them is fo great, and both have fo manifest a relation to those of India, that I hope the reader will pardon me if I wind up this account of the Persian mysteries with selecting a few striking passages from a preceding volume on the subject, in which that fimilarity is most particularly apparent. It must be owned, indeed, that the Greek philosophers improved upon those instituted by their predeceffors by the profound morality which they inculcated in their myfteries; morality, which, after all, is far preferable and far more beneficial to man than the boldest flights of imagination in the institution of a wild system of a fabulous sidereal Metempfychofis.

Nothing can be conceived more folemn than the rites of initiation into the greater mysteries of Eleusis, as described by Apuleius and Dion Chrysostome, who had both gone through the awful ceremony: nothing more tremendous and appalling than the scenery exhibited before the eyes of the terrified aspirant. After entering the grand vestibule of the mystic shrine, he was led by the hierophant, amidst surrounding darkness and incumbent horrors, through all those extended ailes, winding avenues, and gloomy adyta, already mentioned

as equally belonging to the mystic temples of Egypt, Eleufis, and India. I have afferted before, that the Metempsychofis was one of the leading principia taught in those temples, and this first stage was intended to represent the toilsome wanderings of the benighted foul through the mazes of vice and error before initiation: or, in the words of an ancient writer, quoted by Warburton from Stobæus: " It was a rude and fearful march through night and darkness."\* Presently the ground began to rock beneath his feet, the whole temple trembled, and strange and dreadful voices were heard through the midnight filence. To these succeeded other louder and more terrific noises, resembling thunder; while quick and vivid flashes of lightning darted through the cavern, displaying to his view many ghaftly fights and hideous spectres, emblematical of the various vices, difeafes, infirmities, and calamities, incident in that state of terrestrial bondage from which his struggling foul was now going to emerge, as well as of the horrors and penal torments of the guilty in a future state. At this period, all the pageants of vulgar idolatry, all the train of gods; fupernal and infernal, paffed in awful fucceffion

<sup>.</sup> See Divine Legation, vol. i. p. 235.

fuccession before him, and a hymn, called the Theology of Idols, recounting the genealogy and functions of each, was fung; afterwards, the whole fabulous detail was folemnly recanted by the mystagogue; a divine hymn in honour of ETERNAL AND IMMUTABLE TRUTH Was chanted, and the profounder mysteries commenced. " And now, arrived on the verge of death and initiation, every thing wears a dreadful aspect; it is all horror, trembling, and aftonishment." An icy chilliness seizes his limbs; a copious dew, like the damp of real death, bathes his temples; he staggers, and his faculties begin to fail; when the scene is of a fudden changed, and the doors of the interior and splendidly-illumined temple are thrown wide open. "A miraculous and divine light discloses itself; and shining plains and flowery meadows open on all hands before him." Accessi confinium mortis, fays Apuleius,\* et, calcato Proserpinæ limine, per omnia vectus elementa, remeavi; nocte medio vidi solem candido coruscantem lumine: - " Arrived at the bourn of mortality, after having trod the gloomy threshold of Proferpine, I passed rapidly through all the furrounding elements; and,

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Apaleii Metamorphosis, lib. ii. v. i. p. 273. Edit. Bipont.

at deep midnight, beheld the fun fhining in meridian splendour."-The clouds of mental error and the shades of real darkness being now alike diffipated, both the foul and body of the initiated experienced a delightful viciffitude; and while the latter, purified with luftrations, bounded in a blaze of glory, the former diffolved in a tide of overwhelming transport. Those few authors of the ancient world, who have written on this fubject, and who have dared to unfold to posterity the awful and deep fecrets into which they were initiated, fpeak of them exactly as the Brahmins do of the divine raptures of absorption in the Deity. or the modern fect of Swedenborgh of those of their imagined Elyfium. At that period of virtuous and triumphant exultation, according to the divine Plato, (the VYASA of Greece,) " they faw celestial beauty in all the dazzling radiance of its perfection, when, joining with the glorified chorus, they were admitted to the μακαριαν όψιν, or beatific vision, and were initiated into the most blessed of all mysteries."

The preceding relation principally concerns THE GREATER MYSTERIES. The first and most important ceremony in the LESSER MYSTERIES of Eleusis was the purification of the body by water, intended to inculcate the necessity of a fimilar purification of the foul from the impure adhesion of vicious passions and propenfities; and it is remarkable, that the officer affilting upon that folemn occasion was called 'Topavos, from vowe, water. After ablution, the aspirant was clothed in a linen vestment, the emblem of purity, and we are informed, in the Ayeen Akbery, that the Brahmin-candidate, in the first stage of probation, was arrayed " in a linen garment without future." But the mystic temple itself, as described by Apuleius, was ades amplissima; according to Vitruvius, it was immani magnitudine; and, according to Strabo, it was capable of holding as large a number as a theatre. If these several authors had intended to describe the pagodas of Salsette and of Elephanta, could they have done it with more characteristic accuracy? temples, of which the former, according to M. Niebuhr, is a fquare of 120 feet, and in the latter of which, if we are rightly informed in the feventh volume of the Archæologia, the grand altar alone is elevated to the aftonishing height of twenty-seven feet. The gloomy avenues furrounding them have been also particularised, in which an overwhelming dread and horror feized the benighted

nighted wanderer: and, with respect to the gaudy shows and splendid scenery occasionally displayed to the view of the initiated in their recesses; who, that beholds the superb decorations, the richly-painted walls, and carved imagery, in the modern pagodas; who, that confiders the beauty of the colours, and the ingenuity of the devices, conspicuous in many of the manufactures of India, whether in gold and filver enamel, in boxes ouriously inlaid with ivory, in carpets of filk richly flowered, and linens stained with variegated dies; can possibly entertain a doubt of the ability of the ancient Indians strikingly to portray, on canvass or otherwise, the allegorical visions, in which the genius of the nation takes fo much delight; the amarathine bowers, in which beatified spirits are supposed to reside, and the Elyfian plains of EENDRA's voluptuous paradife?

The initiated, in the Grecian temples, were also crowned with myrtle, and the priests of Mithra were invariably decked with a rich tiara, wound about with the same soliage. Finally, the hierophant, that is, the revealer of sacred things in the Eleusinian mysteries, was arrayed in the habit and adorned with the symbols of the great Creator of the world,

of whom in those mysteries he was supposed to be the substitute, and revered as the emblem. He was attended in his facred office by three affiftant ministers, of whom the first was called Aadexos, or the torch-bearer; he was intended to represent the Sun. The second was denominated Kyeus, or the herald; he was confidered as the type of the planet Mercury. The third was called 'O in Buna, or the minister of the altar, and he was venerated as the symbol of the Moon. The same characteristic distinctions doubtless prevailed in those of India, where the Sun, Moon, and Mercury, under the name of Budha, for ever occur in the varied page of their mythology. There perhaps, as in the rites of Mithra in Persia, the chief gods attended in the assumed characters of the various constellations. Their physical theology, which led them, in various instances, to consider the Deity as an incarnate agent upon earth, would naturally lead them in these mysterious institutions to shadow out, under the person of the high presiding Brahmin, the fupreme Creator of all things, and to decorate that facred personage (the fymbolical representation of Deity) after the manner of the Perfian Mithra, with a loofelyfloating tunic of a bright cerulean tincture,

and spangled with innumerable stars. At the same time, their great attachment to astronomy would induce them to consider the priests, who officiated around him, as representing the planetary train moving in their several stations by his immediate command and influence, and clothed with brightness from the restection of his own transcendent glory.

After having thus described, as far as they have been revealed to us by Apuleius and other ancient writers, the Mithriac mysteries, I come at length to detail the yet unparalleled sufferings endured in

THE FOURTH ASHERUM, OR STATE OF SA-NIASSI; AND THE SERIES OF EXQUISITE TORTURES VOLUNTARILY INFLICTED ON HIMSELF BY THE PENITENT YOGEE.

These two states may be considered as the last stage of the terrestrial journey of the Metempsychosis. With them the dreadful period of probation closes; with them the fire of the human ordeal is finally extinguished. The word Saniassi, as explained in the Geeta, p. 124, signifies the forsaking of all actions which

which are defirable. If we might judge from the conduct of those who bear the name, it might with more truth be rendered the performing of all actions that can excite difgust and impress horror on the human foul. The word Yogee, or, as some write it, Jogue, is derived from a root fignifying devotion. By the Saniaffi is properly to be understood the Brahmin in his fourth and highest degree of spiritual discipline, prescribed in the Vedas for those of that cast who may possess fortitude of mind and vigour of body fufficient to undergo those excruciating feverities, which, when refolutely persevered in to the last, have power to unbar the gates of eternity, and introduce the performer immediately into Paradife. The Yogee is properly a voluntary penitent, who aspires to the honours and distinction of a Saniassi, and who endeavours to rival, if not exceed, him in the number and degree of his aggravated fufferings. All the writers of the ancient world, and most of the moderns, have confounded the two characters; and the names of Saniassi and Yogee have been promiscuously applied. The ancients, indeed, ranked all the race of these austere penitents under the title of gymnosophists, or naked philosophers. The Brahmin Saniassi, however, does not wander about VOL. V. R

about entirely naked, although the Yogee rejects all covering, feorning, amidst his divine absorption, to bestow one thought on the contemptible clay that holds in bondage his struggling soul. I shall first delineate the rigid principles and deliberate cruelties inslicted on himself by the Saniass. I shall then enter into rather an extensive detail of what classical writers have related concerning the ancient gymnosophist, and what, from modern writers and authentic living witnesses, I have been able to collect relative to the romantic doctrines and eccentric practices of those furious maniacs, the Yogees of the present day.

There is, as we have just intimated, an immense difference in the conduct of the devotee of the Brahmin cast and that of a devotee of an inferior tribe. The Saniassi is distinguished by the calm, the filent, dignity with which he suffers the series of complicated evils through which he is ordained to toil: the Yogee is wild and desultory in his devotion, and oftentatious of the penances to which he voluntarily condemns himself. The former buries himself in the solitude of the desert, and is content that God and his own soul are conscious to the austerities which he endures: the latter seeks the crowded bazar, or market-

place, and delights to scourge and lacerate himself in the fight of innumerable spectators. The professed design of both, however, is to detach their thoughts from all concern about sublunary objects; to be indifferent to hunger and thirst; to be insensible to shame and reproach; and, as far as it is possible for beings who have not yet passed the bourn of mortality, to emancipate the soul from its tabernacle of clay.

The leading principle that fways the mind of the Saniassi is by unexampled austerities to fubdue the body, because he is convinced that fubjugation of the passions will necessarily follow that conquest. He exults, therefore, in making the most painful facrifices that can shock agonizing nature. On entering this degree, he instantly, and without scruple, difcards for ever the dearest friend and the tenderest relative. The affectionate wife, the blooming daughter, (for, the Saniassi is not always advanced in years,) in vain clasp his knees, and folicit him to relax in his dreadful purpose: he is deaf to their cries and callous to their tears; he throws away every article of drefs, except a feanty linen cloth of a yellow colour which girds his waift, and, with a pitcher in one hand and a pilgrim's staff in the R 2 other, other, he hurries away to the defert, never to return. Famine and mifery are the companions of his folitude. Abforbed in profound meditation on the Deity, he never violates the facred filence in which his lips are fealed, except to pronounce the mystic word AWAN, which is the commencement of the Vedas.\* His food is the fruits and herbage that spontaneoully fpring up in the defert: if these fail him, the laws of his fevere order permit him to go to the nearest village and beg a handful of boiled rice, or other food, which he eats on the fpot; if they throw it on the ground, he takes it up with his mouth, fwallowing only as much as will serve to sustain life. The fole business of that life is incessant mental prayer and intense contemplation. These they consider as uniting them intimately to the Deity, and enduing them with a portion of his power. Their energy is inexpressible: it is felt through all the works of nature, and through all the classes of existence. It can call down the stars from heaven, and bring up dæmons from the lowest bobun of Naraka. To fuch a length does their fanatacism on this point extend, as to lead them to conceive, that they can, by their united power, actually difembody

<sup>\*</sup> Ayeen Akbriy, vol. iii. p. 224-

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disembody the foul, which for a while leaves its earthy mansion in utter insensibility; and, after taking a wide æthereal slight, returns to animate the breathless clod.

