hundred rupees. He obtained the money by pledging his younger brother to a sowcar (money-lender), and had paid it all back except twenty-five rupees. Meanwhile his brother was the bondsman of the sowcar, and cultivating his land in return for simple food.

DEATH CEREMONIES.

At the present day, many Hindus disregard certain ceremonies, in the celebration of which their forefathers were most scrupulous. Even the daily ceremonial ablutions, which are all-important to a Brāhman from a shastraic point of view, are now neglected by a large majority, and the prayers (mantrams), which should be chanted during their performance, are forgotten. But no Brāhman, orthodox or unorthodox, dares to abandon the death ceremonial, and annual srādh (memorial rites). A Brāhman beggar, when soliciting alms, invariably pleads that he has to perform his father or mother's srādh, or upanayanam (thread ceremony) of his children, and he rarely goes away empty-handed. "The constant periodical performance," Monier Williams writes,* "of commemorative obsequies is regarded in the light of a positive and peremptory obligation. It is the simple discharge of a solemn debt to one's forefathers, a debt consisting not only in reverential homage, but in the performance of acts necessary to their support, happiness, and progress onward in the spiritual world. A man's deceased relatives, for at least three generations, are among his cherished divinities, and must be honoured by daily offerings and adoration, or a nemesis of some kind is certain to overtake his living family. The

* Religious Thought and Life in India.

object of a Hindu funeral is nothing less than the investiture of the departed spirit with an intermediate gross body—a peculiar frame interposed, as it were parenthetically, between the terrestrial gross body, which has just been destroyed by fire, and the new terrestrial body, which it is compelled to ultimately assume. The creation of such an intervenient frame, composed of gross elements, though less gross than those of earth, becomes necessary, because the individualised spirit of man, after the cremation of the terrestrial body, has nothing left to withhold it from re-absorption into the universal soul, except its incombustible subtle body, which, as composed of the subtle elements, is not only proof against the fire of the funeral pile, but is incapable of any sensations in the temporary heaven, or temporary hell, through one or other of which every separate human spirit is forced to pass before returning to earth, and becoming re-invested with a terrestrial gross body."

When a Brāhman is on the point of death, he is removed from his bed, and laid on the floor. If there is any fear of the day being a danishtapanchami (inauspicious), the dying man is taken out of the house, and placed in the court-yard or pial (raised verandah). Some prayers are uttered, and a cow is presented (gōdhanam). These are intended to render the passage of life through the various parts of the body as easy as possible. The spirit is supposed to escape through one of the nine orifices of the body, according to the character of the individual concerned. That of a good man leaves the body through the brāhmarandhra (top of the skull), and

that of a bad man through the anus. Immediately after death, the body is washed, religious marks are made on the forehead, and parched paddy (unhusked rice) and betel are scattered over and around it by the son. As a Brāhman is supposed always to have his fire with him, the sacred fire is lighted. At this stage, certain purificatory ceremonies are performed, if death has taken place on a day or hour of evil omen, or at midnight. Next, a little rice is cooked in a new earthen pot, and a new cloth is thrown over the corpse, which is roused by the recitation of mantrams. Four bearers, to each of whom dharba grass is given in token of his office, are selected to carry the corpse to the burning-ground. The space, which intervenes between the dead man's house and the burning-ground, is divided into four parts. When the end of the first of these is reached, the corpse is placed on the ground, and the sons and nephews go round it, repeating mantrams. They untie their kudumis (hair knot), leaving part thereof loose, tie up the rest into a small bunch, and keep on slapping their thighs. [When children at play have their kudumi partially tied, and slap their thighs, they are invariably scolded, owing to the association with funerals.] A little cooked rice is offered to the path as a pathi bali (wayside offering), to propitiate evil spirits, or būthas. The same ceremonial should, strictly speaking, be performed at two other spots, but now-a-days it is the custom to place the corpse on the ground near the funeral pyre, moving its position three times, while the circumambulation and pathi bali are gone through only

once. As soon as the corpse has reached the spot where the pyre is, the celebrant of the rites sprinkles water thereon, and throws a quarter of an anna on it as the equivalent of purchase of the ground for cremation. The sacred fire is lighted, and the right palm of the corpse is touched with a gold coin. The nine orifices of the body are then smeared with ghī (clarified butter), and rice is thrown over the corpse, and placed in its mouth. The son takes a burning brand from the sacred fire, lights the pyre, and looks at the sun. Then he, and all the relations of the deceased, squat on the ground, facing east, take up some dharba grass, and, cutting it into small fragments with their nails, scatter them in the air, while repeating some Vēdic verses, which are chanted very loudly and slowly, especially at the funeral of a respected elder. The celebrant then pours a little water on a stone, and sprinkles himself with it. This is also done by the other relations, and they pass beneath a bundle of dharba grass and twigs of *Ficus glomerata* held by the purōhit (officiating priest), and gaze for a moment at the sun. Once more they sprinkle themselves with water, and proceed to a tank (pond), where they bathe. When they return home, two rites, called nagna (naked) srādh, and pashana sthapanam (stone-fixing), are celebrated. The disembodied spirit is supposed to be naked after the body has been cremated. To clothe it, offerings of water, with balls of cooked rice, are made, and a cloth, lamp, and money are given to a Brāhman. Then two stones are set up, one in the house and the other on the bank of a tank, to represent the

spirit of the deceased. For ten days, libations of water mixed with gingelly (*Sesamum indicum*) seeds, called thīlothakam, and a ball of cooked rice, must be offered to the stones. The ball of rice is left for crows to eat. The number of libations must be seventy-five, commencing with three on the first day, and increasing the number daily by one. In addition, three further libations are made daily by dipping a piece of cloth from the winding-sheet in water, and rinsing it over the stone (vasothakam).

A Brāhman widow removes her tāli (marriage badge) on the tenth day after the death of her husband, and should have the head shaved, and wear white cloths. Every month, for a year after a death in a family, srādh is performed, and corresponds in detail with the annual srādh, which is regularly performed, unless a visit is paid to Gaya, which renders further performance of the rite not obligatory. For the performance of this ceremony by the nearest agnate of the deceased (eldest son or other), three Brāhmans should be called in, to represent respectively Vishnu, the Dēvatas, and the deceased ancestors. Sometimes two Brāhmans are made to suffice, and Vishnu is represented by a sālagrāma stone. In extreme cases, only one Brāhman assists at the ceremony, the two others being represented by dharba grass. The sacred fire is lighted, and ghī, a small quantity of raw and cooked rice, and vegetables are offered up in the fire. The Brāhmans then wash their feet, and are fed. Before they enter the space set apart for the meal, water, gingelly, and rice are sprinkled about it, to

keep off evil spirits. As soon as the meal is finished, a ball of rice, called vayasa pindam (crow's food) is offered to the pithru dēvatas (ancestors of three generations), and thrown to the crows. If they do not eat the rice, the omens are considered to be unfavourable. The Brāhmans receive betel and money in payment for their services.

Burial in a sitting posture, which is still practised by many castes in Southern India, is said to be a survival from neolithic times. "There can," Lord Avebury writes,* "be no doubt that, in the neolithic stone age, it was usual to bury the corpse in a sitting or contracted posture."

Among the Dēvānga and Karnabattu weavers, the dead are usually buried in a sitting attitude. The Dēvāngas are said to erect, in some places, a hut of milk-hedge (*Euphorbia Tirucalli*) branches over the grave.† Before the grave of a Dēvānga is filled in, a rope is tied to the kudumi (hair of the head) and brought towards the surface. Over the end of the rope, when the grave has been filled in, a lingam (phallic emblem) is placed, so as to be above the head of the corpse, and worshipped daily throughout the death rites. By the Paththars or Acharapākam Chettis, who likewise bury their dead in a seated attitude, a bamboo stick is tied to the kudumi instead of a rope. Many of the Kammālans bury their dead in a seated posture.‡ Certain of the Vellālas have

* Prehistoric Times.

† Madras Census Report, 1901; South Canara and North Arcot Manuals.

‡ Madras Census Report, 1891.

a custom called padmāsanam, in reference to the treatment of the dead, who are not laid out, but trussed up in a squatting posture, a string being passed round the neck, and made fast behind, to keep the body upright.* Among the Paraiyans (Pariahs) and Okkiliyans of Coimbatore, if the deceased was a married man, he is buried in a sitting posture.

Before a Lingayat man dies, the ceremony called vibhūti-velai is performed. He is given a bath, and made to drink holy water, in which the Jangam's (priest) feet have been washed. He is made to give the Jangam a handkerchief with vibhūti (sacred ashes), rudraksha (*Elaeocarpus*) beads, coins, and betel leaf. This is followed by a meal, of which all the Jangams present, and the friends and relations of the sick man partake. It appears to be immaterial whether he is still alive or not. It is stated that, if the invalid survives this ceremony, he must take to the jungles and disappear, but in practice this is not observed. The death party resembles, in some respects, an Irish wake, though the latter does not commence until the deceased is well on his way to the next world. The dead are buried in a sitting posture (a fact which was noted by the traveller Pietro della Valle in 1623), facing towards the north, but an exception is made in the case of unmarried people, who are buried in a reclining posture. After death, the corpse is placed in a sitting attitude, and the Jangam who has received the offering before death places his left foot on the right thigh of the body. The people present worship the

* Manual of the Salem district.

corpse, and the usual distribution of coins and betel to Jangams follows. The body is carried in a vimānam or bamboo chair decorated with plantain stems, coloured cloths, and flags, to the burial-ground. The grave should be a cube of nine feet dimensions, with a niche on one side, in which the corpse is to sit. The lingam which the man wears, in a silver-casket or tied up in a silk cloth, is untied, and placed in the left hand. Bilva (*Ægle Marmelos*) leaves and vibhūti are placed at the side; the body is wrapped in an orange-coloured cloth, and the grave is filled in. A Jangam stands on the grave, and, after receiving the usual *douceur*, shouts out the name of the deceased, and announces that he has gone to kailāsa or heaven. Memorial ceremonies are contrary to Lingayat tenets, but in this, as in other matters, Brāhman influence appears, and among some sections an annual ceremony is performed.*

The death ceremonies of a Pishārati (temple servant) in Travancore are peculiar, and resemble those of a Sanyāsi (ascetic). The body is placed in a sitting posture, and buried in a pit with salt, ashes and sand. As in the case of a Sanyāsi who is liberated from the bondage of the flesh, though alive in body, few death rites are performed. But, on the eleventh day, a ceremony corresponding to the ekōddishta srādh of the Brāhman is performed. A knotted piece of kusa (*Eragrostis*) grass, representing the departed soul, is taken to a neighbouring temple, where a lighted lamp, symbolical of Māha Vishnu,

* Madras Mus. Bull. MS.

is worshipped, and prayers are offered. Since the Sanyāsi is considered to be above all sin, and to have acquired sufficient merit for salvation, no srādh is performed by the children born to him before he became an anchorite.*

The jungle Yeruvas of Coorg bury their women in a sitting posture, in a hole scooped out of the side of an ordinary grave, so that the earth does not touch her body.† In like manner, the dead among the Kudubis of South Canara are buried, and no ceremonies are performed for the deceased, except the distribution of rice to a few Brāhmans. Writing about the Irulas of the Nilgiris in 1832, Harkness states‡ that the sepulchres are "pits about thirty or forty feet square, and of considerable depth, over which are placed large planks. Above is erected a shed, covering in the whole, and protecting it from the weather. In the centre of the planks is an opening about a cubit square, over which are placed other pieces of wood, and on these is raised a small mound of earth in the form of an altar, the surface being decorated with pebbles placed there as memorials of the departed, and as objects of future worship. When a casualty occurs, and another burial becomes necessary, the mound of earth is removed, and the body thrown in. Some ten or twelve days after, a mound of fresh earth is raised in room of the one which had been removed. The pebbles, which in the first instance had been put carefully

* Travancore Census Report, 1901.
† Richter. Eth. Compendium of the Castes and Tribes of Coorg.
‡ Aboriginal Race inhabiting the Neilgherry hills, 1832.

aside, are again replaced, and another pebble added to them in memory of the deceased. All this is done with much ceremony, the pebbles being anointed with oil, perfumed with frankincense, and decorated with flowers. Food is also distributed to the assembly, according to the ability of the relatives of the deceased. Should one of this tribe die in an Irula village to which he does not belong, these villagers will not bury him with their dead, but, digging a fresh grave, place the body in it. And, when his relations hear of his death, they come and disinter the body, or whatever may remain of it, in order to deposit it in their own place of sepulture, when they go through the same observances as though the deceased had died among themselves."

When a Nīlgiri Irula dies, two jungle Kurumbas come to the village, and one shaves the head of the other. The shorn man is fed, and presented with a new cloth, which he wraps round his head. This quaint ceremonial is believed, in some way, to bring good luck to the departed. Outside the house of the deceased, in which the corpse is kept till the time of the funeral, men and women dance to the music of the Irula band. The dead are buried in a sitting posture, with the legs crossed tailorwise. Each settlement has its own burial-ground. A pit is dug, at the lower end of which a chamber is excavated, in which the corpse, clad in its own clothes, jewelry, and a new cloth, is placed, and the mouth of the chamber closed with planks or sticks. The pit is then filled in, and the position of the grave marked by a mound. Sometimes an old grave is reopened, and a

further corpse placed in it, either in the original chamber, or in a newly excavated chamber. The following account of an Irula annual memorial service was given to me. A lamp and oil are purchased, and rice is cooked in the village. They are then taken to the shrine at the burial-ground, offered up on stones on which some of the oil is poured and pūja done. At the shrine a pūjāri, with three white marks on the forehead when on duty, officiates. Like the Badaga Dēvadāri, the Nīlgiri Irula priest at times becomes inspired by the god. The Irulas of the North Arcot district are, likewise, said to bury their dead in a sitting posture, with a lamp beside the corpse, and mark the grave with a small upright stone.* The Irulas or Villiyans (bowmen) of the Chingleput district bury their dead lying flat on the face, with the head to the north, and the face turned towards the east. When the grave has been half filled in, they throw into it a prickly-pear (*Opuntia Dillenii*) shrub, and make a mound over it. Around it they place a row or two of prickly-pear stems, to keep off jackals. No monumental stone is placed over the grave. Among other castes, which bury their dead in a sitting posture, are the Yōgi-Gurukkal, who are professional beggars, temple priests, and village schoolmasters in Malabar; the Pandārams, or Saivite beggars in the Tinnevelly district; the Kurnis, who are Kanarese weavers in Bellary; and the Killēkyatas, who speak Marathi, and amuse people with their marionette shows in the little state of Sandūr in the Bellary district, and other places.

* Madras Census Report, 1891.

The Head Magistrate of Coimbatore informs me that the Shōlagas of Gandai near Sirumugai dispose of their dead in a curious way. They have, in the depths of the jungle, a huge bottomless pit, which has been there from time immemorial. When a Shōlaga dies, the body is wrapped in a new cloth, garlanded, and carried to the pit, into which it is thrown. The pit mouth is sealed with a large rock. As soon as this is done, the party return to the village, and no one may look back on the way, as to do so would bring bad luck.

The Kādirs of the Anaimalai hills are buried in a grave, or, if death occurs in the depths of the jungle, with a paucity of hands for digging, the corpse is placed in a crevice between the rocks, and covered over with stones. The grave is dug from four to five feet deep, at some place not far from the scene of death. A band, composed of drum and fife, plays weird dirges outside the hut of the deceased. The body is carried on a bamboo stretcher, lying on a mat, and covered over with a cloth and mat. As it leaves the hut, rice is thrown over it. The corpse is laid in the grave on a mat in a recumbent posture, with head towards the east, and covered over with a mat and leaves. The grave is then filled in. No stone or sepulchral monument is erected to indicate the spot. A memorial service, called karru-mantram, with feasting and dancing, is held two years after death.

When a death occurs among the Paniyans of Malabar, a trench, four or five feet deep, is dug due north and south near the village. At the bottom of this

excavation the earth is scooped out from the western side on a level with the floor, so as to form a receptacle for the corpse, which, placed on a mat, is laid therein upon its left side with the head to the north and feet to the south. After a little cooked rice has been put into the grave, the mat, which has been made broad enough for the purpose, is folded up, and tucked in under the roof of the cavity, and the trench filled up. It has probably been found by experience that the corpse, when thus protected, is safe against the ravages of scavenger jackals and pariah dogs. For seven days after death a little rice gruel is placed at a distance of fifty to a hundred yards from the grave by the Jenmi (landlord), who claps his hands as a signal to the evil spirits in the vicinity, who, in the shape of a pair of crows, are supposed to partake of the food, which is hence called kāka kanji or crow's rice. At a memorial service, held once in every three or four years in honour of those who are specially respected, the Jenmi (landlord), holding on his crossed arms two winnowing sieves, each containing rice, walks round three times, and finally deposits the sieves in a pandal. One of the relatives, or a professional, becomes possessed, and performs the functions of an oracle, working himself up into a frenzied state of divination, while the mourners cry out, and ask why the dead have been taken from them. Meanwhile, food has been prepared for all present, except the mourners, and, when it has been partaken of, dancing is kept up round the central group till daybreak.

On the seventh day after the cremation or burial of a Male (hill) Kudiya, a booth is erected over the grave or place of cremation, and a bleached cloth is spread on it by the washerman. A wick, floating in a half cocoanut shell full of oil, is then lighted, and placed at each corner of the booth. The relations of the deceased then gather round the place, and throw a handful of rice over the spot.* It has been noted as one of the first indications of a jungle tribe being adopted into the Hindu fold, that they replace burial by cremation. Many of the lower classes now-a-days bury or burn their dead, according to the worldly circumstances of the relations of the deceased, burying being cheaper than burning, which necessitates the purchase of wood for the pyre.

At the green funeral of a Toda, which took place when I was on the Nīlgiris in 1900, the corpse was placed in front of the entrance to a circle of loose stones about a yard and a half in diameter, which had been specially constructed for the occasion. Just before the buffalo sacrifice took place, a Toda of the Paiki clan, standing near the head of the corpse, dug a hole in the ground with a cane, and asked a man of the Kenna clan, who was standing opposite, "Shall I throw the mud three times"? To which the Kenna replied "Throw the mud thrice." The Paiki then threw some earth three times over the corpse, and three times into the kraal. According to Breeks,† "it appears that

* Manual of the South Canara district.

† Primitive Tribes and Monuments of the Nilgiris, 1873.

sometimes a circle of old date is used, and sometimes a new one is formed. The ashes of the deceased are scraped together, and buried under a large stone at the entrance of the āzāram. At the dry funeral of a Toda Mr. Walhouse noticed that within the circle several fires were lighted, and bamboo vessels ornamented with cowries and filled with grain, rattans bent to represent buffalo horns, a mimic bow and arrows, ornamented umbrellas, knives, coins, etc., placed in the fire. When the various articles had been consumed, and the fire sunk into embers, the ashes were scraped together, and put into a hole within the circle near the entrance, over which a stone was rolled.

The temples of the Kurubas of North Arcot are said * to be "rude, low structures, resembling an enclosed mantapam (shrine) supported upon rough stone pillars. A wall of stones encloses a considerable space round the temple, and this is covered with small structures formed of four flat stones. The stone facing the open side often has a figure sculptured upon it, representing the deceased gaudu or pūjāri (headman or priest), to whom it has been dedicated. For each deceased person of this rank one of these monuments is erected, and here periodically, and always during the annual feasts, pūja is made, not only to the spirits of the deceased chiefs, but also to those of all who have died in the clan. It seems impossible not to connect this with those strange structures called by the natives Pāndava's temples. They are numerous where the Kurubas are now found,

* Manual of the North Arcot district.

and are known to have been raised over the graves of the dead." Writing concerning the Kurumbas and Irulas,* Mr. Walhouse states that "after every death among them, they bring a long water-worn stone (dēva kotta kallu), and put it into one of the old cromlechs, which are sprinkled over the Nīlgiri plateau. Some of the larger of these have been found piled up to the capstone with such pebbles, which must have been the work of generations. Occasionally, too, the tribes mentioned make small cromlechs for burial purposes, and place the water-worn pebbles in them." According to Mr. Grigg,† some of the Kurumbas of the Nīlgiris "deposit a bone from the pyre in a sāvumanē or death-house—a small cromlech surrounded by upright stones, and bearing some resemblance to the more ancient cromlechs found on the hills. These sāvumanēs, they say, were made by their forefathers." The suggestion is hazarded by Fergusson ‡ that the Kurumbas of the southern hills are the remnant of a great and widely spread race, who may have erected dolmens. Writing concerning the Kurumbas, or shepherd caste of Kaladgi, a correspondent of the Indian Antiquary states § that he came across the tomb of one only four years old. "It was a complete miniature dolmen about eighteen inches every way, composed of four stones, one at each side, one at the rear, and a capstone. The interior was occupied by two round stones about the size of a man's fist, painted red, the deceased man resting in his mother earth below."

* Ind. Ant., IV, 1877.
† Manual of the Nīlgiri district.
‡ Rude Stone Monuments.
§ Ind. Ant., VI, 1877.

The Pāndava temples, pāndu kūlis or kistvaens, referred to above are, Mr. Walhouse writes,* "in many places believed to have been built by a dwarf race a cubit high, who could nevertheless lift the huge stones with ease. I have heard, too, of a large mound near Chingleput, not far from Madras, surrounded by kistvaens, and inhabited by a bearded race of Pāndayar three feet high, ruled by a king who lives in the top of the mound. One of the native notions respecting pāndu kūlis is that men of old constructed them for the purpose of hiding treasure. Hence it is that antiquaries find so many have been ransacked. It is also believed that spells were placed over them as a guard, the strongest being to bury a man alive in the cairn, and bid his ghost protect the deposit against any but the proprietor. The ghost would conceal the treasure from all strangers, or only be compelled to disclose it by a human sacrifice being offered."