A curious story of this kind is related by Father Bouchet, treating concerning the Metempsychosis, in the Lettres Edistantes et Curieuses; which, on such a subject, it would be unpardonable to omit, and which is as follows;

An ancient fovereign of India, by name Veramarken, having, by intense devotion, obtained this art of occasionally disengagingthe foul from its terrestrial prison, was so delighted with his new acquisition, that, instead of attending to the duties of his splendid and important station upon this globe of earth, he was perpetually exploring the æthereal regions, and foaring amidst the superior orbs. At those periods, in which he meditated this aëreal excursion, it was his practice to retire with only one confidential flave into the midst of a gloomy unfrequented grove, and to his care he configned, during the absence of his foul, that inferior and contemptible portion of himfelf, which, however decorated with royal robes and a resplendent crown, was accustomed to fit upon the throne of Asia, and

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was the object of little less than idolatry to the admiring crowd. A too frequent repetition of this practice and an unguarded recital of the mystic prayer called the MANDI-RAM, by which his foul was releafed, in the hearing of the flave, excited a strong defire in the foul of the latter to undertake a fimilar flight into the æthereal regions. Attending diligently, therefore, to the actions of Veramarken, and precisely learning the words of the MANDIRAM, he refolved, the first opportunity, to attempt the temporary emancipation of his own foul; and, one day, when the monarch made a longer stay than usual in the æthereal fields, he fell to fervent prayer, and repeated the MANDIRAM; when, in an inftant, his foul, taking its flight from his body, entered that of his master. He was now a king, and too well pleafed with his new form and habiliments to think of returning to his former abject state. To prevent, therefore, his own body from being re-animated when the foul of Veramarken returned, he cut off its head, and stalked away to the palace in all the grandeur of arrogated royalty, where he received the honours due to his late mafter, and shared in his stead the embraces of his young and beautiful bride.

The foul of the degraded monarch now winged its flight towards the well-known grove, and its horror, as well at finding its own receptacle vanished, as at beholding the headless trunk of the flave, may be conceived but cannot be expressed. However irksome he might formerly have esteemed human existence, he now began to think, that a magnificent throne and a lovely confort, added to the possession of the great fecret of the MAN-DIRAM, might still have rendered tolerable the remaining years of its fojourning in the veil of mortality. The reflection filled the pensive spirit with intolerable anguish; it kept hovering, all forlorn and penfive, amidst the shades of that baleful grove, and made them refound with its bitter wailings. At length the compaffionate " goddess of his former devotion" (Bhavani we must suppose, the Indian Venus) prepared for the royal. fugitive the beautiful body of a parrot, in which he fped away to the court, alas! only to be the diffracted witness of his flave feated on a throne which had defcended to himfelf from a long line of illustrious ancestors, and to fee him share the affectionate carelles intended for Veramarken. As the hapless bird, under the impression of these melancholy sentiments, R 4

timents, flew from one apartment to the other, he was caught by a domestic of the palace. and, for the admirable beauty of his plumage, prefented to the queen, who detained him prisoner in her own chamber; and thus was the unfortunate monarch, who had poffeffed a throne, and had ranged the skies, condemned to perpetual imprisonment, as well as to be a still nearer spectator of the rights of a king and a husband usurped. The secret would never have been known, had not a holy Saniassi, who, by the power of absorption, could penetrate into the past, the present, and the future, some ages after revealed it for the benefit of the fovereigns of India, and as a warning to them not to put too much confidence in their favourites.

At all times the Saniassi beholds with indifference whatever excites human delight, or
inspires vulgar mortals with aversion and
terror; but, when more particularly engaged
at his devotions, there is no object in nature
so horrible as in the smallest degree to appal
him, nor so enchanting as for one moment to
seduce his fixed affections from fervid contemplation of the supreme Brahme. The most
dreadful thunders rolling over his head, balls
of fire bursting from the tempestuous clouds

and ploughing up the ground in every direction around him, even the earth itself convulsed and rocking beneath him, have no power to dismay the soul of the undaunted, the absorbed, Saniassi. That soul is a native of a more elevated region, soars in a purer air, and revolves in a nobler sphere. The soul of the Saniassi is with the Deity who made the worlds and commands the subject elements.

It is the boast of the Saniassi to sacrifice every human feeling and passion at the shrine of devotion. The rains, which, during the annual inundations, descend in tropical regions with fuch refiftless violence, and sweep every thing before them, molest not the inflexible devotee of the fouth; nor is the naked northern anchorite observed to shiver amidst the inceffant fnows that fall upon the fummits of Heemacote, the ancient Imaus, and encircle up to his neck the human statue in the holy mountains of the Brahmins. Let a table be spread with the most delicious viands that ever charmed the eye or feasted the appetite of the daintiest epicure; place the table, thus abundantly and delicately spread, before the Saniassi; although he be emaciated with long-continued famine, and although at the fame fame time he feel the sharpest pangs of corrofive hunger, he will avert his eye from it with
disdain, or gaze upon the luxurious banquet
with calm indifference. Let strains of the
most excellent melody warble around him, the
passages of his ears are impervious to sounds,
which, in other breasts, would awaken ecstafy
and endanger reason. Let nymphs of the
most transcendant beauty, blooming, lovely,
and wanton, as those that sported of old with
Creeshna on the hallowed plains of Mathura,
weave in his presence the airy dance, the Saniassi is conscious to no tumults of rising
passion, but continues, in thought and act,

Chafte as the sciele
That's curdled by the frost from purest fnow,
And hangs on Dian's temple.

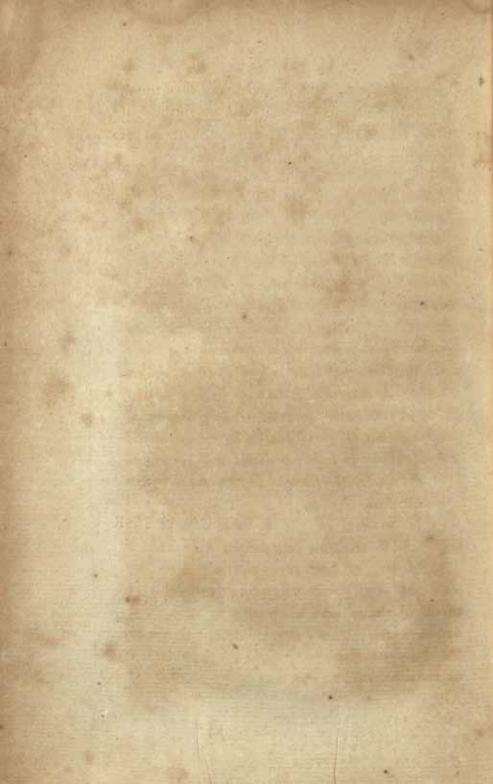
The most delicious odours, exhaled from the spice-beds of a garden of Oriental persumes, have no fragrance for him; to the most beautiful colours he is blind; amidst the most excruciating torments he is dumb.

In effect, by long continued perseverance in these laborious but unnatural efforts to subdue his mortal part, the corporeal functions by degrees lose their energy, and the mental faculties are clouded and overwhelmed. Grown torpid through inactivity, and wrapt in holy infenfibility, the Saniaffi is affected by nothing that occurs within the bounded circle of human nature. He has no interest in any object below the stars, the native region of his afpiring foul. In vain, therefore, to him do the feafons revolve on this terrestrial globe; in vain does the fun enlighten it with his allvivifying ray; in vain do the nutritious dews and genial showers defcend and fertilize it. He feels no more delight, when returning fpring arrays its renovated aspect in beauty and verdure, than he is capable of emotion, when its arid furface is parched with continued drought, and the famished herd perish by thousands on the steril plains. He is no more refreshed by the cooling zephyr that wasts vigour and falubrity to its fainting inhabitants, than he is annoyed by the burning winds from the defert, that bring peftilence and death in their train, and fweep whole nations of his fellow-creatures to the gulph of de-Struction.

Inflexibly adhering to this resolute indifference, the avenues of his soul are barred against the insidious assaults of those delusive passions that secretly undermine and often subvert the fortitude of the sublimest philosophers

phers and the most rigid disciplinarians. He is no more to be foothed by the fuggestions of adulation in its most pleasing form, than he is to be terrified by the loudest clamours of reproach. Ambition and power can have no influence over the man who looks down upon thrones with fcorn, who confiders the fcanty and tattered fragment of yellow linen that girds his loins as of value far more transcendent than the embroidered robe of majesty; and who looks upon himself to be a portion of that Deity, into whose infinite effence he is foon to be wholly and eternally absorbed. Avarice cannot influence the mind that is rich in the countless treasures of immortality; a mind that effeems gold as drofs, and to whom rubies have loft their luftre and value. In fine, the highest distinction, to which the Saniassi aspires, is a state of invincible apathy. By long habits of indifference, he becomes inanimate as a piece of wood or stone; and, though he mechanically respires the vital air, he is to all the purpoles of active life defunct. In confequence of these unexampled severities, and this invincible abstraction from every thing finite, the veneration which the whole Indian nation entertain for the Saniassis is beyond all conception. Veeshnu himself reveres them: to whatsoever object they touch they impart sanctity, and the very dust of their feet is consecrated, from the steeps of Caucasus to the point of Comorin!!!

CHAPTER



## CHAPTER IV.

The Soul, passing through its several Stages of Probation in the Veil of Mortality, not inelegantly compared by the Ancients to the Aureliant, and the various Vicissitudes which that beautiful Insect undergoes in its Progress to Maturity.— The natural History of the Chrysalis, or Aurelia, considered; which necessarily and immediately introduces the noble Greek Allegory of Cupid and Psyche, of an Origin undoubtedly Asiatic.— The sublime Moral, evidently intended to be inculcated through the Whole of that Allegory, explained by Reference to numerous Gems and Sculptures of Antiquity, of beautiful Design and elaborate Execution.

THIS anxious impatience, this ardent fever, of the foul panting after its immortal rest, and ascending progressively through the stages of purity to that final abode, THE DEITY; these incessant efforts of the devout Brahmins to stifle every ebullition of human passion, and live upon earth as if they

they were already, and in reality, disembodied, cannot fail to remind the claffical reader of the noble and beautiful allegory, recorded in Apuleius and other ancient writers, relative to the fuffering of the charming Yuxn, or Psyche. This celestial progeny, Psyche, or, in other words, the buman foul perfinified, was generally represented by the ancients under the form of a beautiful young virgin with the wings of a butterfly; and, fometimes, on antique gems and marbles, fhe is portrayed under the form of the aurelia itself, in the natural history of which infect we may discover the reason as well as the force of the comparison. The general outline of that history is, in brief, as follows: - The aurelia is, in the first stage of its existence, a common grub, or worm, and lies, during the winter, in a state of torpor, apparently dead. When the genial spring renovates nature, it bursts its prison, and issues forth, as it were, to new life, arrayed in beautiful attire. The Egyptians thought this a just and striking emblem of the human foul, which, after a long imprisonment in a human form, at length bursts its terrestrial bonds, and emerges into immortality. Such, I say, is the general outline of that history; but, having confidered the fubject with some degree of attention, and trusting that I can place some parts of the parallel between the human soul and the aurelia in a new point of view, I shall not be asraid of disgusting my readers by entering into a more particular detail, relative to the growth and maturity of that insect. The whole mysterious sable, sikewise, of Cupid and Psyche is so congenial with these Indian sictions, concerning the excruciating severities to be endured by the transmigrating soul, that I hope they will pardon my introducing it into these pages, since the title of my book professes to compare the leading features of the mythology of Egypt, Persia, and Greece.

THE NATURAL HISTORY OF THE AURE-LIA AND THE FABLE OF CUPID AND PSYCHE CONSIDERED.