In the mountains inhabited by the Mala Arayans of Travancore are many tumuli, and vaults called pāndikuri. The latter stand north and south, with the circular opening to the south. "A round stone," the Rev. S. Mateer writes,† "is fitted to this aperture, with another acting as a long lever, to prevent its falling out. The sides, as also the stones of the top and bottom, are single slabs. To this day the Arayans make similar little cells of pieces of stone, the whole forming a box a few inches square; and, on the death of a member of any family, the spirit is supposed to pass, as the body

* Ind. Ant., V, 1876. † Native Life in Travancore.

is being buried, into a brass or silver image, which is shut into this vault. If the parties are very poor, an oblong smooth stone suffices. A few offerings of milk, rice, toddy and ghī are made, a torch is lighted and extinguished, the figure placed inside the cell, and the covering stone hastily placed on. Then all leave. On the anniversary, similar offerings being made, the stone is lifted off, and again hastily closed. The spirit is thus supposed to be enclosed. No one ventures to touch the cell at any other time."

In an account of his excavations at the extensive "prehistoric" burial site at Aditanallur in the Tinnevelly district, Mr. A. Rea writes as follows * concerning a series of gold ornaments, which were found in most cases lying at the bottom of large urns, crusted and crumpled, apparently intentionally, at the time of deposit. "It seems certain that they are diadems. Diadems of the same shape were found at Mycenæ, and are described † as long, thin, oval gold plates, bound round the head by a small gold wire, the holes for which are at each extremity. This description applies equally to the present examples, except as to the gold wire, of which none was seen. The tying material was probably thread, of which I found traces in some bronze necklaces. Now-a-days no custom is known in the neighbourhood of tying diadems on the dead, but what may be a relic of it is described as pattayam kattaradu, meaning literally in Tamil 'the tying of a plate' to the forehead of a corpse,

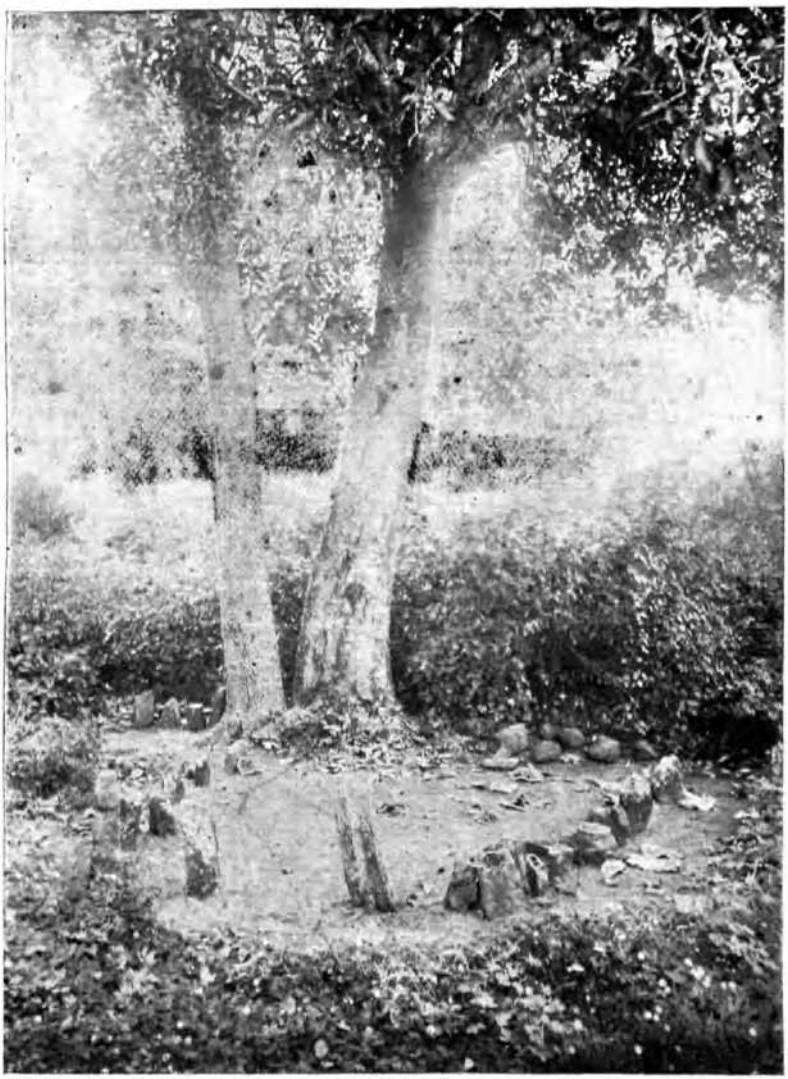
* Arch. Survey of India, Ann. Report, 1902-03.
† Journ. Soc. Arts. No. 2595, Vol. I, 777.

but which now consists in the sprinkling of some grains of gold and silver on the breast of the dead. I also learn that, among some castes in the east of the Madura district, there still exists a custom of tying a plain rectangular strip of gold, an inch or two in length, on the forehead of the dead. In this case, the custom is known by the same name, and its forms have been preserved in their entirety. In Aditanallur the custom could not have been a general one, for, out of many urns excavated, only a few gold ornaments were found. It must have been limited to persons of rank or importance."

The Jains cremate their dead, placing the corpse on a stone, in order to avoid taking the life of any stray insect during the process.

The Nayādis of Malabar burn their dead close to the dwelling hut. The bones are collected on the seventh day, and preserved in a pot, which is kept close to the hut of the deceased. Pollution is observed for ten days. On the tenth day all the sons of the deceased go with their relations to the nearest stream, and bury the bones on the bank. The sons bathe, and perform beli (offering). A heap of sand, representing the deceased, is constructed, and on it are placed a piece of plantain (*Musa*) leaf, some unboiled rice, and karuka grass (*Cynodon*). Over these water is poured twelve times, and the sons reverently prostrate themselves before the heap. The Nayādi is an ancestor worshipper, and keeps representations of the departed near the hut, to which rice, toddy, and arrack are offered at certain fixed times,

Plate VIII.



Nayādi Ancestral Circle.

e.g., at the Onam and Vishu festivals. "I visited," Mr. S. Appadorai Iyer writes,* " one of the spots, where the Nayādis keep these memorial monuments to deceased ancestors. Beneath a mango tree in a paramba (garden) I counted forty-four stones set up in a circle round the tree (plate VIII). One of these stones was a beli-kal (beli stone), such as is placed round the inner shrines of temples. The remainder resembled survey stones, but were smaller in size. I asked a Nayādi what the stones indicated. He stated that they represented forty-four grown-up Nayādis who had left the world. The stone is set up immediately after the cremation of the body. On the ceremonial occasions mentioned above, solemn prayers are offered that the souls of the departed may protect them from the ravages of wild beasts and snakes. I enquired of a Nayādi how he can expect assistance when a tiger comes in his way. The reply was that he would invoke the aid of his ancestors, and that immediately the mouth of the beast would be sealed, and the animal rendered harmless. The purport and object of their prayers are that all the superior castes, who give them alms, may have long life and prosperity; that they themselves, and their families, may have as great peace and as much food in the future as they had yesterday; and that tigers, snakes, and other beasts may not hurt them. When asked why the Nayādis are not thieves, they replied that they are not so much afraid of tigers as of man, and that they would rather die of hunger than steal. Some time ago an old Nayādi, who had the

* Madras Mus. Bull. IV, 1, 1901.

reputation of being a good shot, died, and was buried. His bones were subsequently collected, and his son, who had obtained a handful of gunpowder from a gun license-holder, set fire to it near the grave with a view to satisfying the soul of the deceased, whose bones, after suspension in a pot beneath a mango tree, were carried to the river."

Of the three endogamous sections of the Tottiyans of the Madura district, two—the Yerrakollas and Vekkiliyans—observe the worship of ancestors, who are represented by a number of stones set up somewhere within the village boundaries. Such places are called mālē. The stones are arranged in an irregular circle. The circles of the Yerrakollas are exceedingly simple, and recall to mind those of the Nayādis, but without the tree. The stones are set up in an open space close to the burning-ground. When a death occurs, a stone is erected among the ashes of the deceased, on the last day of the funeral ceremonies (karmandhiram), and worshipped. It is immediately transferred to the ancestral circle. The mālē of the Vekkiliyans consists of a massive central wooden pillar, carved with male and female human figures (plate IX), set up in a cavity in a round boulder, and covered over by a conical canopy supported on pillars (plate X). When this canopy is set in motion, the central pillar appears to be shaking. This illusion, it is claimed, is due to the power of the ancestral gods. All round the central pillar, which is about ten feet high, a number of stones of different sizes are set up. The central pillar represents Jakkamma and other remote ancestors. The surrounding stones are the representatives of those who

Plate IX.

Tottiyan Mālē.

have died in recent times. Like the Yerrakollas, the Vekkiliyans erect a stone on the karmandhiram day at the spot where the body was cremated, but, instead of transferring it at once to the ancestral circle, they wait till the day of periodical mālē worship, which, being an expensive ceremonial, may take place only once in twelve years. If the interval is long, the number of stones representing those who have died meanwhile may be very large. News of the approaching mālē worship is sent to the neighbouring villages, and, on the appointed day, people of all castes pour in, bringing with them several hundred bulls. The hosts supply their guests with fodder, pots, and a liberal supply of sugar-cane. Refusal to bestow sugar-cane freely would involve failure of the object of the ceremonial. After the completion of the worship, the bulls are let loose, and the animal which reaches the mālē first is decorated, and held in reverence. Its owner is presented with cloths, money, etc.

"For ancestor worship," Mr. A. Rea writes,* "each Coorg house has a kaimatta under a tree in his fields, or in the yard close to his house. This is a raised mud platform, where carved stones, representing the images of their ancestors, are placed. Sacrifices of fowls and pigs are made to them. Sometimes Coorgs become possessed of the spirits of the dead, and express all their desires, when they are sumptuously fed and given drink. The spirits of ancestors are believed to hang over their locality, and become angry now and then." On the final

* Arch. Survey, Madras. Report, 1901-02.

day of the death ceremonies among the Kaikōlans, a small hut is erected, and inside it stones representing the ancestors, brought by a barber, are set up. Some days after the death of a Pallan at Coimbatore, cooked rice, betel leaves, and other articles, are placed near a bābul (*Acacia arabica*) or other thorny tree, and seven small stones, smeared with turmeric, are set up. A cocoanut is broken, and pūja performed. The thorny tree represents the dead person, and the stones are emblematic of the seven Hindu sages, who are worshipped in order to secure salvation to the soul of the deceased.

Near the burial ground of the Irulas of the Nīlgiris is a shed, inside which stones of various sizes are piled up. The larger stones represent adult, and the smaller stones youthful members of the tribe who have died.

An uncommon kind of ancestor worship is recorded * by Mr. Francis from the eastern tāluks of the Anantapur district. "In that quarter, carefully and strongly built tombs may often be seen, each of them provided with a niche, in which a lamp may be placed. At these the Vishnavites of several castes do regular worship to their ancestors on the date of the annual ceremony of the deceased, and on the Mahālaya Amāvāsya day. The tombs are previously whitewashed, and, on the day in question after dark, goats are sacrificed, cocoanuts broken, camphor burnt, and a lamp is lighted in the niche on the tomb."

The Savaras of Ganjam burn their dead, and bury the ashes. A grand feast is given on the day after death, a

* Gazetteer of the Anantapur district.