From the circumstance of the aurelia occurring, in most of the mystical writers of antiquity, as the picturesque emblem of the soul passing through the various stages of a mortal to an immortal state, there is great reason to believe those theological philosophers had vigilantly marked all the wonderful vicissitudes Vol. V. S which which the chryfalis fuccessively undergoes, and were scarcely less acquainted with its history than the curious and exploring sons of modern philosophy. The first state of the chryfalis is a state nearly approaching to insensibility; it scarcely appears to be endued with life; its sigure is conical; it has neither legs to walk nor wings to fly; and it can take no nourishment, for it has no organs to receive or digest it. Is not this a just picture of the human soul in infancy, when it rests, as it were, dormant in its prison of clay, incapable of exertion, and insensible to the dictates of instruction and wisdom?

Brought forth amidst the autumnal gloom, and chilled by the ungenial damps and rigours of that inclement season, the embryo-aurelia remains in this inactive state during the early wintry months. As the cold and darkness of winter pass away, and the sun begins to exert its power both on the animal and vegetable creation, the apparently-insensible atom shews some principles of life, and, gradually shedding its coat, or skin, and putting on a more brilliant hue, it begins to feed on the tender springing herbage of the infant year. The variety and exquisite beauty of the colours of the different species of the caterpillar

pillar in this state are infinite and admirable, Some of them are fuperbly clothed in brilliant gold, whence, in fact, they obtain the name of chryfalis, from yourge, gold, as they are called aurelia, from aurum; and it is this brilliant infect by which principally the ancients intended to fymbolize the foul, that radiant emanation of the Divinity in man. Some are of an elegant green colour, others of a beautiful and bright yellow. They fuccessively change these colours as they advance towards maturity through the different stages of a caterpillar, a chryfalis, and a butterfly; and, by this change, as well as by that of their external coat, exhibit ample evidence of that metamorphosis actually taking place, which formed the basis of the pleasing fables of the ancients on this fubject. As the vernal feafon increases, the aurelia also increases in vigour, fprightliness, and magnitude, till, at length, its tender wings burfting from the membraneous integument that confined them, it mounts into the air a perfect butterfly, and joyfully fpreads its richly-variegated pinions to the fun.

May not the aurelia, in this improved stage of its existence, be considered as a striking emblem of the soul arrived at the period of

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maturity

maturity in the human state, when education has lent all its aid to expand the daring genius and ripen to perfection the fervid thought; when man, liberated from the restrictions of grave tutors and the fetters of parental authority, launches forth into the vast ocean of life, and ranges uncontrolled wherefoever his inclination leads him? This the ancients esteemed the period of the greatest danger; in this state are felt the most furious affaults of the various passions, those vultures of the foul, each alternately exerting its baneful influence to harafs it in its terrestrial journey, to stagger its resolution, and undermine all the principles of virtue. Ambition fires it with the defire of unbounded fway, avarice entangles it in a thousand fordid and perplexing cares, envy stimulates it to the perpetration of base and criminal defigns, while love, all-conquering love, renders it its abject flave. To guard the spiritual pilgrim from the despotism of the last-named tyrant, was the principal purpose of the ancient theologists in the following beautiful allegory of Cupid and Psyche, which I have abridged from Apuleius, it being of fuch a length as to engrofs nearly the whole of the fifth and fixth books of the Metamorphoseos of that author.

In a certain city, fays Apuleius, there lived a king and queen, who were bleft with three daughters, all of great beauty; but the youngest, in that point, infinitely outshone the two others. Her charms, indeed, were fo transcendent, that nature feemed to have exhaufted all her skill in forming her. The fame of this the most lovely creature whom human eye had ever beheld ran rapidly through all the neighbouring regions, and multitudes flocked from all quarters to admire and adore. All that faw her exclaimed with rapture, that Venus in person was come down from heaven to visit mankind; and the rites of Cnidos, Paphos, and Cythera, were transferred to the city fanctified by the refidence of the matchless virgin. Sacra deæ (Veneris) deseruntur, templa deformantur, pulvinaria proteruntur, ceremoniæ negliguntur, incoronata fimulacbra, et ara vidua frigido cinere fadata.\* - The real Venus, equally incenfed and indignant at this treatment, and jealous of her too-fortunate rival, incites her fon Cupid to revenge the wrongs of his mother. " My beloved Cupid," fays the distracted parent, " a presumptuous mortal dares to contest with me the palm of beauty, and usurps the rites paid at the altars

Apuleii Metamorph. lib. iv. p. 90, edit. Bipont. oct. 1788.

of thy native Paphos: oh! fly inflantly to the detefted city of her abode, arm thyfelf with one of thy keenest arrows, and, pointing it to her heart, let her languish in all the agonies of unpitied love! or, if that be impossible, from the resistless influence of her charms, let her affections be fixed on fome worthless monster in the form of a man, who may be equally diffinguished for his crimes and his poverty, who may inflict on her the most unheard-of cruelties, and render her the most miserable, as she is the most beautiful, of her fex." Cupid, obedient to the stern mandate, immediately hasted away to the palace of Psyche's father; his bow was bent; and the fhaft, charged full of the foft poison of love, was ready to be launched at the unfufpecting fair: the fight, however, of fuch amazing beauty difarmed the furious young deity. His hand trembled, his foot faltered, and he became the victim of those charms of which he intended to have been the destroyer.

In the mean time Pfyche, though gazed at, admired, and praised, by all, seemed to be doomed to waste the bloom of youth in barren celibacy. Her beauty was of that nature (for, in fact, Psyche is only the virtuous principle in the soul personified) that it inspired reveren-

tial awe rather than kindled ardent attachment in the beholder. Even those, who were inflamed with affection for her, dared not approach the idol of their devotion, nor prefumed to ask her hand in marriage. Although, therefore, her fifters, who were of more accessible beauty, were married to two powerful fovereigns, the lovely, the forlorn, Psyche could gain no fuitor of any rank; but, like fome filent folitary statue, furveyed only with delight for its admirable fymmetry, received not the carefles of nuptial love, nor glowed with the fervour of mutual affection. The wearisome day was confumed in fighs; her pillow by night was bathed with tears: she fometimes bewailed aloud her miserable situation; nor forbore, at others, to execrate that diftinguished beauty, the lustre of which subjected her to fo hard a fate.

Penetrated with anguish at the distress of their disconsolate daughter, anxious for the restoration of her tranquillity, and, fearful lest her health should be injured by her continual grief, her royal parents consult the Delphic oracle upon her unhappy case, and the dreadful mandate of Apollo could not fail to infipire both their own minds, and that of the

tender Psyche, with grief and horror inexpreffible :-

Montis in excelfi scopulo desiste puellam, Ornatam mundo funerei thalami; - &cc. &cc. \*

" Let the maid be conveyed to the rocky fummit of a lofty mountain; and there, arrayed, not in bridal robes, but in funereal ornaments, and wrapt in the shroud of death, let her await the husband she so anxiously folicits." She is not doomed to marry any being of mortal descent,

Sed fævum, atque ferum, vipereumque, malum;

" but a being fierce, implacable, and malignant as the viper;" a being terrible on earth and formidable to the gods themselves.+

The moral of the allegory hitherto must be evident to the meanest capacity; it is the virtuous principle of the human foul overcome by concupifcence, that is, carnal affection as opposed to spiritual; and the punishment, we fee, rapidly follows. The indulgence of fenfual passions is the death of that virtuous principle: the foul itself becomes defunct in a moral fense, and therefore Psyche is to be veiled

veiled in a shroud, and exposed to do penance on a high and desolate mountain.

By this dreadful oracle, not only the royal family, but the whole city, was overwhelmed with grief and consternation. All classes of people made the cause of Psyche their own, and every quarter refounded with cries and lamentations. It was, however, indispensably necessary, after consulting the god, punctually to obey his fublime, though stern, behest. The funereal folemnities and the deathful robe were prepared; the day was fixed for the performance of this grand facrifice of a beautiful virgin to DEATH and HYMEN, whose torches were now, for the first time, to unite their flames, and gleam on the stupified populace their dreadful glare. At length the day arrived; and both court and city, moving forward in one vast cavalcade of woe, accompanied Pfyche to the fatal mountain. Steeped in tears, and torn with inexpressible agony, she slowly proceeded to the folemnization of what were to be at once her bridal and funereal rites. The original is highly beautiful: Et lachrymofa Pfyche comitatur non nuptias, sed exequias suas.

Arrived at the fpot marked out by the oracle, which was the highest eminence of the mountain.

mountain, she was there left by her miserable parents and the forrowing multitude, who, returning to the city, gave way to the violence of their grief as for a beloved relative deceafed, and both the walls of the palace and the private houses of the citizens were hung with fable, in token of respect to her memory. In the mean time, Pfyche, deeply regretting her past impatience under the restraints of virtuous celibacy, remained in her lofty exiled fituation in a state of the utmost suspense and anxiety. It was not long before a zephyr embraced the trembling fair one, and bore her, gently gliding through the air, into the bosom of a spacious valley, rich with verdure and fragrant with flowers. Here, reclined upon a bed of foft aromatic herbage, the tumult of her mind gradually fubfided, her fears were diffipated, and her senses enlivened. After a short repose, curiosity induced her to rise and explore the recesses of a spacious wood adjoining, where mufic, more fweet than mortal ever before heard, warbled from the branches, and fountains of the purest water perpetually played, cooling and refreshing the air, heated by the beams of a meridian fun. Proceeding farther, she entered a stately palace, the roofs of which glittered with gold and filver; while

its variegated pavement sparkled with precious stones of the leveliest hue and the richest brilliancy. What appeared to her most wonderful of all was, that this beautiful palace was without an owner; for, as she wandered through its rich faloons, no human being met her eye, though the most melodious voices from invisible forms accosted her ear, inceffantly inviting her to make that palace her constant residence, to bathe by day, without restraint, in its ambrofial fountains, and repose by night, without fear, on its gilded sofas; fofas of a texture far fofter than the springing down of the cygnet, for, the filk which formed them was woven in a celeftial loom. Deriving confidence from this foothing address, Psyche now fat down to partake of a banquet prepared by the same invisible agents. The most elegant viands were successively ferved up in golden diffies, and wines of exquifite flavour sparkled before her in agate vales. To this miraculous banquet succeeded concerts of foft mufic from immortal harps, whose tender thrilling strains pierced the foul of the delighted virgin, and diffolved it in voluptuous languor. These were but a prelude to the refined pleasures of nuptial love, which, with advancing night, were rapidly approaching; approaching: when Psyche, with mingled terror and transport, was to clasp the mysterious husband promised her by heaven.

The star of evening, friendly to Hymen, already began to glimmer on high in the blue vault of heaven. Fatigued with the alternate fufferings and joy produced by the wonderful vicifitudes of the past day, and deriving fome gleams of hope from what she had already experienced, yet still trembling at the dreadful oracle, Psyche at length retired to the nuptial bed, which her unfeen attendants had prepared, fprinkled with odours and decorated with flowers. The folitude of the fcene, and the darkness of furrounding night, added to her perplexity, and filled with unutterable folicitude the throbbing bosom of the virgin. After a short interval of dreadful fuspense, a voice, benign and soothing, bade her difmiss unnecessary terror, and, in an instant, she found herself locked in the fond embrace of a husband, who, though unknown, inspired no terror; but, on the contrary, whose precipitate retreat, on the approach of day, filled her with concern and grief. Invisible nymphs now hover around the deferted bed, who, with harmonious voices, hail the new bride, and invite her to a repetition

repetition of the pleasures of the preceding day. She ranges with fresh delight through the delicious gardens and all the apartments of that magnificent palace: she listens to the warbling of the birds and the murmuring of the fountains: she again bathes in the stream her beauteous limbs, sits down to the delicious repast, is regaled with music by celestial bands, and, at night, no longer reluctant, retires to the same bed, and again enjoys the embrace of her affectionate, but fugitive, husband.

A long period elapsed in this unceasing round of daily pleasure, and this nightly commerce with a bridegroom whom as yet she had not beheld. All remembrance of her former sufferings was erased from her mind, while her invisible attendants prevented her feeling the tedium of solitude and the absence of her lord during the day, by perpetually varying the amusements of the enchanting paradise that held her a willing prisoner. Her happiness might have continued for ever could she have KEPT A SECRET, or restrained within due bounds that fatal curiosity which too often betrays the unthinking part of her sex into errors never to be remedied.

Anxiety

Anxiety for the fate of their daughter had long banished repose from the bosom of her disconsolate parents. They prevailed on her two fifters to undertake the talk of exploring her retreat; and the latter repaired, without delay, to the desolate mountain, on whose fummit she had been exposed. The same gentle zephyr, that had conveyed Pfyche to the happy valley, was also ready to conduct her fifters to that feeluded fpot, and they were foon wafted to the palace of delights. Psyche had been forewarned, by her nightly paramour, of their intended vifit, and, at first, received his strict injunctions not to have any communion with them, as the interview might be productive of the most dreadful calamities to all parties. She promifed to obey those injunctions; but growing, in consequence, dejected and melancholy, the obtained his permission to entertain them. The adventurous princesses were received with transport, shewn all the rarities of the castle, and dismissed to the court of their royal parents, but with the affurance that the was the happiest of women, and wedded to a husband, young, beautiful, finely accomplished, and ardently attached to her.

Burning with envy at her happy lot, thefe ungrateful fifters foon began to plot the ruin of the generous and unfufpecting Pfyche. They took an opportunity of repeating their vifit; and, infidiously inquiring into particulars concerning that hufband, on whofe charms fhe had fo rapturoufly descanted, learned from her answers the fatal secret of his visiting her only during the night-feafon, and that the was a stranger to the fight, though not to the embrace, of her beloved confort. Having obtained this clue, these harpies in a female form retired to plan their diabolical project of plunging in inexpressible milery an amiable and affectionate fifter; who, however, was again kindly cautioned by her hufband not to listen to their artful and base infinuations to his prejudice. At their next interview, therefore, they alarmed her with dreadful apprehentions relating to the almost-forgotten oracle of Apollo, which had destined her to the arms of a monster, malignant and venomous as a viper; and they perfuaded her, that, under the assumed appearance of a young man, in the bloom of life, she was actually married to a monstrous serpent, who, when fatiated with her charms, would not fail to inflict upon her unheard-of cruelties, and finally

finally put her to a miferable death. Struck with horror at this intimation, unable to account for her husband's continued reluctance to discover himself, and, at the same time, comparing the oracle with the nocturnal vifit and clandestine embrace, Psyche confessed herfelf overcome by the force of their representation, and earnestly implored their advice towards extricating herfelf from the danger of impending destruction. The counsel given by her fifters was, that she should secretly convey a lighted lamp and a razor into fome obscure recess of the chamber in which they slept; that, when the monster's eyes were sealed in flumber, she should, with the former, take the prohibited furvey of his person, and, with the latter, fever his head from his body. By this resolute act alone could she avoid the miferable end to which she was, otherwise, inevitably devoted. The terrified Psyche promised compliance, and the princesses were again wafted back by the obedient zephyr. Psyche, determined faithfully to execute their pernicious counfels, concealed in her chamber the lamp which was to reveal, and the razor which was to immolate, her fleeping husband. The instant his eyes were closed, she stole foftly from his fide, and feizing, with impatience,

tience, the concealed lamp, hurried to the bedfide to gratify herfelf with a furvey fo long and rigidly denied, and dispatch at once her intended murderer. She elevates the lamp, and, by its light, discovers no formidable monster, no envenomed serpent, but the lovely, the enchanting, Cupid, the god of young defires, conspicuous by the vermilion that glowed on his cheek and lips, by the purple hue of his waving wings, and by the exquifite beauty of his yellow treffes. The rashness and cruelty of the bloody act she was about to perpetrate overwhelmed her with horror, and filled her bosom with remorfe and anguish inexpressible. She gazed upon him again and again with renewed delight, and fhe would have plunged in her own throat the fatal weapon, but, in the midst of her perturbation, it had fallen out of her languid grasp. At the foot of the bed lay the bow and arrows of the juvenile god. She admired the elegance of the workmanship, and, trying the point of one of the arrows, she unfortunately wounded her finger. That wound, however, was trivial compared with the greater one which now rankled in her heart, and she continued fixing her enraptured eyes upon the fleeping god. As fhe advanced nearer him, by VOL. V.

by fatal mischance, a drop of burning oil, from the lamp which she held in her hand, fell upon the right shoulder of Cupid, who, being awaked by the anguish of the wound, immediately spread his wings for flight. In vain did Psyche attempt to arrest that flight by entreaty, by tears, and by forcibly grafping his feet. The frowning deity, fpringing up into the air, raifed her up with him a litthe way, and then let her fall to the ground. Alighting upon a cypress-tree that grew near, from its funeral boughs, the emblem of his deceased affection, he bitterly upbraided her for her curiofity and want of confidence in his counsels: he then fled away and entirely difappeared.

The anguish, which, upon this event, seized the mind of Psyche, it is impossible to describe. No gentle voices, from invisible attendants, now soothed her extreme affliction; no music, from immortal harps, warbled sweet symphonies in her ear. All was hushed, all was silent, as death and midnight. On a sudden, while she stood wringing her hands in frantic grief, a thunder-storm, bursting on the palace, shivered it to atoms; and the garden of delights was converted into a blasted and barren heath, through which are impetuous

impetuous river rolled. Into that river she instantly plunged, in the fond hope of burying herself and all her miseries in the friendly wave. But the final period of those miseries was not yet arrived; and the river, out of respect to the wife of Cupid, immediately threw her back upon the banks. Prefently after she sees the god Pan, and solicits his advice. Pan condoles with her, but acquaints her there is no hope for her unless she can make her peace with Cupid. In pursuit of the injured deity, she continues for a long time wandering about the earth; and, in the course of her peregrination, she meets with one of those fifters, whose perfidious counsel was the cause of her ruin, and upon whom, therefore, the was determined to be revenged. She recites to her the story of her melancholy adventures; informs her that Cupid had repudiated her as a punishment for her curiofity; and, moreover, had threatened, as a more fignal infliction of his vengeance upon herfelf, to marry one of her fifters. Inflamed with hope that she might be the intended bride, her ambitious fister immediately hurried away to the rocky eminence, whence she had formerly been wafted to the palace of Cupid; and, not doubting but that the fame zephyr T 2

zephyr would fafely transport her thither, she let herself drop down from the summit, and was dashed in pieces on the rocks below. Shortly after, meeting the other sister, she deluded her with the same story, and she also miserably perished in the same snare. In this respect, Psyche was not actuated by the dictates of her accustomed benevolence; but, let it be remembered, her wrongs were trying and aggravated; and, when once virtue is fled, RAGE and REVENGE, with a thousand other turbulent passions, rush in, unresisted, upon the defenceless soul.

In the mean time, Venus, incenfed beyond measure both at the failure of her scheme for Psyche's destruction, and at the torments which Cupid fuffered from his wound, refolved to find out her rival upon earth, and inflict upon her the most exemplary vengeance. That unhappy exile was still traversing the earth in fearch of her dear Cupid, and accidentally coming to a temple of Ceres, she collected, from a neighbouring corn-field, a few ears of loofe grain, and devoutly offered them up to that goddess, earnestly entreating her to take an unhappy female under her protection, and shield her from the menaced fury of the mother of Cupid. Ceres vouchfafed her no other

other answer than that she would not be actively hostile to her, nor betray the path of her flight to Venus. She met with nearly the fame reply from Juno, at whose thrine the afterwards paid homage, and offered facrifice. At length she resolved to proftrate herself before the cruel Venus herfelf, with whom it was possible she might find Cupid, who, she flattered herfelf, would relent at her tears, and prevail on his mother to relent alfo. In both these expectations she was cruelly disappointed; for, when the came to her temple, the haughty vindictive goddess refused to receive, as a fuppliant, her whole crimes no repentance could obliterate, no prayers atone for, no tears expunge. She was determined to feize her as a victim, but that she thought beneath her dignity to do at a time when she came to her altars in a humble and supplicating posture. She therefore ascended Olympus, and entreated Jupiter to dispatch Mercury to bring Pfyche before her as a guilty criminal destined to appeale the vengeance of an infulted goddefs.

Before the swift Mercury could execute his cruel mission, Custom, one of the confidential domestics of Venus, happened to meet with Psyche, and, seizing her, dragged her

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by the hair of her head to her mistress. Venus, the instant she saw her rival, in a paroxysm of rage, slew at her, tore her beautiful and slowing tresses, and rent in pieces her silken robe; violently beating her about the head and wounding that face whose exquisite beauty had won from her so many admirers. But this was not all, Psyche was now under the absolute dominion of Venus, (ILLICIT LOVE,) who makes mere drudges of her votaries, and subjects them to the most painful and tollsome servitude.

The first task which Venus, the mater fava cupidinum, imposed upon the beautiful Psyche, was to separate into distinct parcels an immense heap of grains intermixed, confisting of wheat, barley, millet, poppies, peas, lentils, and beans, all promiscuously jumbled together. She was enjoined to perform this tedious and difficult talk before night, and Venus appointed two others of her attendants, Sorrow and Anxiety, to be her vigilant guardians and companions. Pivche was thunderstruck at this severe injunction, to perform, within fo short a period, what she conceived to be totally impracticable in the course of a prolonged life, and remained, for fome time, in stupid insensibility. But a brood

of industrious ants, who tenanted a neighbouring hillock, hearing the injunction, took compassion upon her, and separated the grain for her within the allotted time. The second talk enjoined her was to fetch her fevere tyrant a lock of golden wool from certain sheep that fed on the steep and almost-inaccessible banks of a broad and rapid river, which must be passed before she could reach the demanded object. Psyche, despairing of being able either to pass the stream, or obtain the lock of golden wool, was just on the point of again attempting to drown herielf, when a reed foftly whifpered certain articulate founds, from which she learned how to get possession of the wool without danger, which she in consequence obtained, and exultingly bore to Venus. All this ready and punctual performance of talks, scarcely practicable by human nature, was of no avail; Venus feemed to rife in the feverity of her injunctions, in proportion to the promptitude of Psyche to execute them; and the now orders her to fetch her a pitcher of black and deadly water that iffued from a fountain guarded by dragons. As she was confidering with herfelf how this, the most terrible of her mandates yet iffued, was to be accomplished, an eagle, pouncing down from above, T 4

above, with his talons fnatched the pitcher from her trembling hand, then, foaring away to the appointed fountain, filled it, and brought it back to Psyche, who carried it to Venus, and hoped that now, at least, her labours and forrows would have their final confum-But what pencil can adequately paint the horrors of the exhausted Psyche, when, instead of being instantly admitted to her forgiveness and the enjoyment of her former communion with Cupid, she received immediate and positive orders to visit the gloomy subterraneous regions of Pluto, and request of Proferpine a casket which might contain a portion of the beauty of the Stygian queen. to repair what Venus herfelf had loft by her anxiety and exertion in curing the wound of Cupid. She was commanded to use dispatch on this embaffy, fince there was shortly to be an affembly of the gods, in which it was impossible for Venus to appear with beauty the least impaired. Psyche, ignorant of any other way of vifiting the infernal region than by death, interpreted this order into an injunction to kill herfelf, to which, being now plunged into the utmost grief and defpair, she was by no means reluctant. To effect her own destruction with equal speed

and certainty, she immediately ascended a steep tower, with intent to throw herself headlong from it, and thus terminate her career of misery; but, just as she was on the point of executing her rash resolution, the benevolent, but invisible, genius, who had hitherto attended her through all her sufferings, addressed her in an audible voice from the tower, and bade her go to Tænarus, near Lacedæmon, where she would find a passage by which she might descend to the infernal regions; enjoining her rigidly to observe the following instructions during her journey thither and her return.