Plate X.

month after that event, and on the anniversary. On the last occasion they dance round the spot where the body was burnt, and set up a stone on end under a tree near the village in memory of the deceased.*

In an account of the death ceremonies of the Kois or Koyis of the Godāvari district, the Rev. J. Cain states,† that "the bodies of children, and young men and women, are buried. If a child dies within a month of its birth, it is usually buried close to the house, so that the rain, dropping from the eaves, may fall upon the grave, and thereby cause the parents to be blessed with another child in due course. With the exception of the above-mentioned, corpses are usually burnt. A cow or bullock is slain, and the tail cut off and put in the dead person's hand, after the cot on which the corpse is carried has been placed upon the funeral pile. If a pūjāri or Koi priest is present, he not unfrequently claims a cloth or two belonging to the dead person. The cot is then removed, and the body burnt. Mr. Vanstavern reports that he has seen part of the liver of the slain animal placed in the mouth of the corpse. The friends of the deceased then retire, and proceed to feast upon the animal slain for the occasion. Three days afterwards they generally return, bringing contributions of cholum (millet: *Sorghum*), and, having slain one or more animals, have another feast. The general idea of the Kois is that the spirits of the dead wander about the forest in the form of pishāchis." Mr. G. F. Paddison informs me that in the Mulkanagari tālūk of Vizagapatam he came across a Koya graveyard

* Manual of the Ganjam district. † Ind. Ant. V, 1876.

with upright stones, each of which had a bullock's tail tied to it. He was told that it is the custom to tie a bullock by the tail to the stone, kill it, and then, leaving the tail on the stone, take away the carcase to be eaten. The tail, representing the animal, is left to appease the ghost of the deceased, who thinks that he has got the whole animal. Much in the same way, a lizard, when pursued by a scorpion, sheds its tail, which the scorpion proceeds to sting, while the lizard hurries away to make a new one.

Among the Koragas of South Canara, a handful of earth is removed from the grave on the sixteenth day after burial, and buried in a pit. A stone is erected over it, on which some rice and toddy are placed as a last offering to the departed soul, which is then asked to join its ancestors.* When a death occurs among the Shōlagas of the Coimbatore hills, the corpse is buried. On their return from the funeral, those who have been present salute a lighted lamp. On the spot where the dead person breathed his last, a little rāgi (*Eleusine*) paste and water are placed, and here, on the fourth day, a goat is sacrificed, and offered up to the soul of the departed. After this, the son proceeds to the burial-ground, carrying a stone, and followed by five men selected from each of the exogamous septs. Arrived near the grave, they sit down while the son places the stone on the ground, and they then lift it in succession. The last man to do so is said to fall into a trance. On his recovery, five leaves (plantain, teak, etc.) are

* Manual of the South Canara district.

arranged round the stone, and, on each leaf, five different kinds of food are placed. The five men partake of the food, each from the leaf allotted to his sept. The meal concluded, the son holds the stone in his hands, while his companions pour rāgi and water over it, and then carries it away to the gopamanē (burial-ground) of his sept, and sets it up there.

When a Toreya of the Coimbatore district dies, the corpse is placed inside a pandal made of cocoanut leaves and stems of the milk-hedge (*Euphorbia*). Sect marks are placed on the foreheads of the corpse and the widow. The son dons the sacred thread. At the funeral a mound is piled up over the grave. A Paraiyan places a small twig of the arka plant (*Calotropis gigantea*) in three corners of the grave, leaving out the north-east corner, and the son puts a small coin on each twig. As he goes round the grave with a water-pot and fire-brand, his maternal uncle, who stands at the head of the grave, makes holes in the pot. On the third, fifth, seventh, and ninth days, the widow, dressed in new cloths and decorated with ornaments and flowers, is taken to the burial-ground with offerings of milk, ghī, tender cocoanut, sandal, camphor, etc. Five small stones, smeared with turmeric and lime, are set up at the head of the grave, and worshipped. The widow goes thrice round the grave, and seats herself near the head thereof. Her brother holds up her arms, and one of her husband's male relations breaks her bangles. She breaks her tāli, and throws it on the grave, with the flowers which adorn her. Her ornaments are removed, and she is covered with a

cloth, and taken to the river, where she is rubbed with cow-dung, and bathed. The son and other relatives go to the temple with butter and other articles required for pūja. The Brāhman performs a service, and shuts the door of the temple. The son, with his back to the temple, throws a little butter on the doors, which are then opened. This is repeated thrice. On the eleventh day pollution is removed by sprinkling holy water, and the caste people are fed. The widow remains gōsha (not appearing in public) for three months.

On the death of an Odde at Coimbatore, the corpse is, like that of the Toreya, placed under a milk-hedge pandal. When it is borne to the burial-ground, the son carries a new earthen pot filled with water, and the barber the various articles required for pūja, and a pot containing cooked rice. A Paraiyan marches in front, carrying the mat and pillows used by the deceased, and throws them in a place called the idukādu, which has to be passed before the burial-ground is reached. This spot is made to represent the shrine of Arichandra, a king who became a slave of the Paraiyans, and is in charge of the burial-ground. At the idukādu the bier is set on the ground, and the barber makes a mark at the four corners, on each of which the son places a quarter-anna. The barber and the son then go round the bier three times, and the latter, after putting some of the cooked rice on the corpse, breaks the pot containing the rice near its head. The two bearers, who up to this time were at the head of the corpse, now change places with those who were at the feet. From the idukādu to the burial-ground only a single

drum may be beaten. Arrived at the burial-ground, the son and other relations place a little raw rice in the mouth of the corpse. The son is shaved, and a piece of cloth, torn from the winding sheet, is given to the Paraiyan. The corpse is laid in the grave with its face to the north, and the grave is filled in. The Paraiyan places a small stone and twig of a thorny tree on it, and again makes a mark in the four corners, in each of which the son once more places a quarter-anna. The coins are the perquisite of the Paraiyan. Placing the pot of water on his right shoulder, the son, with a fire-brand in his left hand, goes, accompanied by the barber, thrice round the grave. Each time the head of the grave is reached, the barber makes a hole in the pot. The son then throws the pot away, and sticks the fire-brand into the grave. All then take their departure without looking back. On the evening of the third day, on which crows are fed with rice at the grave, the figure of a human being is made in rice flour, and placed on a leaf. At the ends of the four extremities, the navel, and on the head, depressions are made, into which a little oil and lighted wicks are placed. The son carries it to the backyard of the house, and places it in a pit filled with water. He then returns to the house without being seen by any one, and enters a room, in which rice has been kept ready for him. He shuts the doors, and eats the food. A calf is placed outside the door, so that, when he opens it, he must see it. He then gazes at the stars. On the day of the anniversary ceremony, the cloths and other belongings of the deceased are worshipped by the near relations.

Somewhat similar are the death ceremonies of the Paraiyans of Coimbatore. The corpse is placed in a pandal made of twigs of the nīm tree (*Melia Azadirachta*) and milk-hedge, and supported behind by a mortar. The widow puts on all her ornaments, and decorates her hair with flowers. She seats herself on the left of the corpse, into the hand of which some paddy and salt are placed. Taking hold of the hands, some one pours the contents into the hands of the widow, who throws them back into those of the corpse. This is done thrice, after which she ties the rice in her cloth. On the way to the burial-ground, the son carries a new pot of water, the barber a pot of cooked rice and brinjal (*Solanum Melongena*) fruits, and other things required for doing pūja. The Paraiyan in charge of the burial-ground carries a fire-brand. The mats, and other articles used by the deceased, and the materials of which the pandal were made, are carried in front by the washerman, who throws them into the idukādu. Here, as before, the son breaks the pot of rice, and the barber makes marks. The son places a quarter-anna on three of the marks, and a little cow-dung on the one at the north-east corner. The widow seats herself at the feet of the corpse, and another widowed woman breaks her tāli-string, and throws it on the corpse. Arrived at the grave the gurukkal (priest) descends into it, does pūja, and applies sacred ashes to its sides. The body is lowered into it, and half a yard of cloth from the winding-sheet is given to the Paraiyan, and a quarter of a yard to an Āndi (religious mendicant). The grave is filled in up to the neck, and bael leaves

(*Ægle Marmelos*), salt, and sacred ashes placed on the head by the gurukkal. The grave is then completely filled in, and a stone and thorny branch placed at the head end. As the son goes round the grave thrice, the barber makes a hole in the water-pot, which is thrown on the stone. The son retires with his head covered with a cloth. The son and other relations bathe, and return to the house, where a vessel containing milk is placed on a mortar, and another containing water placed at the door. They dip twigs of the pīpal (*Ficus religiosa*) into the milk, and throw them on the roof. They also worship a lighted lamp. On the third day, cooked rice, and other food for which the deceased had a special liking, are taken to the grave, and placed on plantain leaves. Pūja is done, and the crows are attracted to the spot. If they do not turn up, the gurukkal prays, and sprinkles water three times. On the seventeenth day the son and others, accompanied by the gurukkal, carry a new brick, and articles required for pūja, to the river. The brick is placed in the water, and the son bathes. The various articles are spread on a plantain leaf, before which the son places the brick. Pūja is done to it, and a piece of new cloth tied to it. It is then again carried to the river, and immersed therein. The ceremony concludes with the lighting of the sacred fire (hōmam). The 'Dead March in Saul' has been known to be played at a Paraiyan funeral in Madras. At royal death ceremonies in Travancore, the same march is played by the band of the Nayar Brigade.

When a Mukkuvan (fishing caste of Malabar) dies, the body is placed on a bier brought by the barber, dressed in new clothes, and decked with ornaments. Four persons are deputed to carry the bier. They bathe in the sea, and carry the corpse to the grave. Four old women engage in loud lamentations. A few pieces of the clothes on the dead body are torn off, and preserved by the son, and others who perform the burial rites. The bearers and near relations of the deceased then bathe in the sea, and the body is placed in the grave. A small piece of gold, and a little water and flowers, are placed in the nose, and all present drop water into the mouth of the corpse. The grave is then filled in. Some use coffins. The son, or other person who conducts the ceremonies, goes round the grave three times with a pot of water on his head, and breaks the pot at the head of the grave. After the interment, all return to the house, and worship a lamp, which is lighted by a barber woman. The next-of-kin is then taken by the barber to the sea-shore, where oblations of water and cooked rice are offered to the deceased. Until the fourteenth day, the barber woman sprinkles water on those who observe pollution. On the fourteenth day the barber makes an image of the deceased in rice, and the relations worship it. The barber then gives them salt and tamarinds, which they eat. He and the headman are then paid their fees. Rice and cocoanuts are distributed to all the houses of the dēsam (sub-division), and the son performs the final ceremony at the grave. That night all go in procession to the shore, and the funeral cakes

and a piece of the hair of the son are thrown into the sea. There is a feast on that, and the following day. On the fifteenth day, after the feast, the barber distributes sandal and jaggery to the assembled people, and they leave the house without touching the eaves. If the deceased has a wife of the first class (*i.e.*, married to him with all the marriage rites), her tāli is broken by the barber woman, and put into the grave. A cloth is thrown on her head, and a pot of water poured over it. She is then confined to the house for a year. On the death of such a wife, if her husband is alive, three pots of water are poured over his head, and he remains in the house for three days.

At the funeral of a Thanda Pulayan of Cochin, a pot of water is broken at the head of grave. At the four corners thereof a few grains of rice are placed, and a pebble is laid on it, with mantrams (charms), to keep jackals away, and to prevent the spirit of the departed from molesting people. The Cherumans (agrestic serfs) of Malabar, like other classes, observe death pollution. But, as they cannot, at certain seasons, afford to be idle for fourteen consecutive days, they resort to an artifice to attain this end. They mix cow-dung and paddy, and make it into a ball, and place the ball in an earthen pot, the mouth of which they carefully close with clay. The pot is laid in a corner of the hut, and as long as it remains unopened, they remain free from pollution, and can mix among their fellows. On a convenient day they open the pot, and are instantly seized with pollution, which continues for forty days. Otherwise fourteen

days' consecutive pollution is all that is required. On the forty-first or fifteenth day, as the case may be, rice is thrown to the ancestors, and a feast follows.*

The Koramas of Mysore are said to experience considerable difficulty in finding men to undertake the work of carrying the corpse to the grave. Should the dead Korama be a man who has left a young widow, it is customary for some one to propose to marry her the same day, and, by so doing, to engage to carry out the principal part of the work connected with the burial. A shallow grave, barely two feet deep, is dug, and the corpse laid therein. When the soil has been loosely piled in, a pot of fire, carried by the chief mourner in a split bamboo, is broken, and a pot of water placed on the raised mound. Should the spot be visited during the night by a pack of jackals, and the water drunk by them, to slake their thirst after feasting on the dead Korama, the omen is accepted as proof that the liberated spirit has fled away to the realms of the dead, and will never trouble man, woman, child, or cattle. On the sixth day the chief mourner must kill a fowl, and mix its blood with rice. This he places, with some betel leaves and nuts, near the grave. If it is carried off by crows, every thing is considered to have been settled satisfactorily. When a Hasalara or Hasala (forest tribe) of Mysore dies, somebody's evil spirit is credited with the mishap, and an astrologer is consulted, to ascertain its identity. He throws cowry (*Cypræa moneta*) shells or rice for divination, and mentions the name of some neighbour as the

* Malabar Manual.

owner of the devil. Thereupon the spirit of the dead is redeemed by the heir or relative by means of a pig, fowl, or other guerdon. The spirit is then considered to be released, and is thenceforward domiciled in a pot, which is periodically supplied with water and nourishment. This, it is suggested, may be the elementary germ of the posthumous care taking, or srādh, in the more civilised members of the Hindu community.*

On the day following the funeral of a Khond, a little rice is cooked, placed on a dish, and laid on the spot where the corpse was burnt. An incantation is then pronounced, requesting the spirit of the deceased person to eat the rice, and enjoy itself, and not to change itself into a devil or tiger, and come bothering the survivors in the village. Three days after death, the madda, or ceremony, is performed. An effigy of the deceased is prepared out of straw, and stuck up in front of, or on the roof of the house. The relations and friends assemble, mourn, and eat at the expense of the people of the deceased's house. Each person brings a present of some kind or other, and, on his departure next day, receives something of slightly higher value. The death of a person in a village requires a purification, which is made by the sacrifice of a buffalo. If a man has been killed by a tiger, the purification is made by the sacrifice of a pig, the head of which is cut off with a tangi (axe) by a Pāno (hill weaver), and passed between the legs of the men in the village, who stand in a line astraddle. It is a bad omen to him, if the head

* Mysore Census Report, 1891.

touches any man's legs. If the Patro (head of a group of villages) attends a funeral, he gets a fee of a goat for firing his gun, to drive away the dead man's ghost.*

At the final death ceremonies of the Gānigas, food is offered to crows and the soul of the dead person, who is represented by a wooden post decorated with his clothes. The bangles of a widow are broken near the post, which is finally thrown into a tank or stream.

At a funeral of a Nambūtiri Brāhman in Travanore, when the corpse is almost reduced to ashes, the principal performer of the ceremonies and his brothers bathe, and, taking some earth from the adjoining stream or a tank make it into a representation of the deceased.†

When a Yānādi (Telugu forest tribe) is buried, at a fixed spot near the grave, on which all corpses are placed, a cross is drawn on the ground, the four lines of which represent the four cardinal points of the compass. Close to the corpse are placed betel leaves and nuts, and a copper coin. All present then proceed to the spot where the grave is to be dug, while the corpse is left in charge of a Yānādi called the Bathyasthadu, who, as a rule, belongs to a different sept from that of the deceased. The corpse is laid on a cloth, face downwards, in the grave. The eldest son, followed by the other relatives, then throws three handfuls of earth into the grave, which is filled in. On their return home the mourners undergo purification by bathing before entering their huts. In front of the dead man's hut, two broken chatties (pots) are placed, whereof one contains ash-water, the other

* Manual of the Ganjam district. † Travancore Census Report, 1901.

turmeric-water. Into each chatty a leafy twig is thrown. Those who have been present at the funeral stop at the chatties, and, with the twig, sprinkle themselves first with the ash-water, and then with the turmeric-water. Inside the hut a lighted lamp, fed with gingelly-oil, is set up, before which those who enter make obeisance before eating. The chinnadinamu (little day) ceremony, whereof notice is given by the Bathyasthadu, is usually held on the third day after death. Every group (gudem) or village has its own Bathyasthadu, specially appointed, whose duty it is to convey the news of death, puberty of girls, and other events, to all the relatives. On the morning of the chinnadinamu, the eldest son of the deceased cooks rice in a new pot, and makes curries and cakes according to his means. These are made up into six balls, which are placed in a new basket, and taken to the burial ground. On reaching the spot where the cross-lines were drawn, a ball of rice is placed thereon, together with betel leaves and nuts and a copper coin. The Bathyasthadu remains in charge thereof, while those assembled proceed to the grave, whereon a pot of water is poured, and a stone planted at the spot beneath which the head lies. The stone is anointed with shi-kai (fruit of *Acacia concinna*) and red powder, and milk poured over it, first by the widow or widower, and then by the relations This ceremony concluded, the son places a ball of rice at each corner of the grave, together with betel and money. Milk is poured over the remaining ball, which is wrapped in a leaf, and buried over the spot where the abdomen of the deceased is situated.

Close to the grave, at the southern or head end, three stones are set up in the form of a triangle, whereon a new pot full of water is placed. A hole is made in the bottom of the pot, and water trickles out towards the head of the corpse. This concludes the ceremony, and, as on the day of the funeral, purification by bathing, ash-water and turmeric-water is carried out. The peddadinamu (big day) ceremony is performed on the sixteenth, or some later day after death. As at the chinnadinamu, the son cooks rice in a new pot. Opposite the entrance to the hut a handful of clay is squeezed into a conical mass, representing the soul of the deceased, and stuck up on a platform. The eldest son, taking a portion of the cooked rice, spreads it on a leaf in front of the clay image before which incense is burnt, and a lamp placed. The image, and the remainder of the food made up into four balls, are then carried by the son to a tank. As soon as the relatives have assembled there, a recumbent effigy of a man is made, close to the edge of the tank, with the feet towards the north. The conical image is set up close to the head of this effigy, which is anointed by the relatives as at the chinnadinamu, except that no milk is poured over it. The four balls of rice are placed close to the hands and feet of the effigy, together with betel and money, and the son salutes it. The agnates then seat themselves in a row between the effigy and the water, with their hands behind their backs, so as to reach the effigy, which is moved slowly towards the water, into which it finally falls, and becomes disintegrated. The proceedings

Plate XI.

Gammala Muggu.

conclude with the distribution of cloths and tobacco and purification as before. The more prosperous Yānādis now engage a Brāhman to remove the pollution by sprinkling water over them. During the peddadinamu incessant music and drum-beating has been going on, and is continued till far into the night, and sometimes the ceremonial is made to last over two days, in order that the Yānādis may indulge in a bout of music and dancing.

Like the Yānādis, the Mādigas, at the peddadinamu ceremony, make an effigy of the deceased, but only if a female, to which food, winnowing sieves, and glass bangles are offered.

On the last day (peddadinamu) of the funeral ceremonies of the Gamallas (Telugu toddy-drawers), it is customary to engage Pambalas and Bainēdis (musicians and story-tellers) to recite the story of Ankamma, or some other god or goddess. After food has been offered to the dead person, the musician and reciter turn up in the evening, and draw on the floor of the house figures (muggu, plate XI) of a male and female ancestor in powders of five colours, red, yellow, white, green, and black. To these figures a fowl and cocoanuts are offered, and the story-telling is continued until dawn. It is customary among the Padmā Sālē weavers, in some places, to offer up a fowl to the corpse before its removal from the house. If a death occurs on a Saturday or Sunday, a fowl is tied to the bier, and burnt with the corpse. This is done, as there is a belief that otherwise another death will very shortly occur. The Tamulians, in like manner, have a proverb "A Saturday corpse will not go alone."

On the final day of the death ceremonies among the Paraiyans of the Chingleput district, all concerned proceed to a tank with cooked rice, cakes, etc. A Pillayar (figure of Ganēsa) is made with earth, and five kalasams (vessels) are placed near it. The various articles which have been brought are set out in front of it. Two bricks, on which figures of a man and woman are drawn, are given to the son, who washes them, and does pūja to them, after an effigy has been made at the waterside by a washerman. He then says "I gave you calves and money. Enter kailāsam (the abode of Sīva). Find your way to paralokam (the other world). I gave you milk and fruit. Go to the world of the dead. I gave gingelly and milk. Enter yamalokam (the abode of the god of death). Eleven descendants on the mother's side, and ten on the father's, twenty-one in all, may they enter heaven." He then puts the bricks in the water.

At the funeral of an Okkiliyan of Coimbatore, as the procession proceeds towards the burial ground, the relations and friends of the deceased throw small coins, fruits, cakes, fried rice, etc., on the road, to be picked up by poor people. If the funeral is in high life, they may throw flowers made in silver or gold, but not images, as is done by some of the higher classes. A small quantity of salt is placed on the abdomen of the corpse before the grave is filled in. Leaves of the arka plant or tangēdu (*Cassia auriculata*) are placed at three corners of the grave, and a stone is set up over the head. On the third day, dried twigs of several species of *Ficus* and the jāk tree (*Artocarpus integrifolia*), milk, a new cloth,

plantains, tender cocoanuts, cheroots, raw rice, betel, etc., are taken to the grave. The twigs are burnt, and reduced to ashes, with which, mixed with water, the figure of a human being is made. It is covered with the new cloth, and flowers are thrown on it. Pūja is done to the plantains, cocoanuts, etc., and milk is poured on the figure by the relations and friends of the deceased. The widow breaks her tāli string, and throws it on the figure. The son, and the four bearers who carried the corpse to the grave, are shaved. Each of the bearers stands up, holding a pestle. The barber touches their shoulders with sacred grass dipped in gingelly oil. Raw rice, and other eatables, are sent to the houses of the bearers by the dead person's son. And, at night, his cloths, turban, and other personal belongings, are worshipped.