She was ordered to provide herfelf with two cakes, (and the reader will recollect that cakes and water are at this day offered in India to the dead,) bearing one of them in each hand; the was likewife to carry with her two pieces of money, which were to be borne in her mouth; the was told that, if the accidentally met, in her way to the shades, any person who might be in distress, and crave her assistance, not to take any notice, but to observe a religious silence and pursue her journey; that, when she arrived at the infernal river, and Charon demanded his fee for ferrying her over, one of the pieces of money which she car-

ried was his allotted fee, which she must suffer him to take out of her mouth; that she must pass without notice the numerous crowds of departed spirits who would cover the banks of Styx, and folicit relief from her; and that, when arrived at the gate of Proferpine's palace, the must give one of the cakes to the great dog that guarded it, who would let her pass into the interior court. She was informed that Proferpine would receive her with great kindness, and invite her to a noble entertainment, of which, however, the must by no means partake, but, fitting down upon the ground, make her folitary and abstemious repast upon black bread. She must then inform her of the occasion of her visit to that infernal kingdom, and, having folicited and received the precious casket, must hurry back with it to the regions of day.

On her return, she must pacify Cerberus with the other cake, and see Charon with the remaining piece of money, but must take especial care, during her return, not to be seduced by any consideration whatever to open the casket containing the portion of beauty sent by Proserpine to Venus. Psyche successfully executed her dangerous errand, and punctually obeyed all the injunctions given her except

except the last; to observe that with equal sidelity proved too much for the powerful operations of female VANITY. She could not ressist the inclination to examine the casket, and appropriate to herself a small particle, at least, of the beauty intended to adorn the mother of

Cupid.

Ah! too delufive vanity, of what nameless evils, in every age, halt thou been the unfortunate fource to the young and beautiful! With adventurous hand, in a luckless hour, the curious Pfyche opened the calket, which, like the box of Pandora, contained nothing but mifery for its ill-fated poffellor. Instead of the rose of eternal youth, instead of the bloom of unfading beauty, that cafket was stored only with a deadly, infernal, foporiferous, vapour, which in an inftant overpowered all herfaculties, and the funk down upon the earth in a profound flumber. In that lethargic flumber fhe lay for fome time, nor ever would have awaked from it, had not Cupid, now fully appeafed and healed of his wound, fled out of the windows of his mother's palace, to feek his dear, his long-loft, Pfyche. His wonder was as great as his anguish was exquisite, when he, at length, discovered her lying fast asleep upon the ground; but, immediately divining

the cause, he exerted the portion of divinity which he enjoyed by being the offspring of a deity, and burst the charm that bound her. He waked her by gently wounding her with the point of his arrow; he collected together the fumes of the deadly vapour which had iffued, and, returning them to the fatal cafket, bade her carry it to his mother. He himself, in the mean time, winged his flight to heaven, and laid the whole affair before Jupiter. Jupiter immediately called an affembly of the gods, and, with the awful nod that shakes Olympus, not only himfelf confented to his marriage with Psyche, but insisted that Venus should no longer oppose their union. Mercury was dispatched in haste to bring Psyche up to heaven, and, the period of her terrestrial sojourning and probation being over, she drank ambrofia, and became IMMORTAL. On occafion of her apotheofis and nuptials, a magnificent banquet was prepared in heaven, at which all the gods were prefent, at which Apollo played upon the harp, and even Venus herself danced. Psyche, thus solemnly reunited to Cupid, commenced a new career of happiness, not subject to interruption or decay; and the fruit of her renovated affection was a daughter named PLEASURE; that is, celeftial

lestial and eternal pleasure, opposed to that which is earthly and temporal.\*

The general moral, intended to be inculcated throughout the preceding fable, must be obvious to the reader, although many of the circumstances recorded in it, being introduced merely for the fake of ornament, no direct or particular application can be made of every part of it. We can, however, collect from it, on the whole, that the ancient Greeks, like the Brahmins, conceived there was no greater enemy to the foul, aspiring to the heights of purity and virtue, than carnal affection, symbolized by Venus, whose servant Custom drags us on against our better inclinations and resolutions to criminal indulgence, and then delivers us over, by the command of her mistress, to be tormented by her two other fervants, Sorrow and ANXIETY. There are variety of defigns, on ancient gems and marbles, which still more strikingly and distinctly explain their meaning on this point, and many of thefe may be feen in Montfaucon and other collections. On these sculptures Psyche is invariably defignated with the wings of a butterfly, and fometimes a Cupid is reprefented as burning her wings, those wings on which she should mount mount to heaven, with his flaming torch. Sometimes she is drawn kneeling, with her hands tied behind her; a certain mark of the abject flavery into which a foul is brought by the power of the paffions. At other times she is to be feen bound to a tree, while Cupid is feverely beating her with rods. In an engraving published by Spon, he is even armed with a hammer and chiffel to brufe and torment her tender limbs. These gems and sculptures sufficiently mark the parallel fentiments entertained on this fubject by the philosophers of Greece and of India: but in no country ever yet heard of, except the latter, have aufterities been actually put in practice of fuch a dreadful and fanguinary complexion, as those voluntarily inflicted upon themselves by the penitents of the latter country.

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## CHAPTER V.

The Metempsychosis, or Wandering of the Soul, through various Spheres and various Bodies; being believed in a far more extensive Degree in India ban in ancient Greece, and, in Fact, making an important Part of the religious Code of the Brabmins, has been productive of Doctrines and Practices far more romantie and extravagant in the former than in the latter Country .- A Variety of Instances adduced in Proof of the above Affertion, as well in Regard to the supposed retrospective Power of that Soul to penetrate the Obscurity of past Ages and Events, as the singular Penances which the ancient GYMNOSOPHIST and modern Yogen alike inflicted upon themselves; to renovate their fallen State. - An extended Parallel drawn between those two Characters; both from ancient and modern Sources of authentic Information .- The Self-Sacrifice of CALANUS and ZARMANOCHAGAS, by Fire, in the Times of Alexander and Augustus, contrasted with recent Instances of that Species of public Suicide. — The real Origin of that dreadful Custom of the Indians investigated and explained.

THE Indian philosophers seem, at all times, the Metempsycholis to a point of greater extravagance than the Pythagoreans and Platonists; and those more extravagant notions impelled them to adopt feverer modes of expiation and penance The philosophers of Greece, at least those who alone truly merited that appellation, believed and felt that the foul was a degraded and fallen spirit, that the body was its terrestrial prison, that life was a state of expiation and discipline, and they confidered death only as a passage to a more perfect and happy state, in which they should be reunited to the eternal fource whence that foul emaned, the fupreme BEATITUDE. It was this belief that supported the foul of Socrates in his dying moments, and difarmed of its terrors the poisoned bowl. It was the propagation of this fublime doctrine, which shines forth with such lustre in the Phædo of Plato, that procured to that philosopher the envied title of DIVINE. The Brahmins conceiving, as was before-observed,

that, by the power of abstracted meditation and absorption, they are able to penetrate into past as well as future scenes, have indulged on this subject speculations far more bold and extensive, and formed the result of those speculations into a regular system of religious belief and action. By this power, the contemplatist can trace his spiritual genealogy through fuccessive spheres and animals for a hundred generations, and knows what particular punishment in one state unalterably attends the perpetration of crimes in another. Endued with this imaginary power, and incited by the wild phrenzy of fuperstition, he is for ever rolling back his eye upon the past periods of existence, and, for every calamity endured in the present state, he can instantly find a cause in the vices and follies of the state preceding. Disease imbibed with the breath of life is thus accounted for, and rendered tolerable; fince men, blind and lame from the womb, are only fuffering penance for former crimes, and therefore fustain their hard fate with cheerfulness and relignation. " Physicians (fays the Hindoo Sastra) assert that sickness originates in the animal constitution; but those skilled in the mystery of the Metempsychosis maintain that it is a punishment for crimes VOL. V.

crimes committed in a former state."\* It cannot fail of gratifying curiosity, however it may sometimes provoke laughter, to specify a few of those causes for terrestrial suffering enumerated in the same Sastra.

Thus, in regard to men, epilepfy is a punishment for one who has, in a previous existence, poisoned another; blindness and madness are punishments, the first for murdering your parents, the last for having been disobedient and negligent of them; dumbness for having killed a fifter; the stone for having committed incest; fevers, asthmas, indigestion, &c. &c. have also their whimfical causes affigned them, and the expiations are, in fome instances, as whimfical as in others they are extremely severe; but, in general, are too tedious to be here enumerated. They confift, for the most part, of vast sums, given away in charity to the Brahmins, or in the long and dreadful fast of the Chanderayan. In respect to women, upon whom these uncivil Brahmins, impotent through age or aufterities, feem to be uncommonly fevere, it is afferted,+ that a woman who furvives her hufband, which in India is a difgrace, was false to her hufband

<sup>·</sup> Aycen Akbery, vol. ii. p. 169.

<sup>†</sup> Ayeen Akbery, vol. iii. p. 172.

husband in the preceding state. The expiation: she must pass all her life in austerities, or put an end to her existence by burying herfelf in fnow. - The woman, whose child dies, has, in a former state, exposed her child, which died in consequence of that exposure. The expiation: a cow of gold, with hoofs of filver, bestowed in charity. - A woman, who has only daughters, was inflamed with pride in her former existence, and was disrespectful to her hufband. The expiation: let her feed fifty Brabmins .- I shall not torture the reader's patience with any more of these absurd details. Abfurd, however, as they appear to us, they form the creed of the pious in India, who, confidering the Brahmins as a portion of the Deity, are not in the least shocked by this barefaced monopoly of facred donations by that avaricious order. So barefaced indeed is it, that, in a following page, it is afferted, that whofoever shall give to the Brahmins sufficient ground for a house to stand upon, shall enjoy ten kulehs in paradise before he returns again to the earth; but, if he should be so generous as to bestow upon them a thousand head of cattle, their grand reward will be ten thousand years of blis in Paradise before he revifits U 2

revisits earth.\* How different is the felfish maxim here inculcated from the following very enlarged and liberal fentiment in the Geeta. The disparity may, in some measure, be accounted for, by considering that it is the Deity, not the priest, that speaks. "They, who serve even other gods with a sirm belief, in doing so, involuntarily worship me; I am he who partaketh of all worship, and I am their reward."+

We must now complete the dreadful picture of Indian penance which we are exhibiting, by more particularly introducing the reader to

the Gymnosophist, or Yogee.

The Yogees, or ancient Gymnosophists, are, as their name (derived from yourses, nudus, and soopes, sapiens,) implies, absolutely divested of all covering, as well to shew how contemptible, in their opinion, the body is in comparison of the divine guest that inhabits it, as for convenience; since Dindamis, one of them, in his speech to Alexander, acutely enough observed, "that is the most suitable habitation for a philosopher which is the least encumbered with surniture." Of all the ancient writers on this subject, Strabo perhaps is most to be depended upon; since he professes to have

<sup>35. +</sup> Geeta, p. 81.

have acquired his information, relative to India, from those who had been ambassadors at Palibothra, the present Patna. Strabo gives us two remarkable instances of the voluntary feverities which two of these gymnosophists inflicted upon themselves: the first, far advanced in years, hoped to obtain heaven by lying constantly extended upon the hard ground without any covering, exposed to all the fervours of a tropical fun, and without any shelter from the drenching rains, which, at particular feafons, descended in torrents.\* The fecond, who was more in the vigour of life, laboured to obtain the fame immortal boon by standing on one leg for a whole day, and bearing aloft, at the same time, with both his erected arms, an immense piece of wood.+ Pliny acquaints us, that some gymnosophists would fix their eager and stedfast eyes upon the fun from the time of his rifing till his letting; while others, at the same time, would stand on one foot, alternately varying the foot on which they stood, for a whole day, in the midst of burning fands, without shrinking or complaining. The original in Pliny is as follows: " Philosophos corum, quos gymnosophistas vocant, ab exortu ad occasum persture contuentes tuentes solem IMMOBILIBUS OCULIS, ferventibus arenis toto die alternis pedibus consistere."\* He might have added the epithet of nudis to pedibus; for, the gymnosophists, as the name implies, entirely reject every fort of covering for the body, even that which decency requires.