The Myāsa Bēdas (hunters) of Mysore, on the day after cremation, scatter the ashes on five tangēdu trees.* On the last day of the funeral rites of a Pattanāvan (Tamil fishing caste) married man, the tāli of his widow is cut off, and thrown into a new pot containing water. Those who come to condole with her on her loss must first set eyes on the tāli on a tray, and afterwards on the widow. A common form of abuse among Pattanāvan women is "Let your tāli be thrown into water."

At the funeral of the Jōgis various articles of food, and tobacco, are placed in a hole scooped out in the floor of the grave. On the last day of the funeral rites,

* Mysore Census Report, 1891.

a widower cuts through his waist-thread, and a widow removes her tāli.

Turning now to the tribes which inhabit the Nīlgiri plateau. Full details of the funeral ceremonies of the Todas will, I know, be published ere long by Dr. Rivers. And it must suffice for the moment to describe those funerals, at which I have been present as an eye-witness.

It was my good fortune to have an opportunity of witnessing the dry funeral ceremony (kēdu) of a woman who had died from small-pox two months previously. On arrival at a mand (Toda settlement) on the open downs about five miles from Ootacamund, we were conducted by a Toda friend to the margin of a dense shola (grove), where we found two groups seated apart, consisting of (*a*) women, girls, and brown-haired female babies, chatting round a camp fire; (*b*) men, boys, and male babies carried, with marked signs of paternal affection, by their fathers. The warm copper hue of the little girls and young adults stood out in noticeable contrast to the dull, muddy complexion of the elder women. In a few minutes a murmuring sound commenced in the centre of the female group. Working themselves up to the necessary pitch, some of the women (near relatives of the dead woman) commenced to cry freely, and the wailing and lachrymation gradually spread round the circle, until all, except little girls and babies who were too young to be affected, were weeping and moaning, some for fashion, others from genuine grief. The men meanwhile showed no signs of sorrow, but sat talking together, and expressed regret that we had not

brought the hand dynamometer, to amuse them with trials of strength. In carrying out the orthodox form of mourning, the women first had a good cry to themselves, and then, as their emotions became more intense, went round the circle, selecting partners with whom to share companionship in grief. Gradually the group resolved itself into couplets of mourners, each pair with their heads in close contact, and giving expression to their emotions in unison. Before separating, to select a new partner, each couple saluted by bowing the head and raising the feet of the other, covered by the putkūli (cloth), thereto. From time to time the company of mourners was reinforced by late arrivals from distant mands, and, as each detachment, now of men, now of women, came in view across the open downs, one could not fail to be reminded of the gathering of the clans on some Highland moor. The resemblance was heightened by the distant sound as of pipers, produced by the Kota band (with two police constables in attendance), composed of four Kotas, who made a hideous noise with drums and flutes as they drew near the scene of action. The band, on arrival, took up a position close to the mourning women. As each detachment arrived, the women, recognising their relatives, came forward and saluted them in the manner customary among Todas by falling at their feet, and placing first the right then the left foot on their head (ababuddiken). Shortly after the arrival of the band, signals were exchanged, by waving of putkūlis (cloths) between the assembled throng and a small detachment of men some distance off. A general

move was made, and an *impromptu* procession formed with men in front, band in the middle, and women bringing up the rear. A halt was made opposite a narrow gap leading into the shola; men and women sat apart as before, and the band walked round, discoursing unsweet music. A party of girls went off to bring fire from the spot just vacated for use in the coming ceremonial, but recourse was finally had to a box of tändstikers lent by one of our party. At this stage of the proceedings we noticed a woman go up to the eldest son of the deceased, who was seated apart from the other men crying bitterly, and would not be comforted in spite of her efforts to console him. On receipt of a summons from within the shola, the assembled Toda men and ourselves swarmed into it by a narrow track leading to a small clear space around a big tree, from a hole cut at the base of which an elderly Toda produced a piece of the skull of the dead woman, wrapped round with long tresses of her hair. It now became the men's turn to exhibit active signs of grief, and all with one accord commenced to weep and mourn. Amid the scene of lamentation, the hair was slowly unwrapt from off the skull, and burned in an iron ladle, from which a smell as of incense arose. A bamboo pot of ghī was produced, with which the skull was reverently anointed, and placed in a cloth spread on the ground. To this relic of the deceased the throng of men, amid a scene of wild excitement, made obeisance by kneeling down before it, and touching it with their foreheads. The females were not permitted to witness this stage of the proceedings, with

the exception of one or two near relatives of the departed one, who supported themselves sobbing against the tree. The ceremonial concluded, the fragment of skull, wrapt in the cloth, was carried into the open, where, as men and boys had previously done, women and girls made obeisance to it. A procession was then again formed, and marched on until a place was reached, where were two stone-walled kraals, large and small. Around the former the men, and within the latter the women, took up their position, the men engaging in chit-chat, and the women in mourning, which after a time ceased, and they too engaged in conversation, one of their number (a Toda beauty) entertaining the rest by exhibiting a photograph of herself, with which I had presented her. A party of men, carrying the skull, still in the cloth, set out for a neighbouring shola, where a kēdu of several other dead Todas was being celebrated; and a long pause ensued, broken eventually by the arrival of the other funeral party, the men advancing in several lines, with arms linked, keeping step and crying out U, hah, hah,U, hah, hah, in regular time. This party brought with it pieces of the skulls of a woman and two men, which were placed, wrapt in cloths, on the ground, saluted, and mourned over by the assembled multitude. At this stage a small party of Kotas arrived, and took up their position on a neighbouring hill, waiting, vulture-like, for the carcase of the buffalo which was shortly to be slain. Several young men now went off across the hill in search of buffaloes, and speedily re-appeared, driving five buffaloes before them with sticks. As soon as the beasts approached a

swampy marsh at the foot of the hill, on which the expectant crowd of men was gathered together, two young men of athletic build, throwing off their putkūlis, made a rush down the hill, and tried to seize one of the buffaloes by the horns, with the result that one of them was promptly thrown. The buffalo escaping, one of the remaining four was quickly caught by the horns, and, with arms interlocked, the men brought it down on its knees, amid a general scuffle. In spite of marked objection and strenuous resistance on the part of the animal —a barren cow—it was, by means of sticks freely applied, slowly dragged up the hill, preceded by the Kota band, and with a Toda youth pulling at its tail. Arrived at the open space between the two kraals, the buffalo, by this time thoroughly exasperated, and with blood pouring from its nostrils, had a cloth put on its back, and was despatched by a blow on the poll with an axe deftly wielded by a young and muscular man. On this occasion no one was badly hurt by the sacrificial cow, though one man was seen washing his legs in the swamp after the preliminary struggle with the beast. But Colonel Ross-King narrates * how he saw a man receive a dangerous wound in the neck from a thrust of the horn, which ripped open a wide gash from the collar bone to the ear. With the death of the buffalo, the last scene which terminated the strange rites commenced; men, women, and children pressing forward and jostling one another in their eagerness to salute the dead beast by placing their heads between its horns, and weeping

* Aboriginal Tribes of the Nilgiri Hills, 1870.

and mourning in pairs; the facial expression of grief being mimicked when tears refused to flow spontaneously.

It has been suggested * that the numerous figures of large-horned buffaloes, some with bells round their necks, made of clay, which are found in the Nīlgiri cairns, are monuments of the antiquity of the Toda custom of sacrificing buffaloes decorated with bells at funerals.

A few days after the dry funeral ceremony, I was invited to be present at the green funeral of a young girl who had died of small-pox five days previously. I proceeded accordingly to the scene of the recent ceremony, and there, in company with a small gathering of Todas from the neighbouring mands (among them the only white-haired old woman whom I have seen), awaited the arrival of the funeral cortége, the approach of which was announced by the advancing strains of Kota music. Slowly the procession came over the brow of the hill; the corpse, covered by a cloth, on a rude ladder-like bier, borne on the shoulders of four men, followed by two Kota musicians; the mother carried hidden within a sack; relatives and men carrying bags of rice and jaggery, and bundles of wood of the kiaz tree (*Eugenia Arnottiana*) for the funeral pyre. Arrived opposite a small hut, which had been specially built for the ceremonial, the corpse was removed from the bier, laid on the ground, face upwards, outside the hut, and saluted by men, women, and children, with the same manifestations of grief as at the dry funeral. Soon the men moved

* H. Congreve, Madras Journ. Lit. Science, XIV, 1847. The figures referred to are now in the Madras Museum.

away to a short distance, and engaged in quiet conversation, leaving the females to continue mourning round the corpse, interrupted from time to time by the arrival of detachments from distant mands, whose first duty was to salute the dead body. Meanwhile a near female relative of the dead child was busily engaged inside the hut, collecting together in a basket small measures of rice, jaggery, sago, honey-comb, and the girl's simple toys, which were subsequently to be burned with the corpse. The mourning ceasing after a time, the corpse was placed inside the hut, and followed by the near relatives, who there continued to weep over it. A detachment of men and boys, who had set out in search of the buffaloes which were to be sacrificed, now returned driving before them three cows, which escaped from their pursuers to re-join the main herd. A long pause ensued, and, after a very prolonged drive, three more cows were guided into a swampy marsh, where one of them was caught by the horns as at the dry funeral, and dragged reluctantly, but with little show of fight, to the weird strains of Kota drum and flute, in front of the hut, where it was promptly despatched by a blow on the poll. The corpse was now brought from within the hut, and placed, face upwards, with its feet resting on the forehead of the buffalo, whose neck was decorated with a silver chain, such as is worn by Todas round the loins to suspend the langūti, as no bell was available, and the horns were smeared with butter. Then followed the same frantic manifestations of grief as at the dry funeral, amid which the unhappy mother fainted from sheer

exhaustion. Mourning over, the corpse was made to go through a form of ceremony, resembling that which is performed at the fifth month of pregnancy with the first child. A small boy, three years old, was selected from among the relatives of the dead girl, and taken by his father in search of a certain grass (*Andropogon Schœnanthus*), and a twig of a shrub (*Sophora glauca*), which were brought to the spot where the corpse was lying. The mother of the dead child then withdrew one of its hands from the putkūli, and the boy placed the grass and twig in the hand, and limes, plantains, rice, jaggery, honey-comb, and butter in the pocket of the putkūli, which was then stitched with needle and thread in a circular pattern. The boy's father then took off his son's putkūli, and covered him with it from head to foot. Thus covered, the boy remained outside the hut till the morning of the morrow, watched through the night by near relatives of himself and his dead bride. [On the occasion of the funeral of an unmarried lad, a girl is, in like manner selected, covered with her putkūli from head to foot, and a metal vessel, filled with jaggery, rice, etc. (to be subsequently burnt on the funeral pyre), placed for a short time within the folds of the putkūli. Thus covered, the girl remains till next morning, watched through the dreary hours of the night by relatives. The same ceremony is performed over the corpse of a married woman, who has not borne children, the husband acting as such for the last time, in the vain hope that the woman may produce issue in heaven.] The quaint ceremonial concluded, the corpse was borne away to the

burning-ground within the shola, and, after removal of some of the hair by the mother of the newly wedded boy, burned, with face turned upwards,* amid the music of the Kota band, the groans of the assembled crowd squatting on the ground, and the genuine grief of the nearest relatives. The burning concluded, a portion of the skull was removed from the ashes, and handed over to the recently made mother-in-law of the dead girl, and wrapped up with the hair in the bark of the tūd tree (*Meliosma pungens*). A second buffalo, which, properly speaking, should have been slain before the corpse was burnt, was then sacrificed, and rice and jaggery were distributed among the crowd, which dispersed, leaving behind the youthful widower and his custodians, who, after daybreak, partook of a meal of rice, and returned to their mands; the boy's mother taking with her the skull and hair to her mand, where it would remain until the celebration of the dry funeral. No attention is paid to the ashes after cremation, but they are left to be scattered by the winds.

A further opportunity offered itself to be present at the green funeral of an elderly woman on the open downs not far from our head-quarters, in connection with which certain details, not recorded in my original account of the funeral ceremonies, possess some interest. The corpse was, at the time of our arrival, laid out on a rude bier within an improvised arbour covered with leaves and open at each end, and tended by some of the female relatives. At some little distance, a conclave of Toda

* Marshall states that he was "careful to ascertain that the placing the body with its *face downwards* had not been an accidental circumstance."

men, who rose of one accord to greet us, was squatting in a circle, among whom were many venerable white-turbaned elders of the tribe, protected from the scorching sun by palm-leaf umbrellas. Amid much joking, and speech-making by the veterans, it was decided that, as the eldest son of the deceased woman was dead, leaving a widow, this daughter-in-law should be united to the second son, and that they should live together as man and wife. On the announcement of the decision, the bridegroom-elect saluted the principal Todas present by placing his head on their feet, which were sometimes concealed within the ample folds of the body-cloth. At the funeral of a married woman, three ceremonies must, I was informed, be performed, if possible, by a daughter or daughter-in-law, viz. :—

(1) Tying a leafy branch of the tiviri shrub (*Atylosia Candolleana*) in the putkūli of the corpse ;

(2) Tying balls of thread and cowry shells on the arm of the corpse, just above the elbow ;

(3) Setting fire to the funeral pyre, which was, on the present occasion, done by lighting a rag with a match. In an account of a Toda green funeral Mr. Walhouse notes * that, "when the pile was completed, fire was obtained by rubbing two dry sticks together. This was done mysteriously and apart, for such a mode of obtaining fire is looked upon as something secret and sacred." The buffalo capture took place amid the usual excitement and freedom from accident ; and, later in the day, the stalwart buffalo catchers turned up at the travellers'

* Ind. Ant., III, 1874.

bungalow for a *pour boire* in return, as they said, for treating us to a good fight. The beasts selected for sacrifice were a full grown cow and a young calf. As they were dragged near to the corpse, now removed from the arbour, butter was smeared over the horns, and a bell tied round the neck. The bell was subsequently removed by Kotas, in whose custody it was to remain till the next dry funeral. The death blow, or rather series of blows, having been delivered with the butt-end of an axe, the feet of the corpse were placed in the mouth of the buffalo. In the case of a male corpse, the hands are made to clasp the horns. The customary mourning in couples concluded, the corpse, clad in four cloths, was carried on the stretcher to a hollow in the neighbouring shola, and placed by the side of the funeral pyre, which had been rapidly piled up. The innermost cloth was black in colour, and similar to that worn by the holy pālāl (priest) of the tiriēri (sacred mand). Next to it came a putkūli decorated with blue and red embroidery, outside which again was a plain white putkūli covered over by a red cotton cloth of European manufacture. Seated by the side of the pyre, near to which I was courteously invited to take a seat on the stump of a rhododendron, was an elderly relative of the dead woman, who, while watching the ceremonial, was placidly engaged in the manufacture of a holly walking-stick with the aid of a glass scraper. The proceedings were watched on behalf of Government by a forest guard, and a police constable who, with marked affectation, held his handkerchief to his nose throughout the ceremonial. The corpse was decorated

with brass rings, and within the putkūli were stowed jaggery, a scroll of paper adorned with cowry shells, snuff and tobacco, cocoanuts, biscuits, various kinds of grain, ghī, honey, and a tin-framed looking-glass. A long purse, containing a silver yen and an Arcot rupee of the East India Company, was tied up in the putkūli close to the feet. These preliminaries concluded, the corpse was hoisted up, and swung three times over the now burning pyre, above which a mimic bier, made of slender twigs, was held. This ceremonial, wherein presumably the spirit was supposed to depart heavenwards (to Amnor), concluded, the body was stripped of its jewelry, and a lock of hair cut off by the daughter-in-law for preservation, together with a fragment of the skull, until the dry funeral. As soon as the pyre was fairly ablaze, the mourners, with the exception of some of the female relatives, left the shola, and the men, congregating on the summit of a neighbouring hill, invoked their god. Four men, seized, apparently in imitation of the Kota dēvādi, with divine frenzy, began to shiver and gesticulate wildly, while running blindly to and fro with closed eyes and shaking heads. They then began to talk in Malayālam, and offer an explanation of an extraordinary phenomenon, which had appeared in the form of a gigantic figure, which disappeared as suddenly as it appeared. At the annual ceremony of walking through fire (hot ashes) in that year, two factions arose owing to some dissension, and two sets of ashes were used. This seems to have annoyed the gods, and those concerned were threatened with speedy ruin. But

the whole story was very vague. The possession by some Todas of a smattering of Malayālam is explained by the fact that, when grazing their buffaloes on the northern and western slopes of the Nīlgiris, they come in contact with the Malayālam-speaking people from the neighbouring Malabar district.

The death of a man in a Khond village requires a purificatory ceremony on the seventh day, in the course of which a buffalo is sacrificed. When staying at Kotagiri on the Nīlgiris a few years ago, the weird strains of the Kota band announced to me that death reigned in the Kota village. Soon after daybreak, a detachment of villagers hastened to convey the tidings of the death to the Kotas of the neighbouring villages, who arrived on the scene later in the day in Indian file, men in front and women in the rear. As they drew near to the place of mourning, they all, of one accord, commenced the orthodox manifestations of grief, and were met by a deputation of villagers accompanied by the band. Meanwhile a red flag, tied to the top of a bamboo pole, was hoisted as a signal of death in the village, and a party had gone off to a glade, some two miles distant, to obtain wood for the construction of the funeral car (tēru). The car, when completed, was an elaborate structure, about eighteen feet in height, made of wood and bamboo, in four tiers, each with a canopy of turkey red and yellow cloth, and an upper canopy of white cloth trimmed with red, surmounted by a black umbrella of European manufacture, decorated with red ribands. The car was profusely adorned throughout with red flags and long

white streamers, and with young plantain trees at the base. Tied to the car were a calabash and a bell. During the construction of the car the corpse remained within the house of the deceased man, outside which the relatives and villagers continued mourning to the dirge-like music of the band, which plays so prominent a part at the death ceremonies of both Todas and Kotas. On the completion of the car, late in the afternoon, it was deposited in front of the house. The corpse dressed up in a coloured turban and gaudy coat as for a nautch party, with a garland of flowers round the neck, and two rupees, a half rupee, and sovereign gummed on to the forehead, was brought from within the house, lying face upwards on a cot, and placed beneath the lowest canopy of the car. Near the head were placed iron implements and a bag of rice, at the feet a bag of tobacco, and beneath the cot baskets of grain, rice, cakes, etc. The corpse was covered by cloths offered to it as presents, and before it those Kotas who were younger than the dead man prostrated themselves, while those who were older touched the head of the corpse, and bowed to it. Around the car the male members of the community executed a wild step-dance, keeping time with the music in the execution of various fantastic movements of the arms and legs. During the long hours of the night mourning was kept up to the almost incessant music of the band, and the early morn discovered many of the villagers in an advanced stage of intoxication. Throughout the morning dancing round the car was continued by men, sober and inebriated, with brief intervals of rest, and a young buffalo was

slaughtered as a matter of routine form, with no special ceremonial, in a pen outside the village, by blows on the back and neck administered with the keen edge of an adze. Towards midday presents of rice from the relatives of the dead man arrived on the back of a pony, which was paraded round the funeral car. From a vessel containing rice and rice water, rice was crammed into the mouths of the near relatives, some of the water poured over their heads, and the remainder offered to the corpse. At intervals a musket, charged with gunpowder, which proved later on a dangerous weapon in the hands of an intoxicated Kota, was let off, and the bell on the car rung. About 2 P.M., the time announced for the funeral, the cot bearing the corpse, from the forehead of which the coins had been removed, was carried outside the village, followed by the widow and a throng of Kotas of both sexes, young and old, and the car was carried to the foot of the hill, there to await the arrival of the corpse after the performance of various ceremonies. Seated together at some distance from the corpse, the women continued to mourn until the funeral procession was out of sight, those who could not cry spontaneously, or compel the tears to flow, mimicking the expression of woe by contortion of the grief muscles. The most poignant grief was displayed by man, in a state of extreme intoxication, who sat apart by himself, howling and sobbing, and wound up by creating considerable disturbance at the burning ground. Three young bulls were brought from the village, and led round the corpse. Of these, two were permitted to escape for the time being,

while a vain attempt, which would have excited the derision of the expert Toda buffalo catchers, was made by three men hanging on to the head and tail to steer the third bull up to the head of the corpse. The animal, however, proving refractory, it was deemed discreet to put an end to its existence by a blow on the poll with the butt-end of an adze, at some distance from the corpse, which was carried up to it, and made to salute the dead beast's head with the right hand in feeble imitation of the impressive Toda ceremonial. The carcase of the bull was saluted by a few of the Kota men, and subsequently carried off by Paraiyans. Supported by females, the exhausted widow of the dead man, who had fainted earlier in the day, was dragged up to the corpse, and, lying back beside it, had to submit to the ordeal of removal of all her jewelry, the heavy brass bangle being hammered off the wrist, supported on a wooden roller, by oft-repeated smart blows with mallet and chisel, delivered by a village blacksmith assisted by a besotten individual noted as a consumer of twelve grains of opium daily. The ornaments, as removed, were collected in a basket, to be worn again by the widow after several months. This revolting ceremony concluded, and a last salutation given by the widow to her dead husband, arches of bamboo were attached to the cot, which was covered over with a coloured table-cloth hiding the corpse from sight. A procession was then formed, composed of the corpse on the cot, preceded by the car and musicians, and followed by male Kotas and Badagas, Kota women carrying the baskets of grain and cakes, a vessel

containing fire, burning camphor, and, bringing up the rear, a high dignitary of the church, an amateur photographer, and myself. Quickly the procession marched to the burning ground beyond the bazār, situated in a valley by the side of a stream running through a glade in a dense undergrowth of bracken fern and trailing passion-flower. On arrival at the selected spot, a number of agile Kotas swarmed up the sides of the car, and stripped it of its adornments, including the umbrella, and a free fight for the possession of the cloths and flags ensued. The denuded car was then placed over the corpse, which, deprived of all valuable ornaments, and still lying on the cot face upwards, had been meanwhile placed, amid a noisy scene of brawling, on the rapidly constructed funeral pyre. Around the car faggots of fire-wood, supplied, in lieu of wreaths, by different families in the dead man's village, as a tribute of respect to the deceased, were piled up, and the pyre was lighted with torches kindled at a fire which was burning on the ground close by. As soon as the pyre was in a blaze, tobacco, cheroots, cloths, and grain were distributed among those present, and the funeral party dispersed, discussing the events of the day as they returned to their homes, leaving a few men behind in charge of the burning corpse. And peace reigned once more in the Kota village. A few days later the funeral of an elderly Kota woman took place with a very similar ceremonial. But, suspended from the handle of the umbrella on the top of the car was a rag doll, which, in appearance, resembled an 'Aunt Sally.'