Cicero, speaking of the gymnosophists, warmly commends their invincible patience and undaunted fortitude. "These men," says that eloquent writer, "with equal sirmness endure the severity of the snows of Caucasus while they live, as they brave, when life verges on expiration, the fire that terminates their ife of torture;" alluding to the suicidal slames in which Calanus and Zarmanochagas perished. This particular subject of their sometimes consuming themselves, while yet living, on the sunereal pile, and the general custom in India of burning their dead, I shall make the last article of consideration in this extensive and final chapter of the Indian Theology.

Arrian, speaking of this same race, obferves: These people live naked. In winter they enjoy the benefit of the sun's rays in the open air; and, in the summer, when the

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<sup>&</sup>quot; Piin. Nat. Hift. lib. vii. cap. 2.

<sup>†</sup> Tufc. Quarft. lib. v.

heat becomes excessive, they pass their time in moist and marshy places under large trees; which, according to Nearchus, cover a circumference of five acres, and extend their branches so far, that ten thousand men may easily find shelter under them.\*

Porphyry enters into the subject more extenfively, and makes a just discrimination between the Brachmans and Gymnosophists, or Samaneans, as he calls them. He fixes very accurately the place of refidence of the former, fome on the mountains, by which he probably meant the old college at Naugracut, and some on the Ganges, at Cafi and Patna. Those on the mountains, he fays, feed on fruits and cows' milk; congealed with herbs (probably curds, or ghee); those on the Ganges eat the abundant vegetables and wild barley that grow in its neighbourhood. In respect to the Samaneans, or Sarmans, as Clemens calls them, he characterises them very justly as men voluntarily depriving themselves of all wordly wealth and advantages, shaving their heads and beards, and refolutely quitting their wives and children for the defert. He describes them as living there upon herbs and water alone, as reluctantly

· Arrian, lib. vii. p. 275, edit. Gronovii; and confult the engraving here annexed.

reluctantly bearing the load of life, and, inflamed with the hope of transmigrating into a better state, as impatiently panting for the hour of their departure.\*

There is no necessity to cite farther the fentiments of the ancients on the subject of thefe rigid devotionists. Let us turn to the more authentic accounts of the moderns, and exemplify the train of general observations preceding by particular instances of individuals, who have been feen, by modern travellers, in the act of fuffering the almostincredible severities alluded to above. One of them, whose veracity may be depended upon, has illustrated the subject with a very curious print of Yogees in various attitudes of penance; and, fince that print reprefents fo strikingly both those devotees and the great banian-tree of India, of which so ample an account was inferted in a preceding volume, I have had it engraved, by a very correct artist, for the inspection of those, whose curiosity may have been excited by the detail of their fufferings in this volume. It would have been inconfistent with propriety, though not with the delicacy I could wish to have been preferved,

<sup>\*</sup> Porphyry de Abstinentia, lib. iv. p. 167, edit. Cantab.

preserved, to have given any covering to deluded wretches, whose glory it is to have cast off every vestment, and with it the very sense of shame: the figures, I trust, are upon too small a scale to excite any disgust in the reader. It was to avoid giving offence that I forbore to have engraved, as it merited, upon a larger plate, that mighty tree, under whose shade they dwelt, and which may be truly called the monarch of the vegetable world.\*

One of the Mohammedan travellers, who visited India in the ninth century, informs us, that "there are in the Indies certain men who profess to live in the woods and mountains. and to despise whatsoever is considered valuable by the rest of mankind. They go all their life-time stark naked, and suffer the hair of their head and beard to grow till it nearly covers their whole body. They religiously forbear to pare their nails, fo that they become pointed and sharp as swords; and around the neck of each is suspended an earthen porringer, intended to contain the rice and other food which charity may supply. They, for the most part, stand motionless as statues, with their faces always turned to the fun. I formerly faw one in the posture here described,

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<sup>.</sup> Consult the description of it, vol. Hi. p, 492.

and, returning to India about fixteen years afterwards, I found him in the very fame attitude, and was astonished he had not lost his eye-sight by the intense heat of the sun."\*

Baldæus, an excellent and authentic writer. who refided many years in India, fays, that, besides their usual purifications, some of the Yogees carry huge iron collars about their necks, others travel about conftantly encumbered with heavy fetters and chains of the fame metal, while sharp nails, with their points terminating inwards, line their wooden flippers or fandals. Others, he adds, have caufed themselves to be bound immoveably with strong ropes or chains to a tree, and in that posture expired, after lingering for many months in the greatest tortures; and that, in 1657, he himself saw a Yogee at Columbo, whose arms were grown together over his head from being kept long erect in that pofture.+

It is exceedingly remarkable, that these men should possess such exalted notions of the purity of the Deity, and yet entertain such

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Renaudot's ancient Accounts of India and China, p. 32, edit.
 Lond. 1733.

<sup>+</sup> Baldaeus, in Churchill's Voyages, vol. iii. p. 806, first edition.

contemptuous and degrading ideas of the works created by him. According to them, all nature is contaminated, and the earth itself labours under some dreadful defilement, a fentiment which, in my humble opinion, could only fpring from certain corrupted traditions relative to God's curfing the ground, and condemning it to bring forth thorns and thiftles, on the fall of man. To fuch an extreme point of extravagance, however, do they carry their conceptions on this point, that fome of them, according to Du Halde, impelled by the dread of terrestrial pollution, have embraced the refolution of never more touching the planet which they were born to cultivate, and cause themselves to be suspended aloft in cages upon the boughs of trees, to which elevation the admiring multitude raife the fcanty provision, necessary to the support of the small portion of life that animates their emaciated carcales.\* Another of the ancient Jesuits, cited in Purchase, relates as follows: " These Jogues, with admirable patience, endured the funne's heat; and one among the rest enclosed the trunk of his body in an iron cage, while his head and feet alone were at liberty. In this figuation he could neither fit nor lie down at any time, and round the cage were fuffpended a hundred lamps, which four other Jogues, his companions, lighted at certain times. Thus walked he, in this his perpetual prison, as a light unto the world, in his vain-glorious opinion."\*

These sentiments and these practices are, I own, apparently very contradictory to fome others in vogue among the Indians, fuch as burying themselves in pits hollowed in the ground, with only a small hole left open at the top to breathe through, of which an example or two will be given hereafter: and the custom of purifying themselves by passing through a natural or artificial cavern, where the spiritual pilgrims entered in at the fouth gate, and made their exit at the northern one, as was anciently the custom in the Mythriac mysteries, for astronomical reasons already asfigned, and according to the remarkable instance which we have given of the famous Angria in modern times.+ Apparently contradictory, however, as they are, they, in fact, originate in the same prejudices, and are referrible

<sup>\*</sup> See Purchase's Pilgrimage, p. 636, folio, edit. 1617.— Master Purchase sudicrously enough calls these Joouns sad reques; and to the Santassis he gives the facetious appellation of bely affer.

<sup>†</sup> See the appendix to the preface, vol. i.

to the same creed. The penitents being first inhumed, and afterwards emerging from the pit, as well as their paffage through the dreary cavern, were only emblems of terrestrial trials and struggles undergone and happily furmounted by the foul in its progress to perfection and glory through the various inferior fpheres of purgation and purification; for, it should never be forgotten, that to those spheres, in the Hindoo astronomical theology, different degrees of purity and fanctity are attributed. or rather, to speak more properly, different degrees of impurity and guilt. Confonant to this idea, on one of their festivals that fall in June, and which, according to Mr. Holwell, is called the UMBOOBISSEE, (Ambuvachi is the Sanscreet word,) the earth itself, conformably to the Egyptian and Greek mythology, being converted into a prolific female, is left to ber purgations from the seventh day to the tenth of that month, both days inclusive, during which period, neither plough, nor fpade, nor any other agricultural instrument. is permitted to molest her.\* I ought also before to have mentioned this author's account of the Sannials Pooja, or Hindoo Lent, which laits from the first to the thirtieth of March.

on which last day, the penance of the CHEREC, or wheel, is submitted to by the Yogee; a penance not the least painful and eccentric of those endured in India, and which is thus defcribed by Captain Hamilton, who has given an engraving of the fwing-machine on which the penance is performed. " On the coast of Canara," fays our humorous captain, whom the fevere pains of the penitents do not feem very fenfibly to have touched, " feveral thoufands of people affemble in the middle of a grove around a shapeless black stone of 300 or 400 weight, (it is the phallus of Seeva, and the performers are rigid Saivites,) befmeared with red lead mixed with oil, to ferve for a mouth, eyes, and ears, with a vale of incense burning before it, and a young virgin of ten years old" (an Indian vestal, we must suppose; for, few are virgins in that warm climate afer that age) " to attend and cherish the flame. Some priefts all naked, except a cloth of decency, run and dance round the stone and fire for half an hour like madmen, making strange diffortions in their faces, and now and then bellowing like calves. This was the first fcene. Those priests had previously erected a scaffold, about 15 feet long and as many broad.

broad, in the middle of which was elevated a piece of wood about 20 feet high. In the upper end of this beam was cut a notch, on which refted a lever about 40 feet long, with two crofs-beams at the end, each four feet in length, with a rope fastened to the ends, on which the actors were to hang, and perform their parts. The penitents were four in number; and, prefenting themselves to the priests, the latter took two tenter-hooks, exactly fuch as the butchers in Britain use to hang their meat on, and fix those hooks in the muscles of the backs of each. The hooks being fastened to the ropes at each end of the crofs-beams, the penitents were then drawn up into the air. They were kept hanging by their backs in this manner at the distance of ten yards from the ground, while hundreds of other devotees dragged the scaffold, which went upon wheels, above a mile over ploughed ground; the suspended penitents all the while swinging round in a circle; whence the name of CHEREC. a circle or wheel. They were then let down in a bleeding condition, but both exulting themselves, and amidst the exulting acclamations of the spectators."\* M. Sonnerat, who alfo

<sup>\*</sup> Hamilton's Voyage to the East Indies, vol. i. p. 274, oft. Lond. edit. 1745.

also saw this dreadful ceremony performed on the Coromandel coast, says they are generally armed with a sword and shield, which they brandish with the furious motions of a man who is sighting, and, to shew their heroism, often give themselves dreadful wounds. They must appear cheerful whatever pain they may feel; for, if tears escape them, they are driven from their cast, a punishment more terrible than death itself.\*

These authentic accounts of the indifference which the devout Indians feel at the feverest inflictions of corporeal pain may strike Europeans with aftonishment, but they will not those who have resided in India, and seen the Yogees affembled under their facred trees in acts of penance. For, what will not frantic superstition perform? In India, even the women themselves reject the natural softness and timidity of their fex, with determined refolution brave the dreadful ordeal of boiling oil, walk over plates of burning iron, and mount with ferenity the funereal pile: while the men, by nature more daring and intrepid, perform fuch acts as can fcarcely be admitted for true, even by credulity itself. An instance or two of this more delperate kind now lies before me,

in Renaudot's Arabian Travellers, which for refolution and horror cannot possibly be paralleled among any nation of the earth, except among the fanguinary favages who fing the DEATH-SONG on the plains of America. A certain person, determined, like Calanus, to facrifice himself alive in the flames, when he approached the altar, drew out his fabre, and, with his right hand, gave himself a wide and dreadful gash that reached from the breast far down in the abdomen, and laid bare his entrails to the view of the spectators. He then, with his left, tore out a lobe of the liver, which he cut off with the fame fabre, and gave it to one of his brothers who flood by, converfing all the time with the utmost indifference, and with apparent infenfibility to the torments that racked him. He then, with undaunted countenance, leapt into the flames, and, without any visible motion, was burnt to cinders.\*

In the early periods, when these travellers visited India, it was the custom of the Yogees of the mountains to dare to acts of singular austerity those who lived in the plains. Among others, there once came down a Yogee who called upon the penitents of the plain eivor. Vol. V.

<sup>.</sup> Ancient Relations, p. 80.

ther to follow the example he was about to fet them, or elfe to own their zeal and fortitude inferior. He sat himself down in a plantation of canes which grew in the neighbourhood. These canes, say our travellers, resemble our fugar-canes, are fupple, and bend like them, have a large stem, and often grow to a vast height. When bowed down by force, they obey the pressure without breaking, but, as soon as the pressure is removed, they violently fly back, and regain their first rectitude. One of the loftiest and largest of these canes he ordered to be bent down to his height, and fastened his long and bushy hair strongly to the end of it; then, taking his fabre, which, from its keenness, sparkled like fire, he severed it from his body, and it mounted into the air. None of the spectators had resolution to follow his example, and the mountaineers triumphed over their brethren of the valley. The high reputation which the book, from which these facts are almost verbatim extracted, enjoys, will, I trust, rescue the relation either from contempt or discredit.\*

Dr. Fryer, an eminent physician and a Fellow of the Royal Society, who was at Surat about the fame time with Baldæus, has also given

<sup>\*</sup> Ancient Relations, p. 82.

given a very ample and particular account of Indian penitents whom he vifited under the great banian-tree in its neighbourhood. One of these penitents he remarked, whose nails, by neglect, were grown as long as a man's finger, having absolutely pierced into the flesh; and another, whose bushy, plaited, sun-burnt, hair trailed upon the ground, being above four yards in length. Some he faw with their arms fo diflocated, that, as the Doctor expresses himself, " the diagonous of the joints was inverted, and the head of the bone lay in the pit or valley of the arm. In that fituation they must necessarily be defrauded of their nourishment, and hang down useless appendages to the body; fo that, unless relieved by charitable attendants, which are numerous at these holy retreats, the sufferers must perish, being totally unable to help themselves." Others, he observed, who kept their eyes immutably fixed on heaven, like Pliny's gymnofophists, their heads hanging over their shoulders, and incapable of being moved from that posture from the stiffness contracted, during a long uninterrupted rest, by the tendons of the muscles and the ligaments of the neck, so that no aliment, not liquid, can possibly pass, and even that is swallowed with much diffi-

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culty. Others, by continued abstinence, were fo emaciated, that they appeared like walking skeletons. All were bedaubed with ashes, and

all flept upon the bare ground.

He gives two other remarkable instances of penitentiary fuffering, the former of which will corroborate what was before inferted concerning the penance between four fires under a meridian fun, and which must have appeared, to one who has not been an eye-witness of these horrible exhibitions, absolutely incredible. A Yogee had refolved, fays our traveller, for forty days to endure the purgatory of five fires, the blazing fun above his head making the fifth. The folemn act was to take place during a public festivity, and before an innumerable crowd of spectators. Early in the morning the penitent was feated on a quadrangular stage with three ascents to it. He now fell proftrate, and continued fervent at his devotions till the fun began to have confiderable power. He then rose, and assumed the position of the Yogee at No. 9, in the print annexed, looking stedfaltly at the fun, and standing on one of his legs, while the other was kept in a bent posture drawn up under him. In the interim, fays our traveller, four fires being kindled (either of them large enough enough to roast an ox) at each corner of the stage, the penitent, counting over his beads, and occasionally using his pot of incense, like Scævola, with his own hands increased the stames, adding to them combustible matter by way of incense; he then bowed himself down in the centre of the four fires, with his eye still fixed upon the sun, and stood upon his head, his feet being bolt upright in the air for three hours; after which he seated himself cross-legged, and remained so all the rest of the day, roasting between those fires, and bathed in the profuse exudation of his own grease.\*

Three others of these devotees, according to Fryer, had made a vow not to lie down for sixteen years, but to remain standing on their feet during that time. The elder of them had completed the full period of his painful discipline; of the two others, the sirst had passed five, the second three, years in that position. The legs of all three were swollen in a dreadful manner, and deeply ulcerated; but, being unable to support the weight of their bodies, they leaned upon pillows suspended on a string, which hung from one of the branches of the banian-tree, after the

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· Fryer's Travels, p. 102, edit. fol. 1698.

manner of the figure, marked No. 7, in the plate. He, who had completed his penance, was afterwards entombed in the same standing polition for nine days without taking any fuftenance; and, to prove that he actually continued in his earthy bed during all the nine days, he caused, says our author, " a bank of earth to be thrown up before the mouth of his cave, on which was fown a certain grain, which ears exactly in nine days, and which in fact did ear before his removal thence." Fryer faw the fouglid figure of this penitent immediately after his refurrection from this fubterraneous prison.\*

M. Sonnerat was the eye-witness of many of these extravagant penances on the coast of Coromandel. The following particulars are the result of his observation and inquiries. After having described some of their penances of inferior note, he proceeds to remark: "The Indians have, beside these, other more rigid penitents, whom fanaticism induces to quit friends, relatives, possessions, every thing, in order to lead a miserable life. The majority are of the fect of Seeva. The only goods they can possess are a lingam, to which they continually offer their adorations, and a tiger's skin, on

Fayer's Travels, p. 101.

which they fleep. They exercise on their bodies all that a fanatic fury can convey to their imagination: fome tear their flesh with the strokes of a whip, or fasten themselves to the foot of a tree by a chain, which death only can break: - others make a vow to remain all their lives in an uneasy posture, such as keeping the hands shut, while their nails, which they never cut, in the course of time pierce through them. Some are feen who have their hands always croffed on their breafts, or lifted above their heads in such a manner that they can no more bend them. These unfortunate people can neither eat nor drink without the affiftance of some disciples who follow them; and it may be eafily judged what they must fuffer, during several years, to reduce their arms to this state of inaction. Many bury themselves, and breathe only through a little hole; and it is wonderful, confidering the time they remain under-ground, that they are not suffocated. Others, who are less enthusiafts, are contented with burying themselves only up to the neck. Some are found who have made a vow always to frand upright, without ever lying down; they sleep leaning against a wall or a tree; and, to deprive themselves of all means of fleeping comfortably, they put their X 4

their necks into certain machines that refemble a kind of grate, which, when once they have riveted on, can no more be taken off. Others stand whole hours upon one foot, with their eyes fixed on the sun, contemplating that planet with the most earnest application of mind. Others, again, observe the same position, with one foot in the air, the other resting only on tiptoe, and with both arms elevated; they are placed in the midst of four vases sull of sire, and keep their eyes intensely fixed on the solar orb.

"There are also others who appear in public quite naked, and that to shew that they are no longer susceptible of any passion, and are re-entered into a state of innocence fince they have given their bodies to the Divinity. The people, perfuaded of their virtue, esteem them as faints, and imagine they can obtain of God whatever they ask: they also believe that they perform a work of piety in hastening to carry them victuals, to put in the mouths of those who are prohibited the use of their hands, and to cleanfe them. The number of these more rigid penitents is much leffened fince the Indians have been oppressed and reduced to a state of slavery. The only person of this kind I ever faw pierced his cheeks with an iron, which

which went through his tongue, and was riveted on the other fide of the cheek with another piece of iron, which formed a circle underneath the chin.

" The characteristics of these penitents are great pride, felf-love, and a belief that they are faints. They avoid being touched by people of a low cast, and Europeans, from a fear of being defiled; they will not even let them touch their goods, but fly at their approach. They have a fovereign contempt for all who are not in their state, and esteem them as profane: there is also nothing belonging to them but what is thought to contain some mystery, and that is not also esteemed worthy of great veneration.

"The Indian history has preserved the memory of a great many of these penitents, celebrated in ancient times, and whom the penitents of this day glory in imitating."\*

The Chaldeans, it has been observed, had a feast of fire. The Indians, likewise, have a feast of fire, during which, the zealous devotees among them walk on that element. It was instituted in honour of DARMA-RAJA, and should be more properly called a fast than a feast; for, those devotees are to refrain from food

food during all the eighteen days which it lasts, forbear all connexion with women, fleep on the bare ground, and walk on a brifk fire, The last, or eighteenth, day, they assemble to the found of instruments, their heads crowned with flowers and their bodies befmeared with faffron, and follow the image of Darma-raja and Drobede his wife, which are carried in procession three times round a fire, kindled to the honour of those deities. - After this, the devotees actually pass through the fire, which, M. Sonnerat afferts, is extended to about forty feet in length, walking through the flames flowly or quickly according to their zeal, and often, like the superstitious votaries of Moloch, carrying their children in their arms.\*

On those most holy festivals, on which their greater gods are carried about on vast machines, drawn by several thousand devotees, our author has seen fathers and mothers of families, bearing also their children in their arms, throw themselves headlong under the broad and ponderous wheels, in hopes of gaining immediate admission into heaven by so exalted a fate as that of being crushed to death by the chariot of the god. By these suicidal executions, he informs us, the proces-

fion is never impeded, nor the people shocked. The machine is drawn over the bodies of these unfortunate wretches without emotion, and its weight, in passing, pounds them, unlamented, to atoms!\*

Mr. Haftings, in his prefatory letter to the Geeta, mentions his having feen one of thefe abstracted Yogees at his devotions, and adds fome judicious observations on the absorption of the Brahmins, which the reader will not be displeased to see: - " It is to be observed, (fays Mr. Hastings,) in illustration of what I have premised, that the Brahmins are enjoined to perform a kind of fpiritual discipline, not, I believe, unknown to some of the religious orders of Christians in the Romish Church. This confifts in devoting a certain period of time to the contemplation of the Deity, his attributes, and the moral duties of life. It is required of those who practise this exercise. not only that they divest their minds of all fenfual defire, but that their attention be abftracted from every external object, and abforbed, with every fense, in the prescribed fubject of their meditation. I myfelf was once a witness of a man employed in this species of devotion at the principal temple of Benares:

<sup>.</sup> Sonnerat's Voyages, vol. i. p. 121.

Benares: his right hand and arm were enclosed in a loose sleeve or bag of red cloth, within which he paffed the beads of his rofary, one after another, through his fingers, repeating, with the touch of each, as I was informed, one of the names of God; while his mind laboured to catch and dwell on the idea of the quality which appertained to it, and shewed the violence of its exertion to attain this purpose by the convulsive movements of all his features, his eyes being at the same time closed, doubtless, to assist the abstraction. The importance of this duty cannot be better illustrated, nor stronger marked, than by the last fentence with which Creeshna closes his instruction to Arjoon, and which is properly the conclusion of the Geeta: " Hath what I have been speaking, O Arjoon, been heard with thy mind fixed to one point? Is the diftraction of thought, which arose from thy ignorance, removed?"

Mr. Crauford, in his Sketches of Indian Mythology, (a book which merits a more important title than the modesty of the author has permitted him to bestow upon it,) mentions an instance of an Indian penitent, who, not long ago, finished measuring the distance between Benares and Jaggernaut with his bo-

dy, by alternately stretching himself upon the ground and rising; which, he observes, if faithfully executed, must have taken up some years to have accomplished. He adds another of an aged father of a numerous offspring, who, like Calanus, recently devoted himself to the slames. He committed the fatal act in the hope of appeasing the wrath of a divinity, who, as he imagined, had for some time past afflicted his family and neighbours with a mortal epidemical disease; a proof that the notion of the efficacy of a buman sacrifice is not at this day wholly extinct in India.

In fact, the whole series of dreadful penances above-described, in reading which the mind of the reader must have been filled with alternate indignation and horror, is nothing more than the relics of a vast system of sanguinary superstition, which, from whatever quarter derived, is equally insulting to the Deity and destructive to his creatures. True religion, the religion which Christianity aims to establish in the world, impresses the mind with sentiments widely different from these; exalted Benevolence, tender Sympathy, and generous Compassion: it inculcates not an arrogant and presumptuous spirit to dare, but

a humble and refigned spirit to endure, the evils allotted to the present state; a state, which, though a state of probation, has its social pleasures as well as its distracting cares, and in which, while we are taught to bear the latter with becoming fortitude, we are permitted to enjoy the former with hearts overslowing with beneficent affections to our fellow-creatures and fervent gratitude to the Almighty Donor!

On the Indian Custom of Burning themselves, and the Motives which led to that Custom.