Of the death rites as carried out by the Badaga subdivision of the Badagas of the Nīlgiris the following note was recorded during a recent visit to Kotagiri. When death is drawing near, a gold coin, called Vīraraya hana or fanam, dipped in butter or ghī, is given to the dying man to swallow. If he is too far gone to be capable of swallowing, the coin is, according to Mr. S. M. Natesa Sastri,* tied round the arm. But our informants told us that this is not done at the present day. "If," Mr. Gover writes,† "the tiny coin slip down, well. He will need both gold and ghee, the one to sustain his strength in the dark journey to the river of death, the other to fee the guardian of the fairy-like bridge that spans the dreaded tide. If sense remain to the wretched man, he knows that now his death is nigh. Despair and the gold make recovery impossible, and there are none who have swallowed the Birianhana, and yet have lived. If insensibility or deathly weakness make it impossible for the coin to pass the thorax, it is carefully bound in cloth, and tied to the right arm, so that there may be nought to hinder the passage of a worthy soul into the regions of the blessed." The giving of the coin to the dying man is apparently an important item, and in the Badaga folk-tales a man on the point of death is made to ask for a Vīraraya fanam. When life is extinct, the corpse is kept within the house until the erection of the funeral car (gudikattu) is completed. Though Mr. Gover states that the burning must not be delayed more than twenty-four hours, at the present day the Badagas postpone the

* Madras Christ. Coll. Magazine, 1892.

† Folk Songs of Southern India, 1871.

funeral till all the near relations have assembled, even if this necessitates the keeping of the dead body for two or three days. Cremation may take place on any day, except Tuesday. News of a death is conveyed to distant hamlets (hattis) by a Toreya,* who is paid a rupee for his services. On approaching a hamlet, he removes his turban, to signify the nature of his errand, and, standing on the side of a hill, yells out "Dho! Dho! Who is in the hamlet"? Having imparted his news, he proceeds on his journey to the next hamlet. On the morning of the day fixed for the funeral, the corpse is taken on a charpoy or native cot to an open space, and a buffalo led thrice round it. The right hand of the corpse is then lifted up, and passed over the horns of the buffalo. A little milk is drawn, and poured into the mouth of the corpse. Prior to this ceremony, two or three buffaloes may be let loose, and one of them captured, after the manner of the Todas, brought near the corpse, and conducted round the cot. The funeral car (frontispiece) is built up in five to eleven tiers, decorated with cloths and streamers, and one tier must be covered with black chintz. By the poorer members of the community the car is replaced by a cot covered with cloth, and surmounted by five umbrellas. Immediately after the buffalo ceremony, the corpse is carried to the car, and placed in the lowest storey thereof, washed, and dressed in coat and turban. A new dhupati (coarse cloth) is wrapped round it. Two silver coins—Japanese yens or rupees—are stuck on the forehead. Beneath the cot are placed a crowbar, and baskets containing

* The Toreyas are the lowest endogamous sub-division of the Badagas.

cakes, parched paddy, tobacco, chick pea (*Cicer arietinum*), jaggery, and sāmai (*Panicum miliare*) flour. A number of women, relations and friends of the dead man, then make a rush to the cot, and, sitting on it round the corpse, keep on wailing, while a woman near its head rings a bell. When one batch is tired, it is replaced by another. Badaga men then pour in in large numbers, and salute the corpse by touching the head, Toreyas and female relations touching the feet. Of those who salute, a few place inside the dhupati a piece of white cloth with red and yellow stripes, which has been specially prepared for the purpose. All then proceed to dance round the car to the music of the Kota band, near male relations removing their turban or woollen nightcap, as a mark of respect, during the first three revolutions. Most of the male dancers are dressed up in gaudy petticoats and smart turbans. "No woman," Mr. Natesa Sastri writes, "mingles in the funeral dance if the dead person is a man, but, if the deceased is a woman, one old woman, the nearest relative of the dead, takes part in it." But, at the funerals of two men which we witnessed, a few women danced together with the men. Usually the tribesmen continue to arrive until 2 or 3 P.M. Relations collect outside the village, and advance in a body towards the car, some, especially the sons-in-law of the dead man, riding on ponies, some of which carry sāmai grain. As they approach the car, they shout "Ja! hoch; Ja! hoch." The Muttu Kotas* bring a double iron sickle

* Each Badaga family has its Muttu Kota, who has to make iron implements, ploughs, etc., in return for an annual present of grain.

with imitation buffalo horns on the tip, which is placed, with a hatchet, buguri (flute), and walking-stick, on the cot or on the ground beside it. When all are assembled, the cot is carried to an open space between the house and the burning ground, followed by the car and a party of women carrying the baskets containing grain, etc The car is then stripped of its trappings, and hacked to pieces The widow is brought close to the cot, and removes her nose-screw (elemukkuththi), and other jewels The nose-screw may be only worn by a woman married to a man of the Madavē exogamous sept on two occasions, at the funeral of her husband, and at the mandēdanda festival, when the first born child is taken to the temple At both the funerals which we witnessed the widow had a narrow strip of coloured chintz over her shoulders Standing near the corpse, she removed a bit of wire from her ear-rings, a lock of hair, and a palm-leaf roll from the lobe of the ear, and tied them up in the cloth of her dead husband After her, the sisters of the dead man cut off a lock of hair, and, in like manner, tied it in the cloth. Women attached to a man by illegitimate ties sometimes also cut off a lock of hair, and, tying it to a twig of *Dodonæa viscosa*, place it inside the cloth. Very impressive is the recitation, or after-death confession of a dead man's sins by an elder of the tribe standing at the head of the corpse, and rapidly chanting the following lines, or a variation thereof, while he waves his right hand during each line towards the feet. The reproduction of the recitation in my phonograph never failed to impress the daily audience of Badagas, Kotas and Todas.

This is the death of Andi.
In his memory the calf of the cow Bellē has been set free.
From this world to the other
He goes in a car.
Everything the man did in this world.
All the sins committed by the ancestors.
All the sins committed by his forefathers.
All the sins committed by his parents.
All the sins committed by himself.
The estranging of brothers
Shifting the boundary line.
Encroaching on a neighbour's land by removing the hedge.
Driving away brothers and sisters.
Cutting the kalli tree stealthily.
Cutting the mulli tree outside his boundary.
Dragging the thorny branches of the kotte tree.
Sweeping with a broom.
Splitting green branches.
Telling lies.
Uprooting seedlings.
Plucking growing plants, and throwing them in the sun.
Giving young birds to cats.
Troubling the poor and cripples.
Throwing refuse water in front of the sun.
Going to sleep after seeing an eclipse of the moon.
Looking enviously at a buffalo yielding an abundance of milk
Being jealous of the good crops of others
Removing boundary stones.
Using a calf set free at the funeral.
Polluting water with dirt.
Urinating on burning embers.
Ingratitude to the priest.
Carrying tales to the higher authorities.
Poisoning food.

Not feeding a hungry person.
Not giving fire to one half frozen.
Killing snakes and cows.
Killing lizards and blood-suckers.
Showing a wrong path. [on the ground.
Getting on the cot, and allowing his father-in-law to sleep
Sitting on a raised verandah, and driving thence his mother-
Going against natural instincts. [in-law.
Troubling daughters-in-law.
Breaking open lakes.
Breaking open reservoirs of water.
Being envious of the prosperity of other villages.
Getting angry with people
Misleading travellers in the forest
Though there be three hundred such sins,
Let them all go with the calf set free to-day.
May the sins be completely removed!
May the sins be forgiven!
May the door of heaven be open!
May the door of hell be closed!
May the hand of charity be extended!
May the wicked hand be shrivelled!
May the door open suddenly!
May beauty or splendour prevail everywhere!
May the hot pillar become cooled!
May the thread bridge* become tight!
May the pit of perdition be closed!
May the thorny path become smooth!
May the mouth of the worm-hole be closed!
May he reach the golden pillar!
May he rub against the silver pillar!

* The bridge spanning the river of death, which the blessed cross in safety.

Holding the feet of the six thousand Athis,
Holding the feet of the twelve thousand Pathis,
Holding the feet of Brāhma,
Holding the feet of the calf set free to-day,
May he reach the abode of Sīva!

So mote it be.

The recitation is repeated thrice, and a few Badagas repeat the last words of each line after the elder. As the ceremony witnessed by us differs materially from the account thereof given by Gover thirty-four years ago, I may appropriately quote his description. "By a conventional mode of expression, the sum total of sins a man may do is said to be thirteen hundred. Admitting that the deceased has performed them all, the performer cries aloud 'Stay not their flight to God's pure feet.' As he closes, the whole assembly chants aloud 'Stay not their flight.' Again the performer enters into details, and cries 'He killed the crawling snake. It is a sin.' In a moment the last word is caught up, and all the people cry 'It is a sin.' As they shout, the performer lays his hand upon the calf. The sin is transferred to the calf. Thus the whole catalogue is gone through in this impressive way. But this is not enough. As the last shout 'Let all be well' dies away, the performer gives place to another, and again confession is made, and all the people shout 'It is a sin.' A third time it is done. Then, still in solemn silence, the calf is let loose. Like the Jewish scape-goat, it may never be used for secular work." At the funerals of which we were spectators, no calf was brought near the corpse, and the celebrants

of the rites were satisfied with the mere mention by name of a calf, which is male or female according to the sex of the deceased. If a dead man leaves a widow in a state of pregnancy, who has not performed the kanni-kattu, or marriage thread ceremony, this must be gone through before the corpse is taken to the pyre, in order to render the child legitimate. A man cannot, during life, claim the paternity of a child unless he has thrown the kanni round his wife's neck during the seventh month of her first pregnancy. The pregnant woman is, at the time of the funeral, brought close to the cot, and a near relation of the deceased, taking up a cotton thread twisted in the form of a necklace without any knots, throws it round her neck. Sometimes the hand of the corpse is lifted up with the thread, and made to place it round the neck. Soon after the recitation of the sins, all the agnates go to the house of the dead man, at the entrance to which a gunny-bag is spread, whereon a small quantity of paddy is poured, and a few culms of *Cynodon Dactylon* and a little cow-dung are placed on it. The eldest of the agnates, sickle in hand, takes some of the paddy, and moves on, raising both hands to his forehead. The other agnates then do the same, and proceed, in Indian file, males in front and females in the rear, to the corpse. Round it they walk, men from left to right, and women in the reverse direction, and at the end of each circuit put some of the paddy on its face. The cot is then carried to the burning-ground, a woman heading the procession, and shaking the end of her cloth all the way. The corpse is laid on the pyre with its feet to the south,