Having accompanied the Hindoo penitent, whether Saniassi or Yogee, thus far through a life of incessant misery and torture, but misery and torture scarcely felt, let us attend him to the fatal bourn whence no traveller returns; let us mark the closing scene, and behold the curtain eternally drawn over human suffering and terrestrial probation. By this I do not mean his dissolution, when he falls a victim to the languor and imbecility of age, when he perishes by the violence of disease, or sinks a gradual

gradual martyr to his aggravated torments: no; it is my intention to depict a more impreffive and awful picture; when, having gone through the prescribed penances of the four degrees, the Indian Brahmin determines to afcend the flaming altar of facrifice, and, by a folemn and public act, devotes himself to the Deity. It is this resolute dereliction of life to which Cicero, cited in a former page, alludes, when he praises the fortitude of the Indians amidst confuming fire; and, though only an account of two instances of this desperate kind of selfdestruction have descended down to us from classical antiquity, we know, not only that it is permitted in their facred books, but that the dreadful rite has been actually and frequently undergone in India. To gain, however, immediate possession of Paradise by this rite is the splendid privilege of the Saniassi and the obedient wife alone. For what reafon fo brilliant a reward is promifed to nuptial constancy in India falls not within the scope of my immediate inquiry; nor the fact itself of women burning themselves with the deceased husbands, a ceremony which has been often and affectingly described by others: my concern is with the devotee, who, animated by religious zeal, refolves to burn,

to examine his motives, and to display the rewards promised in the Vedas for an act which he stamps with the title of glorious and sublime.

This cuftom, fo immemorially used in India, and so peculiar to it, had its origin, I am convinced, in the fystem of physical theology, which, in the remotest periods, so universally prevailed in the East. It was only one of the ancient and symbolical ceremonies of the Mithratic mysteries realized. It was the last stage of purification; after which, the ætherial spirit, purged of its earthly dross, immediately ascended to the sublime source from which it emanated. This, possibly, as some sensible writers have imagined, might have been one reason that induced the Egyptians, wanting fuel in fufficient abundance for the general practice of this rite, to place the bodies of illustrious men in pyramidal monuments, which were the fymbols of fire.

The deep immersion of the Indians in phyfical investigations is also to be traced in this as well as every other part of their theology. The notion, that they are to transmigrate through the elements to the Source of Being, induces them rather to wish for than retard the hour of dissolution of the elementary par-

ticles of which the body is composed. They are impatient during their confinement in the tabernacle of clay; they mount on the wing of hope; and are eager to confign, not only ashes to ashes and dust to dust, but to restore the igneous, the æthereal, and the humid, parts of the mortal frame to the respective elements. Hence they are, at this day, frequently brought from great distances to expire on the banks of the Ganges; and are precipitated into death by the quantity of facred mud and water of that river, which is forced into the mouth of the dying person, in order to purify him for the new scene of existence into which he is about to enter. Indeed his body is often thrown into the ffream, while as yet a confiderable portion of life remains, and is devoured by alligators. Thus, in fact, we see the watery, not less than the fiery, element is used as the medium through which the final transmigration is performed. The former method is principally adopted when diffolution takes place near any great and confecrated river: when it happens in fituations very remote from the Ganges, or other facred river, the body is generally burned. This custom, however, is not peculiar to the Hindoos, fince many other nations, both an-VOL. V. cient

cient and modern, have been accustomed to burn their dead. The Perfians, however, who of all antiquity held fire in the greatest veneration, never burned the bodies of perfons defunct: they thought the facred flame would be polluted by the injection of a putrid carcase; and exposed their dead, as is done in Guzzurat at the present day, on lofty towers, to be eaten by ravenous birds of prey, to be drenched by the fearching rains, and fcorched by the blighting winds. But let us return from this digression to the consideration of the human victim, who offers up himfelf alive on the altar of facrifice. In fearthing the claffical page of antiquity, we find the first instance of the kind in Arrian, the authentic biographer of the hero of Macedon.

Calanus, who burned himself before the whole assembled army of Alexander, was one of a body of penitents whom that prince saw and conversed with at Taxila, the modern Attock, situated on a branch of the Indus, to which it gives its name, and the only one whom he could prevail with to accompany his army back to Persia.\* It is difficult to conceive him to have been a Brahmin, as, in that case, he would scarcely have left a country, of which

Arrian, lib. vii. p. 276, edit. Gronovil.

which every fpot to the Brahmins is confecrated ground; or have croffed a frontier river, whose very name fignifies forbidden, i. e. to be paffed by the natives of India. Soon after his arrival in Persia, being disordered with a flux, he resolutely refused the proffered affistance and prescribed regimen of a foreign race of phyficians, and solicited Alexander, that a funcral pile, for the purpose of burning himself, might be erected, which Alexander at first strenuously refused; but, finding him inflexible, he at length gave orders for the deathful folemnity; when every thing was prepared after a manner becoming the grandeur of fo great a monarch. The funeral scaffold was built of the richest woods, cedar, cypress, and myrtle; the richeft gums and aromatics were scattered over it; and it was adorned with rich vestments and vessels of gold and filver. A litter, decorated with garlands after the Indian fashion, bore to that pile the venerable fage, who all the way fang hymns of exultation and triumph in the dialect of his country. Arrived at the pile, he ordered the costly furniture of all kinds, and the golden and filver vafes with which it was adorned, to be taken away and distributed among his disciples and attendants; after which he afcended Y 2

cended the pile, and, laying himself down upon it, was consumed. The instant that the pile was fired, according to his own express desire to have his funeral considered as a festival, the trumpets were sounded, and the whole army gave a shout, as in the moment of victory, being filled with equal admiration and astonishment at the sight of a man consuming to ashes without any perceptible motion; so powerful, says Arrian, are the force of habit and the impulse of education.\*

The only other instance which we find in claffical antiquity of an Indian devoting himfelf to the facrificial flame, is that of Zarmanochagas, who ranked in the train of a numerous embaffy, fent by King Porus, a monarch who reigned, as the letters brought by them fet forth, over fix hundred tributary fovereigns, and therefore must have been the supreme Balhara of India, to enter into an alliance with Augustus, and cultivate his friendship. Numerous, however, as they were when they left India, all but three pe-· rished through the excessive fatigues endured in fo distant a journey, and those three were feen by Nicolas Damascenus at Antioch. In the very name of this philosopher we discover

the title of the ancient fect of the Indian Sarmanes, or Samanæi, mentioned by Porphyry; and his conduct proved him to have been a true gymnosophist, aspiring after the honours of Brahmanian distinction. Zarmanochagas far exceeded Calanus in the value and merit of his facrifice, fince the former afcended the blazing pile when in the highest vigour of health, as well as when enjoying the full gale of prosperity, the latter when under the presfure of a painful difeafe, which he conjectured might destroy him. It was at Athens that he fet the Grecian philosophers this heroic example of indifference for life and contempt of its most valued blessings; for, in the prefence of all the learned and renowned of that celebrated city, having newly bathed and being anointed with rich unquents, as it were for a gay wedding rather than a funeral, with refolute step and fmiling countenance he mounted the funeral pile, and fuffered himself to be gradually confumed, while the Stoics of Greece stood mute and astonished fpectators of a scene equally novel and wonderful.\*

Although it must be supposed, that a custom fo ancient, and entitling the devotee to so exalt-

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<sup>\*</sup> Suctonius, in Vità Augusti, cap. 21.

ed a reward, is by no means laid afide in India, yet I can find no particular detailed account of this ceremony in the page of any author, except that of the Mohammedan travellers, often referred to, as having vifited India fo early as the ninth century, What they have related on this interesting subject is, in substance, as follows. - When a man has refolved to commit himself to the facrificial flame, he first goes to the palace and aiks permission to burn himself from the reigning sovereign. Having obtained that permission, on the day appointed for the facrifice, he makes a folemn and public procession through the squares of the city where he refides to the place where the funeral fire, already kindled, and blazing to a vaft height, awaits the destined victim of his own infatuation. An immense concourse of people furround the pile, and feed it with every kind of combustibles. In the mean time the cavalcade, confisting of the friends and relations of the devotee, proceeds flowly on, himself marching first, distinguished by the GARLAND OF FIRE that confpicuoufly adorns his head. This garland, esteemed more honourable by the Hindoos than ever was the laurel-wreath worn by a Greek or Roman victor after a campaign of glory, is formed

formed of fraw or dried herbs, upon which, when placed upon his head, they heap burning coals, and invigorate the flame by pouring sandarac upon them, which catches fire like Naphtha, and flames as fiercely. Though the blazing garland circles his temples, and the crown of his head be all on fire, too well evidenced to the spectators by the offensive stench arising from his burnt flesh, he pursues his way exulting, nor is the fmallest fympton of pain feen to diffort the features of his unchanged countenance. Arrived at the fatal pile, he looks round with an intrepid countenance on the flaming fcaffold and admiring populace; and then, plunging into the flame, is, without a struggle, confumed to ashes.\*

With this folemn and public act, performed in expectation of the glorious immunities promifed in the Vedas, the journey of the Metempsychosis by no means concludes, but rather the real birth is now commenced, and the gate of immortality is thrown open. Thus, happily released from its terrestrial incumbrance, the soul, sublimed, purified, exulting with holy transport, immediately mounts in its chariot of slame to the æthereal regions, or mansions prepared for the reception of depart-

ed spirits, all varying in their splendor and delights, according to the various degrees of fanctity and excellence attained to during its earthly probation.

By these mansions (I must still adhere to my first-declared opinion) the Brahmin astronomical theologians, following the Sabian notions of their ancestors, mean the orbs of beaven; conceiving that their departed ancestors shall blaze forth in those celestial abodes with different degrees of splendor, even as one star differeth from another in glory: but those who have been supremely devout, and have been inflexibly rigid in their penances, Shall Shine forth as the sun for ever. This fact is, I conceive, incontestably proved by innumerable quotations from Sanscreet authorities, interfperfed throughout the preceding volumes; for, the foul that has only been moderately pious is ordained to leave the body at the time that the fun advances towards the fouth, on the night of fome day when the moon is in her fecond quarter, and will go to the world of the moon. By the fun's fouthern tract, they mean the other hemisphere and its stars, which, in relation to them, appears to be beneath, and is, as I before observed, the hell, or Naraka, of the Afiatic mythologists, where the ferpent

ferpent Seshanaga with his thousand heads; every head adorned with a radiant gemmed crown, (a star,) holds his gloomy infernal sceptre.\* The world of the moon denotes the

orbit of that planet.

The foul ardently devout, whose austerities, during its earthly pilgrimage, have vanquished and even annihilated the action and influence of the corporeal fenses upon the intellectual faculties, is liberated from the body precifely at the period in which the fun begins to bend its course towards the north, and on the morning of fome day when the moon is in her first quarter. Immediately on its liberation from the prison of clay, it becomes a free denizen of infinite space, traverfing at large the cerulean fields, and floating about in a form of fubtle æther. After a long enjoyment of this celestial liberty, the reward of virtue long held struggling in terrestrial bonds, the foul feeks a permanent abode, and is now borne on a refulgent fun-beam to the paradife of Brahma, the fphere of the good deutahs, who have finished their earthly probation in the form of a Brahmin, and is there plunged

in

<sup>\*</sup> See the description of this Indian Pluto, the king of the NAUGS, or serpents, extracted from the Asiatic Researches, in vol.i. p. 241.

in an abyss of inexpressible delights. It remains there for an immense period of time, after which it springs up with native energy to the Surya-logue, or sphere of the sun: whence, perfectly cleansed from all material dross, and clothed in robes of purest light, it passes to the Vaicontha, or paradise of Veeshnu, where it perpetually bathes itself in streams of light ten times more brilliant than the meridian sun, and it finally mingles with, and is absorbed into, the essence of the supreme Brahme, who, the veil of mythology being laid aside, is no other than the INEF-FABLE, INFINITE, AND ETERNAL, God.

END OF THE FIFTH VOLUME, AND OF THE INDIAN THEOLOGY.



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